

THE PATH TO POWER

Programme of the South African Communist Party as Adopted at the Seventh Congress, 1989

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Introduction

The prospects of achieving a revolutionary breakthrough in South Africa are greater today than ever before in our history. The apartheid regime faces an all-round crisis which results from our broad revolutionary offensive, together with the internal contradictions among the rulers. The crisis of racial tyranny cannot be resolved, except by the revolutionary transformation of our country.

The national liberation offensive is led by the African National Congress in revolutionary alliance with the vanguard workers' party - the South African Communist Party - and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. It is a national liberation struggle that combines many mass democratic contingents - the youth, women, students, civic and others - and the trade union movement.

The mobilisation, organisation and unity in action of this large front of forces has swept into every corner of our country, into the factories, townships, schools and rural villages. Our struggle is known throughout the world, stirring freedom-loving people in every country. The building of this broad front of forces inside and outside our country has been the greatest achievement of our struggle.

The Communist Party of South Africa, the first Communist Party on the African continent, was formed on July 30, 1921. Our Party was rooted in South African struggles, and in socialist organisations and socialist thinking which had existed in various forms since the turn of the century. The formation of our Party was also directly inspired by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin, and its vanguard role in the world's first proletarian socialist revolution in Russia, the Great October Revolution of 1917.

One of the first attacks by the Nationalist Party regime on the people's rights was the suppression of Communism Act of 1950, which banned the Communist Party of South Africa. This attack was the beginning of an assault on the whole democratic movement. In the 28 years before its banning, the Communist Party had played a pioneering role in rooting the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism in South African soil. In South African conditions this meant, above all, playing a leading role in building the national liberation movement. Party members also played a leading role in organising black workers into the trade union movement.

It was no accident that the apartheid regime made this Party and the ideas and practice of Marxism-Leninism its first target. Communism stands for the direct opposite of apartheid colonialism. Communism stands for the rights of the workers and oppressed people, against all forms of racism, privilege, colonialism and exploitation. Communism stands for peace, freedom, democracy, national independence and social progress.

The banning of the Communist Party and the persecution of individual communists have proved incapable of destroying us. Within a short time after the banning and dissolution of the Party, underground groups of communists were formed in several places. In 1953 the first underground conference of the Party under its new name, the **South African Communist Party,** was held.

Today the influence and prestige of the South African Communist Party is greater than at any time in its history. Although it has been forced to operate in the underground for nearly forty years, our Party is one of the main pillars of the national liberation movement. The principles, the strategic objectives, and the organisational approach which our Party pioneered from the 1920s have come to be widely accepted among the broad masses within the country.

In the decisive period ahead, the SACP has a crucial role to play in the mobilising, organising and ideological development of all contingents of our revolutionary struggle, and in particular the South African working class. The struggle for national liberation, the destruction of colonialism of a special type and the transition to socialism in South Africa require a vanguard Marxist-Leninist party capable of providing a highly disciplined organisation and the guiding light of scientific socialist outlook grounded in South African realities.

In 1962 the South African Communist Party adopted its programme, The Road to South African Freedom. The 1962 programme has made an indelible contribution to the scientific analysis of the situation in South Africa, and to practical revolutionary work for national liberation. It has proved to be a major guiding light over more than a quarter of a century of struggle, inspiring the work of party and non-party militants alike.

But after 27 years there have been major changes in the world, in our region, and within South Africa itself. The deepening crisis of racial tyranny in our country and the great wave of mass struggles over the last decade have brought our immediate goal much closer, and they have introduced a wealth of revolutionary experience. The period ahead is pregnant with revolutionary potential and challenges. In this programme the South African Communist Party analyses the fundamental features of South African society and considers the main characteristics of the present international situation and of the region in which we live. It puts forward our strategic approach to the struggle to end national oppression and to advance to socialism, with the ultimate objective of building communism in South Africa. It outlines the main tasks of the Marxist-Leninist vanguard party of the working class, and the immediate path to power in the national democratic revolution.

The Communist Party is the leading political force of the South African working class. Together with our allies in the liberation front headed by the ANC, our immediate aim is to win the objectives of the national democratic revolution, whose main content is 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 South Africa in which the working class will be the dominant force.

The Communist Party has no interests separate from those of the working people. The Communists are sons and daughters of the people, and share with them the over-riding necessity to put an end to the suffering and humiliation of apartheid. The destruction of colonialism and the winning of national freedom is the essential

condition and the key for future advance to the supreme aim of the Communist Party: the establishment of a socialist South Africa, laying the foundations of a classless, communist society.

1. The World Revolutionary Process

The revolutionary struggle in South Africa is part of a world revolutionary process whose main tendency is the transition from capitalism to socialism, from societies based on exploitation to a new world free of exploitation and oppression. The present period within the broader epoch is characterised by:

- competition between the two opposing social systems - capitalism and socialism - for the allegiance of humankind;
- more and more peoples taking the path of social progress;
- the struggle of the newly liberated countries for genuine, independent development;
- the struggle for the final liquidation of the colonial system.

Our period is also one in which the whole of humankind faces problems that endanger the very survival of our shared planet. The threat of nuclear war, the catastrophic problems of the developing countries, such as debt, famine and disease, all affect, directly and indirectly, the highly industrialised and developing countries alike. These problems require the broadest international co-operation for their resolution. While such broad co-operation is absolutely imperative, the only guarantee of a lasting solution to these problems lies with the deepening and consolidation of the main historical tendency of our epoch - the transition from capitalism to socialism.

This main tendency of world development does not take place without difficulties. Although imperialism has lost power over fully one third of humanity now in socialist countries, although it has lost its colonial empires and undergone serious crises, it remains a powerful and dangerous enemy of social progress. In its attempt to reverse the main trend of world development and to recapture the historical initiative, imperialism relies on its still vast economic, political, cultural and military resources.

The growing instability and internal crises of modern capitalism do not lead to its automatic collapse. In the present period a number of features have enabled international capital to prolong its existence and delay its end. A major scientific and technological revolution is occurring in both the advanced socialist and capitalist countries. In the capitalist countries, this scientific and technological revolution has greatly accelerated the centralisation and concentration of capital, and spurred on the growth of giant transnational corporations.

In the 1980s transnational corporations accounted for over one-third of all the capitalist world's manufacturing output, more than one-half of its foreign trade, and for up to 80 per cent of new hardware and technology patents. This high level of centralisation enables imperialism to manipulate material, financial and human

resources throughout the non-socialist world. New centres of capital accumulation have been opened up in Latin America and the Far East.

Pursuing maximum profits, the transnational corporations are able to adapt promptly to changing conditions in the market, shifting their activities from country to country, and from one branch of production to another. In the process they close down hundreds of factories, reduce production and employment possibilities, and ride roughshod over the interests and well-being of working people throughout the capitalist world.

The transnational corporations are the shock-force of neocolonialism in the development countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa. Unequal trade and the imposition of a massive debt burden on the developing countries are the principal means for maintaining and deepening neo-colonial subjugation. Through the control of commodity and money markets, the imperialists drive down the price of raw materials produced in the developing countries. At the same time the prices of commodities that the developing countries are forced to import are inflated. In 1987 the debt of developing countries are forced to import are inflated. In 1987 the debt of developing countries to the imperialist banks was the equivalent of almost 30 per cent of the gross annual product of the entire non-socialist world. Already Africa is transferring more capital abroad in debt service and other payments to the imperialists than it is receiving in aid and new loans. The imperialists, through agencies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, use the resulting economic problems to impose policy directions on these countries that bring ever greater misery and mass starvation to millions of their peoples.

Militarism has always been an inherent feature of imperialism. In attempting to reverse the gains of socialism and national liberation, imperialism has entangled the world in a web of aggressive blocs and military bases. It has created hotbeds of tension at the borders of the socialist countries, and in strategic regions of the world. It supports the most reactionary and terrorist regimes.

The aggressive role of the apartheid regime is southern Africa is not just part of the struggle for survival by the last bastion of white colonial rule in our continent. It is also a component of a global imperialist strategy. The politico-military strategy of United States imperialism in regard to regional conflicts aims at defeating national liberation movements and undermining progressive, anti-imperialist governments in the developing world. It involves the export of counter-revolution, direct military intervention and the building up of regional military surrogates: either in the form of sub-imperialist states like Zionist Israel and the South African apartheid regime, or bandit forces like the Contras in Nicaragua, MNR in Mozambique and Unita in Angola. These regional forces act in the general interests of imperialism within their respective regions. There are, however, also internal pressures and tendencies that can lead, on occasion, to secondary contradictions developing between these regional forces and imperialism.

It is the threat of world nuclear war generated by imperialism that the anti-popular nature of capitalism today is most convincingly demonstrated. In an attempt to restore their undermined international position, the most aggressive and reactionary circles in the imperialist world continue to whip up international tensions with anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda. They have also encouraged the massive build-up of arms by the most reactionary regional regimes. With the assistance of imperialism Zionist Israel and the apartheid regime now both possess a nuclear capacity. The fact that two regimes, which are the source of continuing military and economic aggression against their respective regions, possess the nuclear bomb is a real threat to world peace.

In the present historical period the major issue that confronts all of humanity is the struggle against a nuclear war. A nuclear holocaust would obliterate our entire planet. In the light of these changing realities war is no longer inevitable. The consistent, peace-promoting policy of the socialist countries, and the worldwide anti-war movement play a leading role in the struggle to prevent the destruction of human civilisation. Internationally, it is imperative that the struggle against the squandering of enormous resources on weapons of mass destruction is linked to the struggle to overcome the intolerable sufferings of millions upon millions of people in the developing countries. In South Africa the all-round intensification of the revolutionary struggle for the isolation and overthrow of the apartheid regime is our main task in contributing to the overall struggle for world peace.

The Three Main Revolutionary Contingents

Of all of the diverse progressive and revolutionary forces confronting imperialism in our time, there are three main revolutionary contingents:

- the world socialist system;
- the national liberation movements and anti-imperialist forces in the developing countries;
- the working class movement in the developed capitalist countries.

Alongside these main contingents, a major tendency in the present period has been the emergence of mass democratic movements in the advanced capitalist countries. These movements mobilise millions of people around issues such as peace, the preservation of our environment, and the anti-apartheid struggle. While not necessarily being revolutionary in character, these broad-based mass democratic movements share important objectives with the three major world revolutionary contingents. They have contributed to the weakening of imperialism, isolatinq its most reactionary and dangerous circles.

The World Socialist System

World imperialism was dealt its first blow in 1917 - by the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. After the end of the Second World War and the

defeat of German fascism and Japanese militarism, the worldwide historical process of social liberation was marked by the overthrow of exploiters in several countries in Europe and Asia and then Cuba Socialism has turned into a world system, asserting itself on vast expanses of the earth. Socialist countries today represent a powerful international force. Some of them possess highly developed economies, a considerable scientific base, and a reliable military defence potential World socialism accounts for more than one-third of the world's population, in dozens of countries advancing along a path that reveals the intellectual and moral potential of humanity. A new way of life is taking shape in which there are neither oppressors nor the oppressed, neither exploiters nor the exploited, in which power belongs to the people.

There are three main ways in which the world socialist system contributes to the world revolutionary process. First, the existence of socialist countries, their growing might, and their foreign policies, based on working class internationalism, have brought about gradual changes in the worldwide balance of forces between imperialism and all the forces opposing it. The growing might of the socialist countries restricts imperialism's ability to export counter-revolution. Secondly,the advances of the socialist countries inspire the working people throughout the world to struggle for social and national emancipation, raising the level of their demands and programmes of action. Thirdly, socialist countries provide significant and many-sided support to revolutionary movements throughout the world. In short, the growing might of world socialism creates more favourable conditions for the working people of the world to attain peace, democracy and social progress.

Socialism has demonstrated its enormous potential for all-round progress. But the worldwide process of transition from capitalism to socialism has not been without negative features. In the Soviet Union itself socialism had to be built in a country with a low level of capitalist development, a predominantly peasant population, and many national communities with different levels of development, including survivals of feudalism and even earlier social systems. The new workers' state had to find its own way, without historical models to follow, and in the face of local counter-revolution and the invasion of armies from the leading imperialist powers.

The classical industrialisation patterns of the advanced capitalist countries, which took between 100 and 200 years, was based largely on resources plundered from colonies. In contrast, the Soviet Union had only its own resources on which to rely, not least the heroism and dedication of its revolutionary working class and Party.

These difficult origins help to explain, but in no way to justify, the emergence of a party and government system of administrative command, leading to bureaucratic control and criminal violations of socialist justice. These were exposed by the 20th and 27th Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. For a number of decades democratic procedures were neglected in the Soviet Union, and the cult of the personality dominated the leadership, the Party and the whole country. Given the pre-eminent position of the Soviet Union within the world communist movement, some of

these negative tendencies also affected Communist Parties around the world, including our own.

Within the Soviet Union elements of stagnation and other phenomena alien to socialism began to appear. Since the 27th Congress of the CPSU an important process has been initiated for democratisation, restructuring (perestroika) and openness (glasnost), with the aim of ensuring the fuller realisation of the economic, moral and cultural possibilities opened up by socialism. The South African Communist Party strives constantly for the strengthening of ties between all socialist countries and for international Communist unity at all levels. We regard such unity as essential for the progress of world socialism, the defence of peace and the advance of the national liberation struggle everywhere. The proletarian internationalism of the socialist countries has, amongst other things, played an outstanding role in the revolutionary victory of the Vietnamese people over US imperialism, and in defence of the Cuban revolution. In southern Africa, progressive and revolutionary forces have a long and warm experience of the consistent, selfless assistance of the socialist countries. In particular, the contribution of the Cuban internationalist forces, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to the defeat of apartheid and imperialist plans in Angola has been of decisive importance to our whole region.

The National Liberation Movement and the Anti-imperialist Struggle of the Developing Countries

The national liberation movement and the developing countries have played an exceptional part in the worldwide struggle against imperialism. They have contributed greatly to changing the balance of forces in the world in favour of peace and socialism. As recently as the 1950s, almost one third of the world's population was ruled by colonial powers. In the last three decades the national liberation movement has dealt a major blow to colonialism. Today, very little is left of the colonial system in its classical forms. This is an achievement of worldwide historical importance.

A major inter-governmental forum for the newly-independent and other developing countries is the Non-Aligned Movement, which has emerged as an important force in world politics. The Non-Aligned Movement has an anti-war, anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and anti racist orientation. It also promotes the struggle for a new just world economic order.

First put forward in 1973 by the Non-Aligned Movement, the basic principles of a new world economic order to break out of the present grave situation were declared to be:

- the sovereignty and equality of all states;
- the right of every country to choose its own road of development;
- the sovereignty of every state over its own national resources and economy;
- the right to control the activities of the transnational corporations; and economic

aid without any political or military strings.

The crippling debt burden of the 1980s has made the demand for a new international economic order ever more relevant.

The governments of the developing countries pursue a variety of different policies. The most progressive among them have a socialist orientation, involving a gradual transition by economically underdeveloped societies to socialism. In these countries the foundations for social ownership of the means of production are being laid. Progressive social and economic changes are being introduced to implement land reform, stamp out illiteracy and involve the broad masses in building a new society.

Efforts of socialist-oriented countries to develop encounter fierce opposition from reactionary international circles. Imperialism considers vast regions of Asia, Latin America and Africa as spheres of its special interest. There it acts to trample on the rights and aspirations of the developing nations.

The anti-imperialist struggles of the developing countries are closely related to those of liberation movements struggling against the last remnants of the colonial system. In particular, Zionist Israel and apartheid South Africa are springboards to destabilise independent countries throughout their respective regions. The struggles of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO, and of South Africa's majority under the leadership of the ANC, have an importance beyond their immediate context.

The Working Class Movement in the Advanced Capitalist Countries.

The most organised detachments of the working class movement in capitalist countries are concentrated in Western Europe, North America and Japan. There are long traditions of militant class struggle in most of the major capitalist countries. In some there are mass Communist Parties that play an important role in social and political life. The Communist Parties, the progressive wing of the trade union movements, and progressive sections of social democratic organisations lead all democratic elements in these countries in the struggle against monopoly capital.

On the other hand, there have also long been contradictory tendencies within the working class movements of the major imperialist centres. Reformism, class collaboration and even by power chauvinism have often reared their ugly heads. The material base for such negative phenomena has been the relative cushioning of sections of these metropolitan working classes by some of the crumbs from the enormous wealth accumulated by imperialism through super exploitation of colonies and neo-colonies.

The working people of the advanced capitalist countries are now experiencing growing unemployment and a rising cost of living. By the mid-1980s the number of unemployed in these countries had risen to more than 35 million. The transnational corporations and the regimes representing their interests have used mass unemployment to attack the material, social and democratic gains of the working class,

and to undermine their trade unions. In the face of this offensive, the continuation of the class struggle is essential.

At the same time, the strategic orientation of Communist Parties in the advanced capitalist countries is towards broad, democratic, antimonopoly coalitions. The possibilities of working in this direction have been greatly enhanced by the emergence, since the late 1960s, of various mass democratic movements. These mass democratic movements now constitute an important motive force for social development on a world scale. These movements involve people of various political orientations and social status - often drawn from the middle strata. They tend to be non-partisan, mobilising around single issues such as peace, women's rights, the protection of the environment, and the anti-racist and anti-apartheid struggles. Their basic concerns and popular character inevitably bring them into opposition with monopoly domination and the policies of the most reactionary circles of imperialism.

These tendencies underline the need for, and possibilities of, unity of all progressive forces in the advanced capitalist countries. However, social and global problems can only be fully solved on the basis of the interests of the working class whose objective social position makes it central in this regard.

The South African Communist Party believes it is the task of all revolutionaries to grasp the interconnections between the world's revolutionary contingents, to learn from international experience, to apply this experience creatively according to concrete conditions, and to approach national problems in unity with international ones.

The South African Communist Party is part of the world communist forces. True to the principles of working class internationalism, the Party works for the unity of the workers of the whole world, and especially of the Marxist-Leninist parties. We work for the unity of all world anti-imperialist and progressive forces in the life-and-death struggle for nuclear disarmament and international relations based on mutual respect. This policy coincides with the fundamental interests of the people of our country. It is in harmony with the aim of independence and integrity for our country, and for regional and all-African co-operation and unity.

2. The Revolutionary Process in Africa

The South African national liberation struggle is taking place within the context of important developments in southern Africa and the continent as a whole. These developments exert enormous influence on our struggle, as much as South African events have a bearing on the struggles of the peoples of Africa for full democratic and independent development.

The peoples of Africa share a common history which predates the colonial era. Subjected to various forms of colonial plunder by imperialism, their struggles for independence have always been seen as a common fight against a common enemy. This sense of collective responsibility forms the basis for a shared anti-imperialist sentiment, the most crucial and urgent of whose tasks is the complete decolonisation of the

continent.

Although the social conditions within our country are, in many ways, different from the general situation in most of Africa, the root and essence of the system within South Africa differs little from the classical colonial system to which the rest of the continent was subjected. Our struggle and the destiny of African peoples are deeply interconnected.

The attainment of independence by the majority of African peoples constitutes the greatest political advance of the past three decades on the continent. From colonial subjugation, virtually the whole of Africa is today made up of independent states, with the political instruments to determine their destiny. This achievement is a direct result of the heroic struggles of the African masses: the peasants, workers, intelligentsia and other forces.

While similarities abound, each country and each people have their own characteristics. The level of economic development differs from country to country and region to region. The paths to political power; the correlation of class forces in the national liberation alliances before and after independence; the colonial metropolis with which they have had to contend; and the immediate geo-political environment in which they are situated - all these have a profound influence on the political processes in each country.

Today, Africa is made up of a wide variety of political systems and forms of government. In countries where the compradore bourgeoisie - underlings of imperialist forces - dominate the machineries of state, economic resources have been laid bare to plunder by transnational corporations, with some fringe benefits to the local ruling groups In such countries, and those in which other sections of the bourgeoisie or aspirant capitalists took the reins of power, a parasitic variant of the capitalist class - the bureaucratic bourgeoisie - has emerged This group feeds on corruption and is tied to international capital. Politically, these reactionary capitalists rely on force and progressive sounding slogans to suppress the yearnings of the working people for independent development.

In some countries sections of the national bourgeoisie who, though aspiring for growth and prosperity as a class, came into power with the support of the working people: in particular the working class and poor peasantry. This group, relying on this alliance, and moved by genuinely patriotic aims, has taken an active part in struggles against imperialist domination, for independent national development. In these countries, restrictions have been placed on the involvement of transnational corporations. Industrial and land reforms, including a relatively strong state sector, have been introduced. In the field of education, health and in the political system some reforms have been effected to benefit the people and ensure their participation - though limited - in the political process.

A decisive role in the development of socio-political forms in Africa is played by the middle strata, especially professional groups and sections of small businessmen.

Numerically strong, and based in the urban centres, they are the social base that has fed the leadership layers of the liberation movements and political parties. It is from these forces that the majority of the officer corps in the state apparatus and bureaucracy originate. These strata have tended to ally themselves either to the various sections of the bourgeoisie or to the working people.

Over the decades since independence, many socio-political changes have taken place in the countries of the continent. The struggle between the forces of democracy and social progress on the one hand, and those tied to imperialism on the other, has assumed different forms and has been waged with different degrees of intensity. In a number of countries, these struggles have resulted in political coups of either a progressive or reactionary character. In other instances, the upheavals at the top and among the people result from the complex ethnic (and sometimes religious) relations inherited from the colonial division of Africa. This ethnic diversity has often been deliberately manipulated by the colonial and imperialist powers. At the same time, insufficient attention or incorrect approaches to the national question by the classes and strata in power have also precipitated social strife.

One of the most significant developments in this period has been the growth of the African working class and its increasing impact on social developments. The waged workforce in independent Africa has grown in number to over 34-million, 70 per cent of whom are workers in industry and agriculture. The geographic distribution of the working class is uneven, with the majority concentrated in a few relatively industrialised countries. Though small in number, the African working class is crucial to any radical social transformations. But it can only play its revolutionary role to the full if it is conscious of its historic mission and is organised to promote and pursue its immediate and long-term interests under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism. Depending on the actual social and political setting in each country, the vanguard revolutionary forces will assume a variety of organisational forms, the highest expression of which is a Marxist-Leninist Party

Despite the variety of ideological positions, African countries share the common scourge of the grim consequences of colonial rule: the lopsided economic structure, technical under-development, mass starvation and vulnerability to natural disasters, the debt burden and so on. These real problems reinforce the joint struggles of virtually all independent Africa for an equitable system of international economic relations. It is the totality of all these common social problems and the desire to eradicate them that has cemented the bonds of unity, expressed in the Organisation of African Unity. Regional associations such as the Preferential Treaty Area for Eastern and Southern African States and the Economic Community of West African States also aim at strengthening the countries of Africa in their joint quest for independent development. These organisations have not only reinforced continental and regional co-operation, but also significantly strengthened the voice and standing of Africa in the international arena.

The Transition to Socialism

Ultimately, the only viable choice for Africa's working people is the socialist path of development. This road holds out the possibility of resolvinq the many-sided problems afflicting all developing countries, to the benefit of the overwhelming majority of the people.

The main general tasks in the countries of socialist orientation are to: strengthen the state sector; root out domination by foreign capital; create the industrial and technical base for socialism and ensure planned economic development, to introduce progressive land reforms; to widen popular democracy and strengthen the vanguard revolutionary party; and to work for national cultural revival with socialist values.

But these tasks have to be carried out in a situation in which the old masters - local and international - put up stiff resistance. In particular, the most reactionary circles of imperialism and in our region, the apartheid regime, have mobilised their resources for a vicious campaign against socialism. Reactionary terrorist and subversive interference have slowed down the development towards socialism in many of these countries. These actions have hindered the attempts to overcome such objective difficulties as the backward industrial and technological base and the numerical weakness of the working class.

In some of these countries, subjective mistakes have been made. The main error has been the drive to move ahead of objective conditions both in economic and political policy. For instance, premature attempts to eliminate all private property, including small enterprises, often narrows the social base of the revolution and can do incalculable harm to the quest for socialism. In a few cases, elements have emerged within the state to use their position to reverse the whole process of socialist orientation.

The path of socialist orientation demands unflinching reliance by the revolutionary movement on the working people, and a conscious effort to constantly broaden the social base of the revolution by patiently winning over more and more genuinely patriotic forces to the side of social progress. It depends also, to a large measure on the strength and cohesion of the Marxist-Leninist vanguard party and systematic ideological work within the ranks of the party and among all sections of society. In foreign policy, strong, mutually-beneficial relations with socialist countries and other progressive nations is of fundamental importance.

The South African Communist Party supports the struggle of African patriots to achieve full national liberation, sovereignty and independent national development. The Party fully identifies with the efforts to organise and mobilise the working class and working people to play their deserved role in national and continental renaissance; and to cement the unity of workers, peasants and other progressive and democratic forces in the fight to eliminate the vestiges of colonialism and ongoing imperialist plunder. As part of this process, and in pursuit of the working class objective of a society without exploitation, the Party works for the deepening of the comradely unity and cooperation

among Marxist-Leninist Parties of Africa.

The Southern African Region

Over the past two decades, southern Africa has undergone changes of epoch-making significance. These developments have had a profound impact on the struggle within South Africa. And they have themselves been influenced by this struggle. Our revolution is unfolding within this immediate environment, a region which is the foremost target of the racist colonial regime's acts of destabilisation.

The evolution of the colonial system of imperialism in southern Africa was such that the economies of the countries of the region were structured to be highly dependent on South Africa in terms of communication and transport, the supply of manufactured goods and, to an extent, even the employment of wage labour. South Africa emerged as a sub-imperialist centre, a junior partner of imperialism seeking to dominate the region on its own behalf and on behalf of imperialism. Today, South Africa accounts for about 77 per cent of the Gross National Product of countries south of Zaire and Tanzania and approximately 90 per cent of energy consumed. South African capital has been exported to many countries of the region.

The strategy of imperialism consists of ensuring its regional domination of southern Africa. In this regard, imperialism pays particular attention to defending the interests of monopoly capital especially within South Africa as its prime springboard into the region. In pursuit of the objective of regional domination, imperialism employs various tactics aimed at blocking and reversing the struggle of the revolutionary masses, and maintaining the essence of colonial domination within South Africa and the region as a whole.

The achievement of independence by the peoples of Mozambique and Angola in the mid-1970s drastically changed the balance of forces in the region. A product of armed and militant popular struggles, these victories profoundly reinforced the struggles of other oppressed peoples of the sub-continent. These revolutions set the stage for development towards socialist construction. Slightly over half a decade later, and after many years of gruelling struggle, the Zimbabwean people also achieved their independence.

The strategy of the apartheid regime hinges on achieving all-round domination-economic, political and military-and turning the states of southern Africa into satellites of apartheid colonialism. In pursuit of this objective, economic enticement, persuasion, sabotage, direct military aggression and surrogate bandit movements are used interchangeably and in various combinations to bludgeon southern Africa into submission. The regime's acts of aggression are a product of the support Pretoria receives from imperialism.

But it is a policy that is meeting with major obstacles. Intensified mass and armed struggle within South Africa; the economic consequences of regional destabilisation; the cost of direct aggression in human lives and white morale - all these have a powerful

weakening effect upon the apartheid regime. In addition, the states of southern Africa, the Frontline States in particular, have collectively taken consistent positions against apartheid. The Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference and bilateral relations among these and other governments in the region, constitute a significant drive to reduce dependence on South Africa. The Frontline States themselves have sought to strengthen their defence and security to defeat Pretoria's plans. It is against this background that in 1988 the South African war machine suffered an ignominious defeat in southern Angola. Combined with decades of heroic struggle by the people of Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO, this development has precipitated significant changes in the region, opening up unprecedented possibilities for the decolonisation of Namibia.

Within the centres of international capital, and between elements of international capital and the regime, there have always been differences of approach. To the extent that these contradictions are of benefit to the struggle, they must be used and deepened. But these conflicts should not be overestimated: the essence of the strategy of international capital as a whole remains that of defending and extending its economic and political sway. The SACP stands by the governments and peoples of southern Africa in their efforts to defend their sovereignty and independence. Their sacrifices in support of our struggle shall always be emblazoned in the hearts of our people and our working class in particular - with whom many southern African workers share the same workplace. The bonds among the classes and strata in the region lead to a natural alliance among African patriots against colonial domination. The task of isolating, weakening and defeating the Pretoria regime is the noble duty of all anti-apartheid forces in South Africa, the region and internationally. This is the ultimate guarantee of a just peace and social progress in our sub-continent.

3. Colonialism of a Special Type

South Africa has a developed capitalist economy. In our country, and wherever it exists, the capitalist mode of production has the same basic characteristics. It is an exploitative system based on the extraction of surplus value from wage labour. But the universal features of capitalism occur within concrete societies, each with its own specific balance of class forces and particular economic, political and ideological features. In different capitalist countries the bourgeoisie exerts its class rule through different kinds of domination, ranging from bourgeois democracy to fascism.

Like many earlier oppressor classes, the bourgeoisie also exerts its class rule across frontiers. In the imperialist epoch, capitalism has extensively developed its own variants of colonial, semi-colonial and neo-colonial rule, underpinning the brutal super-exploitation of working people in the dominated societies.

Within South Africa, bourgeois domination and capitalist relations of production, which emerged within the context of colonialism, have been developed and maintained since 1910 through a specific variant of bourgeois rule - colonialism of a special type. It

is a variant of capitalist rule in which the essential features of colonial domination in the imperialist epoch are maintained and even intensified. But there is one specific peculiarity: in South Africa the colonial ruling class with its white support base on the one hand, and the oppressed colonial majority on the other, are located within a single country.

On the one hand, white South Africans enjoy political power, racial privileges and the lion's share of the country's wealth. On the other hand, the overwhelming black majority of our country are subjected to extreme national oppression, poverty, super-exploitation, complete denial of basic human rights, and political domination.

There are significant class differences within both the white colonial bloc and the oppressed black majority. However, the effect of colonialism of a special type is that all white classes benefit, albeit unequally and in different ways, from the internal colonial structure. Conversely, all black classes suffer national oppression, in varying degrees and in different ways. The social and economic features of our country are directly related to its colonial history.

The Origins of Colonialism of a Special Type

From the time of the first white settlement, established by the Dutch East India Company over 300 years ago, the pattern was set for the ruthless exploitation of the black people of our country, the seizure of their lands and the enforced harnessing of their labour power. The Dutch made war on the Khoi people of the Cape, whom they contemptuously called 'Hottentots', and rejected their appeals for peace and friendship. The San people, the so-called 'Bushmen', were all but exterminated. Slaves were imported from Malaya and elsewhere. White settlers gradually penetrated into the interior. They drove the indigenous people from the best farm lands and seized their cattle. They subdued them by armed conquest and forced them into their service - at first through direct slavery, later through a harsh system of pass laws and taxation.

Colonialist propaganda has emphasised the negative features of traditional African society the relatively low development of productive techniques, the illiteracy, inter-tribal conflicts and wars, superstitions and poverty. It is true that such features existed in traditional African society just as they did among all peoples at the period of early communal economies. But hostile propaganda has presented a distorted image. Prior to colonial conquest, the indigenous peoples had developed their own independent culture and civilisation. They mined and smelted iron, copper and other metals and fashioned them into useful implements. They had developed a number of handicrafts. Their system of extensive agriculture and livestock breeding was well-suited to the type of country and the tools at their disposal. Their system of government though simple was essentially democratic and popular in character. Private property in land was unknown, and food and shelter were freely shared, even with strangers.

But when the colonists began their ceaseless acts of armed aggression, the African people resisted bravely to defend their cattle and their land from robbery and their

people from enslavement. They took up the spear against the bullets of the invader with his horses and wagons. But, tribal society and a rural economy could not provide the material basis for successful warfare against an enemy with a more advanced economy and more destructive weapons. Disunity among the various African peoples prevented the development of a common front of resistance. Time and again in their wars of conquest against African peoples, the colonisers were able to play off one community against another and to enrol African auxiliaries.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, the development of capitalist industrial mining on the Kimberley diamond fields and on the goldfieds of the Witwatersrand had profound and far-reaching consequences. British and European finance houses exported vast sums of investment capital to South Africa. To seize complete control over the goldfields, British imperialism waged a successful war against the Boers. The gold mining companies were now the real rulers of the country. They had only one interest in the Africans - to force them into labour on the mines at minimum rates of pay. The mine bosses found the harsh colonial policy of the Boer Republics admirably suited to this purpose. The poll tax and pass systems were intensified. Dispossession of Africans from the land was speeded up. Not a single move was made to introduce into the northern colonies even the minimum citizenship rights which had been conceded to some blacks in the Cape. In the oppression, dispossession and exploitation of blacks, British imperialism and Afrikaner nationalism found common ground. This was the basis for the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910.

In that year South Africa was established as a political entity with a centralised state power. This established the political conditions for the construction and development of a national capitalist economy and the national institutions of bourgeois political domination. The economic power and political influence of British imperialism were not abolished with the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910. They were now exercised indirectly through the political structures of the new state monopolised by the descendants of European settlers. These new national structures were based on the effects of centuries of colonial conquest and land dispossession. They reproduced, in changed forms, the essential features of colonial domination that had existed before the Union of South Africa.

The new Union of South Africa perpetuated the inferior colonial status of Africans who were recognised only as the objects of administration, without any citizenship rights. In elected bodies, as well as in public administration, whites occupied all positions of authority, skill and competence. Africans occupied only subordinate, unskilled positions without any authority over whites.

The form of domination developed by the Union of South Africa also perpetuated the racialised economic structures of the pre-Union period. There was a white monopoly of capitalist, means of mining, industrial and agricultural production and of distribution. There was also a virtual white monopoly of skilled and supervisory jobs in the division of labour. Whites had privileged access to trading and petty commodity production. The

1913 Land Act, confining land ownership for the African majority to a tiny arid proportion of the country, legally entrenched and intensified the results of centuries of colonial land dispossession.

The South African capitalist state did not emerge as a result of an internal popular anti-feudal revolution. It was imposed from above and from without. From its birth through to the present, South African capitalism has depended heavily on the imperialist centres. Capital from Europe financed the opening of the mines. It was the colonial state that provided the resources to build the basic infrastructure - railways, roads, harbours, posts and telegraphs. It was an imperial army of occupation that created the conditions for political unification. And it was within a colonial setting that the emerging South African capitalist class entrenched and extended the racially exclusive system to increase its opportunities for profit. The racial division of labour, the battery of racist laws and political exclusiveness guaranteed this. From these origins a pattern of domination, which arose in the period of external colonialism, was carried over into the newly-formed Union of South Africa. From its origins to the present, this form of domination has been maintained under changing conditions and by varying mechanisms. In all essential respects, however, the colonial status of the black majority has remained in place. Therefore we characterise our society as colonialism of a special type.

The Class and Social Structure of Colonialism of a Special Type

Since 1910 South African capitalism has developed enormously. From a typical extractive,colonial economy, whose core was gold mining based on cheap migrant labour and agriculture based on cheap forced labour, South Africa is now a relatively advanced capitalist society with the most developed infrastructure on the African continent. Today monopoly capital dominates every single sector of the South African economy. The development of capitalist forces of production has led to the extensive growth of a modern proletariat. Numerically, the working class, of which the core is a large industrial proletariat, is by far the largest class in our society. Even in the South African countryside, the agrarian working class, and migrant workers and their families, constitute the great majority of the population. Bourgeois class domination is, however, still based on the colonial oppression of the black and, in particular, African majority.

The special colonial domination is based on an alliance of white classes and strata. The maintenance of this system, producing as it does increasing instability, violence and a growing isolation from the international community, is not in the overall long-term interests of the majority of South Africans, black or white. However, in the short term, all white classes and strata benefit from the oppression of the black majority.

Within the white colonial bloc, it is the bourgeoisie and in particular monopoly capital that is the leading class force. In every sector of the economy - mining, manufacturing, finance, and increasingly even in agriculture and services - monopoly capital is now overwhelmingly dominant. Enormous power is wielded by a handful of

companies controlling vast economic empires. By the mid-1980s 2.7 per centof enterprises controlled over 50 per cent of our country's total turnover; 6.3 per cent of all enterprises employed over half of the national workforce; and a mere 6 per cent had 85 per cent of all fixed assets. Monopoly concentration of capital is a universal trend within capitalism - but the level of concentration in South Africa is virtually unprecedented. And the trend to ever greater concentration is increasing each year. By 1987, four companies (Anglo American, Sanlam, SA Mutual and Rembrandt) alone controlled 80 per cent of all shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Of these companies, Anglo American alone controlled 55 per cent.

Over the last decades Afrikaner-controlled monopoly conglomerates have developed, and their interests have interlocked and merged with those of the older monopolies traditionally controlled by English-speaking whites. A decisive role in the capitalist economy is also played by the state. State corporations in some of the key sectors - armaments, energy and transport - play a central role in propping up the entire capitalist economy. With all of these developments, the level of collusion between the state and private monopoly capital, and between English and Afrikaans big business, has increased substantially on the economic and political fronts.

Faced with a deepening crisis and the prospect of a national democratic revolution, these monopoly interests are now calling for some restructuring of race domination. At the heart of the various political arrangements they are advocating is an attempt to keep South Africa safe for monopoly capitalism. Under the guise of protecting 'group rights', they seek to perpetuate their monopoly control over the wealth of our country. In fact, their stranglehold over the great bulk of our country's productive land, machinery and capital is the accumulated result of more than a century of colonial dispossession, oppression and exploitation of the majority. There can be no true liberation from colonial oppression in our country without transforming this fundamental economic legacy.

Although monopoly capitalism has now become dominant in every sector, there are also non-monopoly capitalists. In particular, there is still a large number of non-monopoly white farms. This is the most backward sector of the capitalist economy. The national farming debt in 1986 exceeded the gross agricultural income, and it was ten times the sum of annual profits to farming capitalists. A large number of white-owned capitalist farms are only able to survive as a result of the most barbaric oppression and exploitation of their black labourers, and extensive government loans and other forms of protection.

Among the white middle strata, particularly from the Afrikaans speaking community, large numbers are now integrated into the state bureaucracy. They are highly dependent for their positions on having in power a political organisation committed to a strong, racially privileged state bureaucracy. Other sectors of the white middle strata, professionals and particularly the intelligentsia, often feel least threatened among the white community by the prospect of a nonracial future. It is necessary to detach

significant numbers of these sectors from an unquestioning support for white minority rule, and win them over to the struggle for national democracy.

The two million economically active whites mostly hold clerical, supervisory, administrative and technical positions. In many ways white wage-earners constitute a classical, labour aristocracy. Although their long-term interests lie in making common cause with their black working class brothers and sisters, decades of racial privilege have brought them real material gains. These have instilled an extremely reactionary outlook within a significant proportion of white workers. It is from this stratum that the ultra-rightwing, neofascist parties receive their major support. With the deepening crisis of South African capitalism, and with the growing collusion between the state and the monopolies, the economic situation of white workers has deteriorated. Their trade unions, which have for a long time been in deep collusion with management, are now proving less and less effective in defending the interests of their members. While organising white workers into progressive trade unions, and winning them away from racism is not an easy task in the present situation, every endeavour must be made in this direction.

The alliance of white classes and strata is not without contradictions and counter-tendencies. Although historically all white classes and strata have united around the system of white minority rule, the different interests that draw them together in this alliance are not static. Monopoly capitalism now tends to secure its labour from a more stable, better qualified and higher consuming workforce. From the perspective of monopoly capital these economic changes require a political and economic restructuring of colonialism of a special type. This restructuring is resisted by sections of the white working class and petty bourgeoisie, and by some of the non-monopoly capitalists in agriculture and manufacture.

Above all, the growing revolutionary challenge, and increased international isolation are now dramatically weakening the cement uniting the white bloc. Today, the white community is more confused, more divided and more demoralised than in many decades. While certain sectors are in favour of reform to ward off revolution, others are increasingly swept into the ranks of the ultra-right and various neo-fascist groupings that propagate the most rabid race hatred. Generally speaking, these differences and conflicts within the white bloc are not centred around the abolition of colonial domination of the majority, but around how best to maintain stability and privilege.

However, with the deepening political and economic crisis, increasing numbers of whites are beginning to doubt whether apartheid is in their own long-term interests, and whether it can ever bring them peace and security. White domination means more and more police and military expenditure to burden the taxpayer, diverting resources from useful production. It means enforced conscription of white males into the apartheid armies, to serve and even die for an unjust cause. It means more and more dictatorial police-state measures, and the extinguishing of civil liberties for whites themselves. It means a South Africa despised and shunned by the whole world,

subjected to economic, sports and cultural isolation. It means a future of uncertainty and fear.

There are now many possibilities for detaching significant sectors of whites from at least an unquestioned faith in white minority rule. Indeed, increasing numbers of whites are now espousing an anti apartheid position, joining the broad front of forces aligned against the Pretoria regime. There is also a long tradition within South Africa, pioneered in the 1920s by our Party, of whites renouncing colonial privileges and standing shoulder to shoulder with their black brothers and sisters in the revolutionary struggle for a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. One of the features of the struggles of the 1980s has been the still small but growing number of whites actively making this fuller, revolutionary commitment.

Within the colonially oppressed black majority, the six million strong working class is by far the largest and most significant class force. Neither the profound economic changes that have occurred in South Africa, nor the restructuring that monopoly advocates, amount to an abolition of the special colonial oppression of the black working class. Despite the changes, black workers still occupy the less skilled and lower paid jobs. Inferior education, the unequal provision of resources and the denial of political rights all continue to reproduce a racially divided, colonial-type workforce. The system of national oppression has guaranteed a low paid black labour force, while allowing for changes in size and technical understanding. Until the 1960s there were relatively few black clerical workers and still fewer black employees who were formally described as skilled, semi-skilled, or supervisors, foremen and workers in service capacities.

By the beginning of the 1970s the present shape of the working class had been established. A more literate black workforce entered occupations previously dominated by whites, although the apartheid educational system still limits the vast majority of black people to low levels of education. Colonial oppression of the black proletariat has been retained through the changes. Whites work alongside blacks who, at a lower wage and with a lower status, increase their capacity to run a modern industry. Job descriptions are redefined, as blacks move into them at wages only a fraction of those paid to whites.

Oppressed by the special colonial form of bourgeois domination in South Africa and super-exploited, black workers stand to gain the most from the immediate abolition of national oppression. It is also black workers whose longer-term interests are for the complete and final eradication of all forms of oppression and exploitation in our country.

The South African industrial proletariat, concentrated in the large urban complexes, has emerged as the most organised and powerful mass revolutionary contingent in our country. Its proletariat class consciousness has been developed and deepened by decades of militant trade unionism. This tradition is today embodied in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and in the giant federation, the Congress of

South African Trade Union (COSATU). It is a working class that has responded in its millions to calls for national stayaways, shutting down the mines, factories, shops, and bringing the capitalist economy to a grinding halt for days at a time. It is a working class from among whom increasingly large numbers are actively rallying to the Marxist-Leninist positions of the SACP, openly espousing the perspectives of socialism. Within our own country this proletariat is gathering its forces to fulfil the historical role predicted over one hundred years ago by Marx and Engels for the working class movement on a world scale. Assembled in millions within the very heartland of an advanced capitalist economy, and leading the struggle against national oppression, the South African working class is poised to be the gravedigger of capitalist exploitation itself.

Large-scale and chronic unemployment has now become a central feature of South Africa's capitalist economy. Some 300,000 new job-seekers enter the labour market each year, while a stagnating economy is only able to absorb an extremely small proportion. Official figures deliberately underestimate the number of unemployed Africans by many millions. The most reliable estimates in the late 1980s were between six and eight million unemployed Africans. Other groups, in particular the Coloured people, have been seriously affected by unemployment. This enormous wastage of the human wealth and potential of our country is characteristic both of colonial oppression and of capitalism, a system based on private profits and not on social needs.

Closely allied to the South African industrial proletariat are the oppressed rural masses. There are some 1.3-million black workers on white-owned farms. Conditions for black workers on these farms are invariably bad. They are often treated with brutality, wages are extremely low, and they are not covered by labour laws in effect in other sectors of the economy. Malnutrition is common among black children on white farms, and many children are themselves also forced to work to supplement their family income.

The vast majority of about thirteen and a half million people in the bantustans are landless and without livestock or agricultural implements. While landlessness is acute, the land that is available to African peasants tends to be both overgrazed and barren. Among households with some land it is virtually only those that receive remittances from family members at regular intervals, in the form of wages or pensions, who are able to engage in any agricultural production beyond a garden plot.

The apartheid regime has tried to develop a stratum of middle peasants, so called 'bona fide farmers', in the bantustans. This strategy has generally failed because patronage and corruption have led to resources for development and the little effective farming land available falling into the hands of bantustan civil servants, and bantustan government ministers in particular. These collaborative strata do not engage in small-scale farming, but set themselves up in commercial agricultural enterprises, often in joint ventures as junior partners to white farmers and commercial interests.

Within the economy of apartheid colonialism the bantustans serve as suppliers of

cheap labour and as dumping grounds for the unemployed, the aged and the sick. Apart from migrant labourers and 'commuters', who are forced to travel many hours from dormitory townships, the vast majority of people in the Bantustans are workers, families, unemployed workers and poor peasants. They are linked in many ways,direct and indirect, to the South African working class in their outlook and in their objective interests. Their demands are for land, for the right to settle where they choose, for secure and rewarding work, and for an end to the corruption and repressive actions of the Bantustan authorities. In their struggle to achieve these demands, the rural masses are the major social ally of the working class in the broad struggle for national liberation, and the longer-term struggle for the socialist transformation of our country.

Among the oppressed black majority of our country there is a fairly small but growing and relatively significant range of middle strata, made up of a commercial petty bourgeoisie, and various professional categories. These middle strata suffer, with their fellow black, under the brutal and humiliating system of colonialism. The majority of these middle strata, in terms of their living conditions, their social origin and their political aspirations are closely linked to the oppressed black proletariat. Despite the regime's attempts to woo these black middle strata, hoping to transform them into a buffer between the masses and the white colonial bloc, the overwhelming majority have rejected these ploys. Indeed, the active participation of black middle strata within the national democratic movement has been an important feature of our revolutionary struggle. This is not to say that there are no other, contradictory tendencies among sections of the black middle strata. The apartheid regime has not abandoned its attempts to win them over, and their continued allegiance to the people's cause requires active and on-going work.

There is also a very small but emerging black bourgeoisie in South Africa. At present it controls means of production that are responsible for less than two percent of our country's Gross National Product. One fraction of this emergent black bourgeoisie is closely associated with the various apartheid collaborative structures - like bantustan administrations, community councils, management committees, and the tricameral parliament. Using its control of subordinate bureaucratic apparatuses and by patronage and corruption it accumulates some capital resources. Because of its dependency on these apartheid structures, this fraction tends to be extremely reactionary, aligning itself to the colonial ruling bloc. However, its subordinate status and its very dependence upon the ruling bloc are sometimes the source of resentments and secondary contradictions which can be exploited by the liberation movement.

Other emergent fractions of the black bourgeoisie are developing out of petty bourgeois commercial activities, and also through the professional and managerial routes. Though growing in numbers, their hopes of entrepreneurial operations remain blocked by the economic stranglehold of the monopolies and by racial oppression. These strata can be won over into the broad national liberation movement.

The black majority includes two sizeable groups, the Coloured and Indian peoples.

They share with the African majority the bitter suffering and humiliation of racial oppression. There have been considerable social changes over the last 30 years within these communities, with a growing process of class differentiation. The apartheid regime has used these changes, in particular the growing affluence of some of their upper strata, to intensify its attempts to win active collaboration from these communities. These attempts by the regime have failed dismally, and the Coloured and Indian people in their majority have soundly rejected and isolated the few collaborators drawn from their midst.

The Coloured community, numbering some three million, is predominantly working class in character. This community is subjected to many forms of racial discrimination, reflected in low standards of living, education, housing, nutrition and health. The changes in the national economy, with increased capital investment in the manufacturing sector in the 1970s, led to a significant growth in the number of Coloured workers in white-collar and skilled jobs, and a declining relative share of Coloured employment in the lower manual and skilled occupations.

Despite these advances the average Coloured monthly wage was still only 35 per cent of the average white earnings in 1986. Another significant change in the last decades has been the movement of Coloured women out of domestic service and agriculture into semi-skilled manufacturing, sales and clerical work. Coloured farm labourers still work and live under wretched conditions. The increased mechanisation of agriculture has resulted in over 100,000 Coloured farm workers losing their jobs since 1960. They and their families have swelled the ranks of the unemployed in the urban areas.

Although the Coloured community has always suffered racial oppression, in the first half of this century it occupied a privileged position in relation to Africans. The white ruling group extended various concessions - such as a qualified franchise, trade union rights and property rights - in order to prevent the emergence of a united front of oppressed blacks against white colonialism. This policy was not without success. However, with the accession of the National Party to power in 1948, many of these relative privileges were removed. In the late 1950s and 1960s the Coloured community was subjected to brutal, mass forced removals under the Group Areas Act.

In the 1980s the regime's attempts to incorporate Coloured people within the tricameral parliament have failed miserably. Increasing numbers of Coloured people have now come to align themselves unambivalently with the broader struggle of the African majority. One of the most significant developments in the 1980s has been the militant, mass participation of the Coloured community in the national democratic struggle.

The Indian community, nearly one million strong, originates mainly from the indentured labourers who came to work in the Natal sugar fields a century and a half ago. From the earliest times all sorts of degrading and discriminatory restrictions have been placed on South African Indians, restrictions which they have resisted in many

historic struggles. Today there is a substantial number of Indian industrial workers. Like their fellow African workers they face appalling problems of unemployment and overcrowding in slum conditions. There is also a significant stratum of Indian merchants, factory owners and small shopkeepers. Indian business people, and all sections of the community, are subjected to numerous disabilities, especially relating to land and property ownership and economic opportunities. Until recently they were not allowed to move from one province to another without special permits. The apartheid regime has applied the Group Areas Act with particular ferocity against the Indian communities, uprooting them from their homes and livelihoods.

On the other hand, the Indian community in general has advanced economically and socially much more rapidly than other oppressed communities. There has been a significant increase in the number of Indian people in professional, managerial and supervisory positions in the last twenty years. In addition, the rigid application of the Group Areas Act for over 25 years, which has seen the enforced separation of Indian and African communities, has also had a political and cultural impact. Any negative tendencies resulting from these developments present special challenges to the national liberation struggle in the task of forging the broadest unity of action of the oppressed, while recognising real cultural and other differences. In accomplishing this task it is necessary to build upon the long traditions within the Indian community of united struggle with the African peoples. In the 1970s and 1980s these traditions have been actively reasserted through the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses.

Work amongst the Indian people has to take into account the class differentiation within this community. While there has been some economic advance within this community, it has not been evenly spread. The majority of the economically active Indian people in our country are exploited wage labourers, toiling shoulder to shoulder with African workers. In particular there is a large concentration of Indian workers in the garment industry, many of them working in appalling sweat-shop conditions. Deepening the class consciousness of Indian workers, and strengthening their class unity with the majority of workers, is a priority task.

The Crisis of Colonialism of a Special Type

Today, colonialism of a special type is in deep crisis. The crisis is the result of a combination of factors - the economic impasse of South African capitalism, international isolation, divisions in the ruling bloc, and, above all, the broad revolutionary struggle. The present crisis is more generalised, deep-rooted and enduring than those of the 1940s and the early 1960s.

The present crisis is intimately linked to the economic changes of the previous period, and to their interaction with the central features of colonialism of a special type. The development of an advanced capital economy, with its needs for a relatively settled and skilled workforce and an expanding market have been distorted by apartheid colonialism.

On the economic front the crisis has many features: a severe shortage of skills as a result of the cultural and educational oppression of the majority, the large-scale under-utilisation of productive capacity, an increasing reluctance of capitalists to invest in fixed capital, and massive organic unemployment.

The capitalist economy is now stagnating, while the apartheid state itself sinks deeper into financial crisis. The state, with its large-scale investment in strategic industries and basic infrastructure, has in the past been a moving force for capitalist development. But it is now contributing directly to the overall crisis of the economy. Relying increasingly for its survival on naked repression and upon regional military adventures, the apartheid regime is squandering vast sums on its repressive machinery. In addition, the racial institutions of political control have spawned a huge state bureaucracy. There are numerous racially separate administration departments, Bantustan apparatuses, and the tricameral parliament. These are a heavy drain on the regime's finances. The resulting fiscal crisis has, in turn, fuelled inflation and provoked severe difficulties in the repayment of foreign loans.

The ruling bloc's strategic objective of securing a manufacturing-led economic boom, to pull the economy out of its stagnation, has not materialised. The oppression of the black majority, with low wages and massive unemployment, has resulted in a very restricted home market. On the other hand, attempts to compete on international markets with South African manufactures have also failed to live up to the regime's expectations. South Africa's manufactured goods are, generally, not competitive on world markets. The attempts to compete have resulted simply in a greater dependence on foreign markets for imported machinery and high technology. The southern African market is more accessible to South African manufacturers, but the military and economic destabilisation of our neighbouring countries impoverishes the whole region, thus restricting its market potential.

But, above all, the crisis of apartheid colonialism is a political crisis. The ruling class and its political representatives realise that it is impossible to continue ruling in the old way. Amongst their major strategies is the attempt to secure black participation and collaboration in a subordinate form of civil government. At the political level the essence of the regime's crisis is precisely the failure of this strategy. As long as significant black participation is withheld, the regime's crisis will continue to fester and, in one form or another, upsurge and revolt will continue with increasing intensity and frequency.

Every racist constitutional and, reform, initiative, designed to divert the revolutionary pressures, has landed on the rocks. Such initiatives have usually led to an increased tempo of struggle. The forced retreat from the concept that the Bantustans would provide the, final solution, and the self-evident ineffectiveness of the tricameral parliament, are amongst the most significant of these failures. The attempt to win black participation in the setting up of local ghetto councils - as a step towards the so-called 'Great Indaba' - has failed ignominiously.

The reform failures, the absence of any viable alternative political strategy, growing international isolation, the changing relation between racism and profit in important sectors, a bleeding economy and, above all, the unrelenting people's resistance, have led to significant splits and divisions at the top. Within the dominant race group the centuries-old confidence and belief in the eternal survival of white hegemony has begun to evaporate, leading to a significant shift in the traditional context of white politics.

The ideological cement which had for so long bonded the mainstream white politics together, has crumbled considerably and there is no substitute to fill the gaps. Afrikaner nationalism - the tribal pillar of white political power in the post-war period - is developing significant cracks. Its middle strata leaders had successfully exploited Afrikaner nationalism to win political office and with it access to the upper echelons of the economy. The embrace between English and Afrikaner capital is leading to a noticeable shift away from the purely ethnic divide within the white bloc.

The regime is less and less able to meet the expectations either of the capitalist class it represents or the mass of white workers who have, for over half a century, acted as its historic political support base. Mounting international pressures are having a serious effect on the economy and could reach a point which can no longer be tolerated by the capitalist class as a whole. The search for a way out of the crisis is also leading to increased vacillation and divisions within the power bloc.

The deep-rooted crisis and conflict in South Africa cannot be resolved within the confines of the apartheid colonial system. Nor can they be resolved by the National Party regime or any other section of the ruling class. The basic aims of all sections of the ruling class revolve around maintaining the essence of the system of oppression, and monopoly control over the wealth of South Africa. Our struggle is not, and cannot be, merely for civil rights within the framework of the existing system. This system is rooted in the special colonial subjugation of the majority of the South African people and the denial of their basic rights.

4. National Democratic Revolution

The immediate interests of the overwhelming majority of the South African people lie in the carrying out of fundamental change: a national democratic revolution which will overthrow the colonial state and establish a untied, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The main content of this revolution is the national liberation of the African people in particular, and the black people in general.

The historical experiences of subjugated peoples everywhere, and our own experience, have shown that the ruling class will not relinquish power of its own accord. It has to be removed by the combined force of the struggling people. Seizure of power by the revolutionary masses is the fundamental task of the national democratic revolution. This will entail the destruction of existing state institutions designed to maintain and defend colonial oppression. In their place, democratic institutions will be

set up.

Already, in the course of struggle, the revolutionary masses have built various rudimentary forms of people's government in the localities where racist institutions are destroyed or severely weakened. The people, s committees and related popular institutions such as people' s courts and defence committees, as well as efforts to set up and strengthen alternative structures in the fields of education, culture, sports and others, constitute a creative advance of the aims of the national democratic revolution. As long as the ruling bloc still controls the central organs of power, these popular structures will always experience great difficulties. The masses themselves have yet to muster enough strength to sustain these structures. But any weaknesses and reverses experienced now cannot detract from the central importance of organs of people's power as a product and an effective weapon of struggle. These organs will help shape the content of national democracy in our conditions. The building, strengthening and defence of these organs, in the course of struggle, is a crucial task.

The main aims of the national democratic revolution are outlined in the Freedom Charter, which has also been endorsed by the mass democratic movement representing millions of our struggling people. South African Communists consider that the achievement of the aims of the Charter will answer the pressing and immediate needs of the people and lay the indispensable basis for the advance to socialism.

The foundation of the national democratic state will be popular representative institutions of government based on one-person, one-vote, universal and direct adult franchise without regard to race, sex, property and other discriminatory qualifications. These bodies will have to be accountable to the people and subject to popular control. For it to serve the people’s interests, the new state machinery - the army, the police, the judiciary and the civil service - will be open to all South Africans loyal to democratic and non-racial principles. The state will guarantee the basic freedoms and rights of all citizens, such as the freedoms of speech and thought, of the press and of organisation, of movement, of conscience and religion and full trade union rights for all workers including the right to strike.

It must be one of the basic policies and aims of the national democratic state to raise the living standards of the people, and in particular, to eradicate the centuries-old injustices perpetrated against the black majority. This applies to wages and job opportunities, education, housing, health and other amenities.

In order to satisfy the needs of the people and ensure balanced and rapid development of the economy, it will be necessary to ensure popular control over vital sectors of the economy. This will entail the continual strengthening of the state sector in mining, heavy industry, banks and other monopoly industries. The national democratic state will define the general parameters of economic activity. In addition, it must ensure that workers in particular and the people in general play an important role in the running of enterprises, and that the necessary cadres are trained and deployed to serve the national interest. To fully eliminate the system of colonial domination, it will

be necessary to ensure democratic ownership and control over decisive aspects of the economy. At the same time, the state will protect the interests of private business where these are not incompatible with the public interest.

This applies equally to land distribution: there is an imperative need to restore land to the people. This will take a variety of forms, including state ownership of large-scale farms, redistribution of land among the land-hungry masses and state assistance to them, the setting up of co-operative farms, and guaranteeing the freedom of movement and settlement. It will also entail the task of overcoming the enormous economic under-development of many rural regions.

The realisation of these obiectives also constitutes the foundation to the solution of the national question in South Africa, a basic task of the national democratic revolution. The new state will accelerate the struggle to unite all South Africans into a single nation, and consolidate the gains already made. The basis for such national unity is being laid in the course of common struggle of the overwhelming majority of South Africans - black and white - against the common enemy. This struggle has wrought havoc with the regime's age-old ruse of divide-and-rule. The popular offensive against the Bantustan system and tricameral parliament is a reflection of the failure of enemy ploys. At the same time, more and more whites are joining the ranks of anti-apartheid forces. The struggle for a common nationhood is reinforced by the reality of interaction among the majority of the people in the workplace, within a single national economy and territory.

However, the process of nation-formation has to be backed up by a conscious effort on the part of the liberation alliance and the new democratic state. All discriminatory laws and practices will be abolished, and the preaching and practice of discrimination and contempt on the basis of race, colour or ethnic group shall be considered criminal.

National unification of our people will also recognise their diversity in cultures, customs and languages. It will be one of the basic tasks of the democratic state to develop and encourage the flourishing of the diverse cultures and languages of all the people. Such a policy, combined with the effort to promote elements that are common to all South Africans, is not contradictory to the process of building national unity.

In promoting full equality, the new government will have to rid South Africa of the privileges currently accorded to the white community without undermining the rights of individuals. The white people, like all other South Africans, will have the right to develop those elements in their culture which are not based on racism and privilege. On the other hand, the call for group rights - as distinct from the rights of individual citizens - is fraught with the danger of perpetuating inequality and thus undermining the very tenets of democracy and national unity.

The tasks of the national democratic revolution are all interrelated. Both the national and democratic objectives hinge on the fundamental questions of state power and ownership of and control over the national wealth. In the words of the Freedom Charter, 'only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief'.

Only such a state can guarantee the national independence and sovereignty of our country, and ensure that South Africa plays its rightful role as an equal partner in the development of the region and the continent, and in promoting world peace and social progress.

Role of the Working Class in the National Democratic Revolution

The realisation of the basic guidelines set out in the Freedom Charter and their ongoing consolidation after the seizure of power, will be determined by a number of factors. Among the major ones are: the correlation of class forces within the liberation alliance, the strength of this alliance relative to the overthrown classes, and the international balance of forces. In the final analysis, this depends on the extent to which the working class, the landless rural masses and progressive sections of the middle strata assume decisive positions within the democratic alliance. Among these forces - which are objectively interested in thorough-going revolutionary transformation - the working class is the leading force.

The character of any revolution is determined by objective realities and not by the wishes of individuals or parties. In our situation, the unity in action of the oppressed and democratic forces around the basic national democratic demands constitutes the most powerful revolutionary weapon against the ruling class. To weaken this unity by placing the attainment of socialism on the immediate agenda would, in fact, be to postpone the very attainment of socialist transformation.

The demands for national democracy unite the overwhelming majority of strata and sectors of the oppressed: black workers, the landless rural masses, the intelligentsia, cultural workers, sections of black business, youth, women, religious communities, sports people and others. These demands are also in the long-term interest of white workers, small farmers and middle strata who, together, make up the bulk of the white population.

The struggle for national democracy is also an expression of the class contradiction between the black and democratic forces on the one hand, and the monopoly capitalists on the other. The stranglehold of a small number of white monopoly capitalists over the great bulk of our country's wealth and resources is based on colonial dispossession and promotes racial oppression. This concentration of wealth and power perpetuates the super-exploitation of millions of black workers. It perpetuates the desperate plight of millions of the landless rural poor. And it blocks the advance of black business and other sectors of the oppressed. This reality, therefore, forms the basis of the antimonopoly content of the national democratic programme.

But, in our conditions in which national oppression and economic exploitation are inextricably linked, there can, at the end of the day, be no fundamental liberation without full economic emancipation; without the advance to a socialist and communist future. To achieve this, the South African working class - and black workers in particular - must play the leading role in the national democratic struggle.

Objectively, because of the numbers at their command, and because of their concentration and collective organisation within the strategic points of the economy, black workers are better placed than any other class or stratum among the oppressed to lead the national democratic struggle. Their actions affect the economic foundation of the system of colonialism of a special type. And it is black workers, a class with no property stakes in present-day South Africa, who are most capable of taking the national democratic struggle to its fullest conclusion.

Workers, more than any other class in our society, understand from their own lives the importance of collective solutions to social problems. Their very position within production and their daily struggles have schooled our working class in the need for organisation and united action. The existence of a large, class conscious proletariat is the greatest asset to our revolution.

The role of black workers as the dominant force in our struggle is absolutely crucial to ensure that the national democratic revolution lays the basis for a transition to socialism. Whether we will be able to make a steady advance in this direction depends mainly on the role that the working class plays today. It is vital that black workers ally to themselves all classes and strata among the oppressed and all other forces who have a real interest in the creation of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. By championing the interests of the oppressed people and all those who aspire to democracy; by strengthening the front of organisations struggling for national democracy, black workers are able to win the confidence of all democratic forces as the vanguard class in the national democratic struggle. If the workers were to reject broad alliances and 'go it alone' then they would in fact be surrendering the leadership of the national struggle, working class purity, leads to working class suicide.

However, the alliance strategy does not mean that the working class should abandon its own class organisations. It is of crucial importance that the working class builds and strengthens its own independent class organisations while co-operating with, and indeed leading, the broad democratic forces. Nor does it mean that propagation of socialist ideas should be postponed until popular seizure of power in the national democratic revolution. The Communist Party and all other working class organisations must ensure that the ideas of socialism are widely debated, spread and take root, especially among the working people.

The National Democratic Revolution and the Transition to Socialism

Victory in the national democratic revolution is, for our working class, the most direct route to socialism and ultimately communism. The existence in South Africa of the material conditions for socialism - the relatively advanced technical level and a strong working class - and the achievement of the national democratic revolution, will not in themselves guarantee an advance to socialism. In order to create the conditions for such an advance, the working class will have to ensure that the national democratic tasks are consistently carried out. The working class must win for itself the dominant

role in the new government, and see to it that the character of the national democratic state accords with the genuine interests of the people The programme to eliminate monopoly control over the economy and to tailor economic policies according to the needs of the people will have to be scrupulously ensured.

In the period after the seizure of power by the democratic forces, the working class will need to continue the struggle against capitalism. It will need to strengthen its organisations and build the bases of working class and popular power in the economy, in all sectors of the state and in the communities where the people live. A deliberate effort will have to be made to prevent attempts by the bourgeoisie and aspirant capitalist elements - and their imperialist supporters - to dominate state power and divert the revolution. Constant mass vigilance will also have to be exercised and action taken against such negative tendencies as the stifling of popular democracy, the bureaucratisation of the state and corrupt practices in government or in society as a whole.

In order to prevent the emergence of a seed-bed for capitalist resurgence and ensure an advance to socialism, the working class must win to its side other sections of the working people, both now and after the popular seizure of power. The landless rural masses, sections of the intelligentsia, students, large contingents of youth and women (as social groups) and some small businessmen and other forces stand to gain from the victory of the socialist revolution.

The transition to socialism will be neither completely separate from nor contradictory to the tasks of the national democratic revolution. On the one hand, consistent implementation and defence of the national democratic programme constitute a major guarantee for progress towards socialism. On the other hand, many of the major objectives of the national democratic revolution will be fully accomplished in the process of socialist construction. Among these tasks are complete national liberation and equality, elimination of sex discrimination, and, more significantly, the elimination of monopoly domination over the economy.

The Socialist Perspective

A socialist revolution differs from all other revolutions in world history. It sets out to abolish private ownership of the means of production and all forms of oppression. The systems of slavery, feudalism and capitalism are all based on the private ownership of the means of production and oppression of one class by another. Thus, capitalist relations of production developed even before the bourgeoisie had achieved political power. But the development of socialist relations, which will bring an end to the system of economic exploitation, cannot begin until the working class and its allies have won state power. While the material basis for socialism is created by capitalism itself, socialist relations of production are realised only after the political revolution.

The fundamental question of any socialist revolution is the winning of political power by the working class, in alliance with other progressive elements among the people. The

working class then sets out to eliminate exploitation by achieving public ownership and democratic control of the means of production. Fundamental to the socialist political system is the introduction of the widest democracy to the greatest majority of the people and the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including national oppression and sex discrimination. At the same time, the workers' state should prevent the resurgence of the overthrown classes, both internal and external.

In a socialist society, there are neither exploiters nor the exploited. Public ownership of the means of production, means of distribution and means of exchange is the foundation of the socialist economy.
Governing the distribution of income is the principle: 'From each according to their ability, to each according to their work'. A large and increasing portion of society's wealth is used to raise the living standards of the people by ensuring housing, low rents and transport fares, free education and health care, and other benefits. Socialism is a humane system which promotes the free and all-round development of all individuals in society. The chronic scourges of even the most advanced capitalist countries such as mass unemployment, inflation, cyclical crises and social waste are eliminated.

Through social ownership and democratic control of the means of production, the socialist economy is characterised by a qualitatively higher level of planning and co-ordination than is possible under capitalism. Development is not haphazard and spontaneous. It is not left to chance nor to the greed of a few exploiters. It is made to serve the needs of society as a whole. In this way it is possible to ensure that the combined wealth and human energies of society are harnessed to benefit society as a whole.

Socialism is a transitional stage on the road to communism, a still higher stage of human society. Communism is a classless social system, with all-round public ownership of the means of production, accompanied by the growth of productive forces sufficient to ensure the abundance of goods, enabling the principle to be applied: 'From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs'. The building of socialism and gradual development of communism cannot be achieved overnight in a sudden flash. In all countries where workers' power has triumphed, the realisation of socialism is a long and often difficult process.

Basing ourselves on the creativity, motivation and organisation of our working class and people, on the lessons and experience of our comrades in the socialist countries, and on the fraternal international relations that are a basic feature of world socialism, the South African working class possesses the weapons to develop rapidly on the road to a socialist and communist future.

5. The National Democratic Movement and the Vanguard Role of the Communist Party

The system of apartheid colonialism will be overthrown by the oppressed and democratic forces led by the revolutionary movement. This movement has grown,

developed in experience and maturity, and become steeled in many years of complex and difficult struggle.

The African National Congress is the spearhead of the national democratic revolution. The ANC was formed in l9l2 to unite the Afncan people in the struggle against colonial oppression. It has since developed to represent and lead all the oppressed and democratic forces in militant struggles. Today, despite many years of illegal and underground existence, the ANC - as head of the revolutionary alliance - occupies a virtually unchallenged place as the popular vanguard force in the liberation struggle. It has attracted growing allegiance and support from the overwhelming majority of the struggling masses.

The ANC does not represent any single class or any one ideology. As the head of the liberation alliance and prime representative of all the oppressed, the ANC welcomes within its ranks all - from whatever class they come - who support and are ready to fight for the aims of the Freedom Charter. The overwhelming majority and most strategically placed of our people are workers. The ANC therefore recognises the leading role of the working class. Workers, participation in its ranks is one of the important ways in which our working class plays its role in the democratic revolution. However the ANC is not a workers' vanguard political party.

Another important organised contingent of the democratic forces is the trade union movement. A trade union is the prime mass organisation of the working class. To fulfil its purpose, it must be as broad as possible and must fight to maintain its legal public status. It must unite, on an industrial basis, all workers, at whatever level of political consciousness. But a trade union must be involved in political struggle. The capitalist state everywhere acts in defence of the bosses. It uses its power against workers and their trade unions. It does everything to defend capitalism. Reality has taught workers in every part of the world that it is impossible for trade unions to keep out of the broader political conflict.

In our country, where racism and capitalism are two sides of the same coin, it is even more crystal clear that a trade union cannot stand aside from the liberation struggle. The organised involvement of trade unions in the revolutionary struggle helps reinforce the dominant role of workers as a class.

However, this does not mean that a trade union movement can play the role of a workers’ vanguard party. In fact, the basic character of a trade union means that such a trade union movement cannot play this role. Workers, political leadership must represent the working class in its relation to all other classes and to the state. The political party of the working class must ensure workers' involvement in all forms of struggle appropriate to the situation - armed and unarmed, above-board and underground, mass and vanguard. A trade union movement cannot carry out these functions to the full. If it attempted to do so, it would risk being destroyed.

Vanguard Role of the SACP

In South African conditions, a workers' vanguard political party must be made up of the most tried and tested representatives of this class. Its members must be committed revolutionaries with an understanding of Marxist theory and practice, an unconditional dedication to the workers' cause, and a readiness, if need be, to sacrifice their very lives in the cause of freedom and socialism.

A Communist Party does not earn the honoured title of vanguard merely by proclaiming it. Nor does its claim to be the upholder and custodian of Marxism-Leninism give it a monopoly of political wisdom or a natural right to exclusive control of the struggle. At each stage of its political life, guided by a correct application of Marxist revolutionary theory, a Party must win its place by its superior efforts of leadership and its devotion to the revolutionary cause.

The SACP works consistently to forge the South African working class into a powerful force, capable of playing the leading role in the struggle for national democracy and in carrying out its historic mission of abolishing exploitation and creating a classless society. The Party strives to spread the widest possible understanding of the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, particularly in its application to South African conditions. Its strategy and tactics consist in transforming the immediate struggles of the working class into an organised, class-conscious offensive against oppression and capital.

Through all developments and turns of events, the Communist Party always holds before the workers their long-term objective: the creation of a communist society.

At the same time, the Party always links this long-term objective to the actual struggles of the immediate situation. It strives to forge and strengthen the broad alliance of oppressed and democratic South Africans for the attainment of national democracy on the path to the final goal.

The SACP plays its role both as an independent organisation and as part of the revolutionary alliance headed by the African National Congress. There is no contradiction between the multi-class leadership role of the ANC, and the working class vanguard role of the Party. Both the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party have an important role to play individually and collectively for the attainment of national democracy. These organisations share common objectives and agree on strategy and all the key tactics in the National Democratic Revolution. Within this alliance, the Party works tirelessly to strengthen the liberation movement, deepen its revolutionary nationalism and ensure thorough-going revolutionary democratic transformations.

Despite the unending onslaught on this revolutionary alliance by the apartheid regime, by imperialism and by other reactionary forces, the alliance has grown stronger. It has done so precisely because the respective organisations are a natural product of the struggles of our people, and they represent their deepest aspirations. Communists have never sought to transform the national democratic movement into a front for the Party. Participation by communists in the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe and other

revolutionary organisations is based on our class appreciation of their distinct but complementary tasks. As part of this alliance, it is a vital task of the South African Communist Party to see to the widest possible organisation and mobilisation of the mass of the South African people into an active force to defeat the colonial regime.

The Party therefore works tirelessly to strengthen and develop mass democratic organisations.

Over the years, particularly in the 1980s, there has been a resurgence of mass democratic organisation and militant mass struggles. It is a tribute to the correctness of the strategic line of the ANC, the Party and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, that these forces have adopted the national democratic programme and act to realise it. Despite intense state repression the mass democratic movement has not only survived, but continues to play the central role in the mass struggles.

The Vanguard Party and the Mass Democratic Movement.

The emergence and development of the giant democratic trade union movement is one of the greatest achievements of the South African working class in recent year. Within this movement, South African Communists strive for maximum unity in action around the day-to-day demands of the workers, and for the attainment of national liberation and socialism. The organisation and mobilisation of workers into one non-racial, democratic federation shall always be our guiding principle. In this effort, it is important to win over white workers into the ranks of the democratic movement.

The South African Communist Party works actively among other sectors of the oppressed and democratic forces. The emergence and growth of sectoral mass democratic organisations, and their organisational and political unity, has had a profound impact on the South African political scene. The Party works for united and purposeful action among all these sectors for the eradication of oppression and exploitation. These sectors do not stand apart from the working class; they are composed mainly of individuals who are themselves workers, or who have a working class background.

In the case of the majority of South African women, they suffer from triple oppression - as women, as blacks and as workers. Women cannot change the immediate conditions of their lives without fighting shoulder to shoulder with their brothers against colonialism and exploitation for a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. Forced removals, bantustans and the migratory labour system are some of the key features of this system which tear families apart and trap black women into bearing the heaviest burden of oppression. At the workplace, women are subjected to various forms of discrimination. Yet all this is compounded and reinforced by subjective practices and attitudes within the male-dominated society.

The South African Communist Party struggles to ensure that the disadvantages suffered by the majority of South African women are eliminated in the context of the democratic struggle. This includes fighting sexism within the ranks of the party and the

broad liberation movement. In the long term, an advance to socialism - a society in which resources are, in a planned and purposeful manner, dedicated to overcome sexist oppression - is in the interest of all South African women.

The system of national oppression and capitalist exploitation blocks and frustrates at every turn the aspirations and energies of our young people. For the black youth of our country, there is a serious lack of
employment, educational opportunities and of sport and cultural facilities. It is against this background that the South African youth have displayed courage and militancy in many mass battles and within the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe. The Communist Party considers it a crucial task to constantly give strategic direction and theoretical depth to the militancy of the youth, in pursuit of national democratic and socialist tasks.

Millions of South Africans, including black workers, subscribe to various religious beliefs. The South African ruling class and its allies, like oppressors elsewhere in the world, have always tried to use religion as a tool to instill passivity and resignation among the working masses. With the development of the liberation struggle there has emerged an interpretation of religious doctrines which is in the interest of the struggling people. Moved by a profound rejection of oppression, countless religious leaders and believers have taken up the battle against the colonial system. Many are to be found within the ranks of the liberation movement and the people's army. The ideology of the South African Communist Party is based on scientific materialism. But we recognise the right of all people to adopt and practice religious beliefs of their choice. We work for the involvement of all anti-apartheid forces in the common struggle for freedom and democracy. There is common ground between the immediate and long-term perspectives of the Party and a theology of liberation that identifies with the poor and oppressed. In actual struggle, this bond has grown and must be further strengthened.

Black cultural workers and sports-persons have endured vicious discrimination under a system designed precisely to stifle the allround development of blacks. The regime has always trampled upon the culture of the majority. It has not spared its arsenal of repression in acting against the democratic cultural workers who portray and promote the struggles and aspirations of the people. The oppression and repression suffered by artists and sports-persons lie in the very system of colonialism which is based on the all-round subjugation of the majority of the people. The emergent and developing popular movement in culture and sport - in which the working class is playing a vital role - forms an important part of the liberation struggle. The Communist Party attaches central importance to work in these spheres. Militant struggle in these spheres helps to weld our people into a united, democratic nation. We regard culture and sport as important instruments in forging the working class into a victorious force against capital.

All of these sectors, drawn together into the mass democratic movement, are the organised mass contingent of our national liberation struggle. The mass democratic movement, together with the vanguard liberation alliance, constitute the **front of**

revolutionary forces.

At the same time, more and more forces which do not belong to the vanguard and mass democratic movements, are increasingly Identifying with some of their democratic objectives. These forces must find a place in the broader anti-apartheid front. There can be no valid 'revolutionary' reason for excluding from such a broad front any grouping which supports and is prepared to act for the attainment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa on the basis of one-person, one-vote. The crucial question is whether an alliance or a joint platform will help to weaken the main enemy and advance the people's cause. As long as the revolutionary core does not abandon its independent role and does not dilute its own fundamental objectives, there is no danger whatsoever in acting with such broader **forces for change.**

South African Communists always strive for the strengthening of the revolutionary front for national liberation, the continuous building of a coalition of anti-apartheid forces, and the unity of Communists and non-Communists in the struggle for national democracy.

6. The Path to Power in the National Democratic Revolution

The path to power lies with our masses. In recent years they have shown their immense resilience and strength. Nothing which the enemy has unleashed against the oppressed or their organisations has broken their morale or dampened their combative spirit. **The harnessing of this mass political energy and the realisation of its enormous potential continues to be the dominant task of the liberation vanguard.** It is a task which requires the firm rooting of the underground, consisting of political and military formations under political leadership, and the strengthening of all organs of the mass democratic movement. The prospects of a revolutionary advance are greater today than ever before in our history. The regime continues to face an all-round crisis which can only be resolved by a qualitative transformation of the whole economic, political, social and cultural system.

The people - headed by their revolutionary vanguard - advance on the road to liberation with a rich and varied tradition of struggle, both armed and unarmed. The tribally-based armed resistance to the colonial forces went on for centuries until the defeat of Bambata and his guerrillas in the Nkandla forest in 1906. This signalled the end of a phase. The liberation organisations of our country, including our Party, were born in conditions when the core of the former resistance in the countryside had been destroyed and the new forces were not yet fully developed.

In these conditions it was imperative for the liberation organisations to pursue a strategy of militant but non-violent methods of struggle for many decades after their foundation. But, already in the late 50's, evidence was beginning to accumulate which called for a departure from this strategy.

All remaining possibilities of advancing the struggle through **exclusively** non-violent means were, one by one, being blocked. A growing number among the oppressed

sensed (perhaps sooner than some of their leaders) that a change had come about in the objective conditions of struggle. The strategy of non-violence and passive defiance were being questioned by more and more militants. Our working people, through their own experience, no longer saw much point in non-violent protest alone in the face of escalating state savagery and were beginning to show a readiness to accept the sacrifices involved in the new methods.

The slogan of 'non-violence' had thus become harmful to the cause of our revolution in the new phase of struggle. It disarmed the people in the face of the savage assaults of the oppressor and dampened their militancy. The movement was obliged to respond. The time was clearly ripe to combine mass political action with armed struggle.

A New Strategic Line

In response to this situation, our main strategic line in the struggle for people's power was radically reshaped in the middle of 1961. Joint measures were taken by the ANC and our Party to create MK as the armed wing of the liberation movement. Although there was no possibility of successfully challenging the enemy in armed combat, action could not be postponed. It became vital to demonstrate an organised alternative to unplanned and suicidal outbursts which were beginning to take place. It was also necessary to make an open break with the politics of non-violent protest which had dominated the strategy of the previous half-century and which had unavoidably bred an ideology of pacifism among many leaders of the liberation movement. That open break was symbolised by the national sabotage campaign launched on December 16th, 1961.

This new approach did not imply that all non-violent methods of struggle had now become useless or impossible. Nor did it imply a retreat from agitational, organisational and educational work among the masses. Our Party, it its 1962 Programme, continued to advocate the use of all forms of struggle by the people, including noncollaboration, strikes, boycotts and demonstrations. We also placed prime emphasis on the need to make underground structures and illegal work more effective, more efficient and more successful in reaching the masses of the people and evading repressive action by the authorities.

The adoption of armed struggle as an important part of the political struggle brought our movement into uncharted territory. We were unpractised in the art, techniques and skills of military organisation and combat, and lacked solid experience of clandestine work.

Apart from these subjective weaknesses we had to contend with a number of unique and complex objective difficulties. In contrast to armed liberation struggles in the rest of the African continent, some of the conditions in which we had to implement our new approach were particularly disadvantageous:

- South Africa's special form of colonial subjugation had withheld all military know-how from the subject peoples and prevented any black person from being in

possession or using any modern weapon or other instruments of war. Effective training could, therefore, only take place externally. The long-term escalation of armed activity depended, in the first place, on the return of trainees and a minimum of weaponry.

- In 87 per cent of the land there is no black peasantry and the rural working population is forced to live under conditions of the strictest control on the dispersed white farms. This reduces considerably the social bases which are needed for the survival, growth and manoeuvre of guerrilla and other combat formations in the rural areas.
- No effective rear base was available externally to facilitate the flow of either personnel or logistical material. South Africa was completely surrounded by a barrier of imperialist-controlled territories hostile to the liberation struggle, which deprived us of a friendly border.
- Our terrain lacks any extensive areas of classical guerrilla terrain.
- Most of the first crop of militants who went for training in the early 60's had been known activists from the legal period. This would make their return for political and military tasks especially problematic.
- The regime was in command of a highly centralised state apparatus, including well-organised instruments of repression, powerful and highly mobile armed forces and a sophisticated communications network, anchored on a powerful economic base.

Despite these complexities and disadvantages, history left us with no option but to engage in armed action as a necessary part of the political struggle. It was a moment in which (to use Lenin's words) 'untimely inaction would have been worse than untimely action'.

Thus, we had to venture forth even at the expense of risking a degree of disorganisation. We could not refuse to fight. We had to learn how to do so. And, in many respects, we had to learn on the ground, in the hard school of revolutionary practice. In the process, a combination of inexperience, lapses in security and breaches of conspiracy rules, enabled the enemy to deal massive blows against the whole underground. Party heroes were among those who made enormous sacrifices in their courageous attempt to keep the underground going and to carry on with armed activities.

Despite these efforts, within a few years of the enemy's Rivonia breakthrough, the underground ceased to exist in any organised form. Leading ANC and Party cadres who were abroad on political and military missions reconstituted themselves as leadership collectives and, over time, took steps to help re-establish the movement's internal presence.

The task of rebuilding the shattered internal structures and rekindling the fire of organised struggle proved to be long and arduous. Undaunted by long spells in the

enemy's gaols, many ANC and Party veterans attempted to organise political life, immediately on being released. In addition, in the late 60s, the Party's external leadership organised propaganda units to spread the message of the movement once again. Leaflet bombs, street broadcasts, internal cyclostyled journals, made an appearance at a time when signs of political life were at their lowest. Many of the brave Party activists who pioneered this work were arrested, tortured, imprisoned and murdered.

But in general, for some years after Rivonia, a demoralising silence had descended upon the political arena. There could, however, be no retreat from the decision to combine armed with non-armed activity; indeed, the massive onslaught on all expressions of black resistance underlined even further the inadequacy of a policy which did not include preparation for armed activity. The hundreds of ANC and Party cadres who had been sent abroad for training were, by 1965, both ready and anxious to go back home to pursue the liberation movement's politico-military objectives.

The unending attempts to advance these objectives in the next decade or more met with major difficulties. The pre-Rivonia political base made possible the launching of armed activities. With its destruction such activities could neither be sustained nor raised to a higher level. It was considered that armed activity was essential in order to help recreate the very conditions in which political structures could be developed. At the same time, without such political foundations, armed activity itself could not advance beyond a certain point. We were thus forced to find ways of hitting the enemy at a time of relative weakness in the area of internal political organisation. Armed actions would play a role in helping to create the conditions which would enable us to remedy this weakness.

But in trying to carry this out, there developed a tendency to focus too exclusively on military activities. We did not always pay sufficient attention or devote the necessary resources to political work itself.

We acted as if armed activity would somehow, on its own, spontaneously generate political organisation and mobilisation. And it took some time before attention was given to the balance between these two aspects of our struggle.

These tendencies grew during the many years of relative political lull when armed blows seemed to be the only way of keeping the embers of resistance alive. Even when attention began to be paid to the direct task of building the underground and spreading agitational and educational propaganda, the process was, at times, infected with a lack of co-ordination between the political and military structures. This undoubtedly held back both the political and military objectives of our struggle.

Despite unending efforts it was not until the post-Soweto (1976) period that it became possible to successfully deploy armed combat groups whose activities have grown from year to year. There were some failures and weaknesses. But the unbroken efforts which the movement was seen to be making to challenge the enemy, even during the darker moments, made an indelible impact on the people.

The prestige of MK grew. It came increasingly to be accepted as the fighting organ of the oppressed who were stimulated by the spirit of 'no surrender' and militant heroism of its cadres. Above all, the potential demonstrated through MK's armed challenge helped, more than any other factor, to overcome the feeling of impotence in the face of a powerful foe which had, for so long, monopolised all the modern instruments of force. Armed actions helped considerably to create the atmosphere for political rejuvenation. The serious crisis facing our ruling class is, in no small measure, due to the impact of a strategy which included organised revolutionary violence. On the other hand it is the popular mass actions, started with the student and worker actions of the late 1 960s and early 1 970s, which helped to lay the basis for the introduction of sustained armed combat actions.

Our Approach to Armed Struggle

What then is our approach to armed struggle in the current phase?

The military strategy of the liberation alliance has to take into account the concrete objective conditions prevailing in South Africa. We referred to a number of difficulties which we had to contend with when we embarked on the course of armed struggle. These difficulties and many others continue to face us: the lack of an extensive area of classical guerrilla terrain; the absence of a black peasantry in most of the countryside; the separation of residential areas between whites and blacks; the lack of friendly borders; the great mobility and firepower of the enemy; an army whose main contingent benefits from the system of colonial oppression; and imperialist support to the South African regime. In addition, over the past two decades, the South African regime, drawing on an advanced capitalist base, has greatly increased its military capacity, refining its counter-insurgency strategies.

However, the people and their vanguard liberation movement possess many strategic advantages for the conduct of armed struggle.

- The oppressed people, the social base upon which the armed struggle depends, enjoy both numerical and moral superiority over the enemy. We are fighting a just war which is uniquely supported by the international community.
- Though it commands huge resources, the colonial regime is situated within the theatre of struggle. While this might make the enemy more recalcitrant, at the same time popular actions directly affect the base from which it operates.
- The six-million strong army of black workers occupies a position within the economy which gives it the potential to deal strategic military blows to the entire system. The sophistication and complexity of the economic base and infrastructure of apartheid make them extremely vulnerable to sabotage and other actions.
- The people have a high level of political consciousness as well as a rich tradition of militant struggles - in both town and countryside - which, from time to time, flare

up into partial uprisings. They are led by a vanguard liberation movement armed with rich experience and a grasp of revolutionary theory.

- The increasing reliance of the regime's army and police on recruits from the black community, especially in the bantustans, provides better possibilities for us to undermine the racist state machinery from within.
- Increasing international isolation of apartheid South Africa helps to weaken the economic and social base of the regime.

Given the enemy's military strength, we have to conduct a continuous armed struggle which progressively saps the enemy's strength over a relatively protracted period. **But, given the objective difficulties mentioned above, ours cannot be a classical guerrilla-type war primarily based on the winning, over time, of more and more liberated territory. Nor are there immediate prospects of inflicting an all-round military defeat on the enemy.** Our armed struggle has to rely, above all, on the people in active struggle. The working class, in particular, possesses vast possibilities to take the war to the nerve-centres of apartheid colonialism. In mass action, the people create the conditions in which the armed struggle can be grounded. It is in these conditions that guerrillas can better survive, operate and work among the people. The popular uprisings have, from time to time, led to the emergence of mass revolutionary bases in numerous townships and villages, a reliable and secure terrain for the operation of combatants.

In many current upheavals the people make heroic efforts to engage the enemy using rudimentary weapons. Street battles and barricades take shape where mass confrontation with the enemy becomes acute. At their initiative, the youth and other sectors set up Self Defence Units and combat groups. This creates the basis for the revolutionary movement to raise mass revolt to higher forms of insurrectionary activity, by popularising the skills of armed combat and giving all-round leadership and direction to the popular combat formations. In carrying out this task, particular attention should be paid to the formation and operation of combat groups in the industrial centres and on white-owned farms.

In the rural areas, the growing mood of defiance and opposition, particularly in the bantustans, provides the soil for the creation and operation of rural combat formations. This popular ferment, and the relative weakness of the enemy in some rural areas, also hold out the possibility for the survival and operation of guerrilla-type formations. However, even in these areas, armed activity should be closely linked to, and progressively merge with, mass activity.

All the forces engaged in physical confrontation and in armed combat against the enemy constitute the revolutionary army of our people. The core of this army is Umkhonto we Sizwe, operating in both urban and rural areas. This core must draw in the most active contingents of the people, who are ready to take up arms. It is a vital and ongoing task of the liberation alliance to strengthen and engage all layers of the revolutionary army in action. Crucial to the fulfilment of this task is the development of

underground structures in all areas and among all sectors of our people.

Relationship Between Military and Other Forms of Political Struggle.

Our approach to the relationship between military and other forms of political struggle is guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the experience of other revolutionary struggles and, above all, our own concrete realities. We Communists believe that the struggle must always be given forms appropriate to the concrete political situation. It is this situation which determines whether the revolutionary transformation can be achieved by military or non-military struggle or by a blend of both. A decision to include combat activity as part of the political struggle does not, in itself, imply that the military struggle has become primary or that the route to victory will be only through the barrel of a gun.

Organised combat activity undoubtedly continues to be an essential ingredient of our political strategy for revolutionary transformation. The racist state was founded on violence and survives on violence and terror. It will not be destroyed or give way without an all-round revolutionary assault. A combination of growing political upsurge and escalating armed struggle is clearly vital in order to help create conditions in which People's Power can be won. Organised armed activity continues to be one of the most important factors in helping to deepen the regime's crisis.

But, as emphasised by the ANC's Kabwe conference in 1985, **without a well-organised underground linked to mass political revolutionary bases throughout the country, in both rural and urban areas, armed activities cannot grow significantly either in scale or quality. A mass movement organised at both national and local levels, guided by an internal underground political leadership with structures in all the major localities, and at the point of production, is a precondition for the raising of the armed struggle to new heights.** This does not imply that armed action against the enemy should be postponed until we have achieved a higher level of organisation.**The balance between political and military activities must reflect itself at all levels of our planning and in the way we use our energies and resources.** The need for specialised organs of struggle should not be allowed to undermine political leadership of all aspects of the struggle. **Organised combat activity must be primarily guided by the needs of the political struggle. It must be designed to weaken the enemy's gnp on the reins of power and to reinforce political mobilisation, organisation and resistance.**

Seizure of Power

The situation has within it the potential for a relatively rapid emergence of conditions which make possible seizure of power. We cannot, however, be dogmatic about the exact moment and form of such a breakthrough. Conditions for a revolutionary transition will only emerge through a combination and interplay of objective conditions and subjective factors. In other words, it will depend not only upon what we do but also upon what the enemy does, not only on our strength but upon the

enemy's weakness.

At the subjective level the key element is the build-up of nationwide popular ferment, resistance, all levels of organisation and the presence of people's combat formations. At the objective level it is a weakening of the enemy by circumstances such as radical deterioration in the economy, intensified external measures against race rule, massive vacillations and divisions within the ranks of the power bloc, self-wounding enemy initiatives, and so on. When both subjective and objective elements converge, when mass activity is at its height and divisions and vacillations in the ranks of the enemy are at their strongest, the consequent crisis will signal the possibility of a revolutionary transformation.

But the development of a crisis, however deep, will not, in itself lead to an enemy collapse and a people's victory. The seizure of power will only be assured if the revolutionary movement has already effectively prepared the necessary political and organisational forces with the capacity to launch an offensive for the seizure of power at the right moment. **This at once poses the question of our approach to insurrection as a likely path to people's power.**

An insurrection unlike a coup, is a mass revolutionary upsurge of the people in conditions which hold out the possibility of a seizure of power. It does not lend itself to blue-printing in the same way as a coup does. The call for an insurrection can only be placed on the immediate agenda of struggle if, and when, a specific revolutionary moment has emerged. However, the task of making adequate preparations for a possible insurrectionary 'moment' needs attention even during the phase when it is not yet imminent.

An insurrection is an act of **revolutionary force**. But, it is not always an **armed** uprising. An all-round civil uprising could lead to an insurrection even when the armed factor is absent or secondary. History has seen successful insurrections of both types. Historical experiences are instructive but cannot provide us with an exact model. At the end of the day we have to find our own way. **In what sense then can we talk of an insurrection as a possible path to power?**

The crisis facing our ruling class will be aggravated still further by a combination of mass upsurge, in which working class action at the point of production will play a key role, mass defiance, escalating revolutionary combat activity, intensified international pressure, a situation of ungovernability, a deteriorating economy and growing demoralisation, division, vacillation and confusion within the power bloc.

When all these elements converge in a sufficient measure, the immediate possibility of an insurrectionary breakthrough will present itself. **Such a situation will, of course, not simply ripen on its own; its fruition depends, in the first place, on the work of the revolutionary movement**. But we must also be prepared for a relatively sudden transformation of the situation. In the conditions of deepening crisis, 'events triggered off by the tiniest conflicts, seemingly remote from the real breeding-ground of revolution', can, overnight, grow into a revolutionary turning point (Lenin). The regime's

grip on its reins of power could be swiftly weakened and the stage set for a sustained national uprising leading to an insurrectionary seizure of power.

The subjective forces - both political and military - must be built up so that when these seeds of revolution begin to germinate, the vanguard will be able to seize the historic moment. **In this sense, all-round mass action, merging with organised and armed activity, led by a well-organised underground, and international pressure,** are the keys to the build-up for the seizure of power. **Seizure of power will be a product of escalating and progressive merging mass political and military struggle with the likelihood of culminating in an insurrection.**

The revolutionary movement must place itself in the best position to plan for, and to lead, an insurrection at the right moment. This means, among other things, paying special attention to building factory, urban and rurally-based combat groups, popularising insurrectionary methods among the masses and winning over elements from the enemy's armed forces. The partial uprisings which have become a feature of our mass struggles must also be seen as a school for the accumulation of insurrectionary experience. The organisation of the industrial working class is of major importance; protracted national strikes and other industrial activity at the point of production will be a vital factor in the maturing of the 'revolutionary moment'. Above all, a political vanguard is needed to plan for, and lead, the insurrectionary assault at the crucial stage.

Prospects of a Negotiated Transfer of Power

There is no conflict between this insurrectionary perspective and the possibility of a negotiated transfer of power. There should be no confusion of the strategy needed to help create the conditions for the winning of power with the exact form of the ultimate breakthrough.

Armed struggle cannot be counterposed with dialogue, negotiation and justifiable compromise, as if they were mutually exclusive categories. Liberation struggles have rarely ended with the unconditional surrender of the enemy's military forces. Every such struggle in our continent has had its climax at the negotiating table, occasionally involving compromises judged to be in the interests of revolutionary advance. But whether there is an armed seizure of power or negotiated settlement, what is indisputable to both is the development of the political and military forces of the revolution.

We should be on our guard against the clear objective of our ruling class and their imperialist allies who see negotiation as a way of pre-empting a revolutionary transformation. The imperialists seek their own kind of transformation which goes beyond the reform limits of the present regime but which will, at the same time frustrate the basic objectives of the struggling masses. **And they hope to achieve this by pushing the liberation movement into negotiation before it is strong enough to back its basic demands with sufficient power on the ground.**

Whatever prospects may arise in the future for a negotiated transition, they must not be allowed to infect the purpose and content of our present strategic approaches. **We are not engaged in a struggle whose objective is merely to generate sufficient pressure to bring the other side to the negotiating table**. If, as a result of a generalised crisis and a heightened revolutionary upsurge, the point should ever be reached when the enemy is prepared to talk, the liberation forces will, **at that point,** have to exercise their judgment, guided by the demands of revolutionary advance. But until then its sights must be clearly set on the perspectives of a seizure of power.

The Enemy Armed Forces

It is unlikely that the enemy forces will, within any foreseeable future, come over in large numbers to the side of the people. The possibility of the army playing an **autonomous role** and attempting to impose an open military dictatorship to counter a revolutionary upheaval cannot be ruled out.

But these are not the only possible or inevitable options. There are a number of other factors which could also have an important bearing on the precise role of the enemy's military at the crucial historic moment in the future. This applies particularly to its black contingents. The black component of the enemy's army and police force and those in the Bantustans grows bigger. It is a component which can, at the right moment, be won over to the side of their fellow-oppressed countrymen and women. The potential for making such an inroad is increasing.

The SADF is predominantly a conscript army. As a whole they represent the class and social composition of the dominant group. The conflict and its outcome is vitally bound up with their personal class and community connections. The army can hardly fail to reflect all the stresses and contradictions which developed in society as a whole at the crucial moment of confrontation. At such a moment a lack of cohesion and consensus within the army about its responses to the revolutionary upsurge, could delay decisive action and provide more space for a breakthrough. The uncertainties could grow if the black component of the army, including its Bantustan contingents, turn towards the people. A significant minority among the white SADF might even be influenced to begin to accept the ultimate inevitability of majority rule and seek an accommodation with the revolutionary forces. Disaffection among the white middle strata, from which the bulk of the officer corps is drawn, is already at a high level. It is among these strata that resistance to the draft has grown impressively during the recent period.

The White Community and Armed Conflict

In touching on these future possibilities, it is necessary to stress that one of the key factors influencing the ultimate responses of the army will be the work of our revolutionary alliance and the way its perspectives are understood by the white group as a whole. The opening declaration of the Freedom Charter that 'South Africa belongs to all its people, black and white' must unconditionally continue to guide what we say

and do. It is necessary to intensify efforts to spread this message in the face of an unending enemy campaign of misinformation about our objectives of people's power. This message must also emerge from the nature of our organised combat actions and the targets selected.

This approach is, in no way, inconsistent with decisions to take combat activity more and more into the 'white areas'. This is an imperative for a number of reasons. The overwhelming bulk of the enemy's installations (including military and police bases and assembly points) are situated in these areas and all the key army and police personnel live there. Pressure on these areas will prevent the enemy from concentrating all its forces in the black ghettoes. it will also bring the reality of the conflict more sharply to those who constitute the regime's main political support base. Escalating action in these areas directed against legitimate, non-civilian targets, will serve to eat away at the cohesion of this support base rather than pushing it further into the racist laager.

The Masses are the Key

The insurrectionary potential of our oppressed masses is growing. **While the 'exact moment' of the seizure of power depends upon objective as well as subjective factors, there can be no doubt that what the masses do, led by the liberation alliance, influences the objective factors and hastens the arrival of that moment.** It is precisely this subjective factor which, in the last five years, has dramatically transformed the objective situation. The unique series of partial uprisings, the dramatic growth of the mass democratic movement, the emergence of giant trade union organisation, escalating armed actions and international mobilisation against the regime, are all interdependent processes which have changed the whole objective framework of struggle.

There is no aspect of the crisis facing the regime - whether it be the rapidly deteriorating economic situation or the divisions and vacillations within the power bloc - which has not got its primary roots in the soil of people's struggles. It is the all-round escalation of these struggles, combined with, and dependent upon, the consolidation and growth of mass and underground organisation, which will lead to the revolutionary breakthrough.

Our working class is the decisive force to bring about the collapse of racism and victory in the national democratic revolution as a stage towards building a socialist South Africa.

As always, we Communists, together with our brothers, sisters and comrades in the liberation alliance, will remain at our posts however long the road to victory. The perspective of a protracted struggle can never be abandoned. **But we are also convinced that the situation has within it the seeds of a sudden transformation.** We must prepare ourselves, and be ready. Our watch words are unity, organisation and struggle.

For a Democratic Victory and Advance to Socialism! Victory is Certain!