

MERCURY
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IN SORROW — AND ANGER

IF PEOPLE BELIEVE that Joe Slovo and the SACP appear determined to hammer the nails into the coffin of the new South Africa before it is even born, who is to say they are wrong?

Is there another conclusion to be drawn from this doctrinaire Marxist's categorical statement on SABC-TV that the ultimate economic aim for the new South Africa is communism?

And what of the acting head of the ANC's economics department's bland statement that if there is nationalisation, there is no guarantee of compensation for those whose enterprises are taken over?

We put these questions in sorrow — and in anger.

Sorrow because when, now 40 years of one fatally flawed philosophy are being discarded, those who stand to gain most are offered what the rest of the world has jettisoned as being equally flawed.

Anger because those same people are being ruthlessly brainwashed into believing that what has failed in the USSR and Eastern Europe — and in those parts of black Africa which so ardently embraced it — will somehow miraculously work here.

What has Joe Slovo got that Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Bulganin, Krushchev, Kosygin, Brezhnev, and Chernenko, plus puppet leaders of their straitjacketed satrapies like Castro, Honecker, Ceausescu and Mengistu, hadn't?

What they couldn't make work, this Lithuanian lawyer says he can!

Anger too because if the new South Africa is to function it desperately needs capital investment from overseas, investment it is hardly likely to get now when the Western world's eyes are on rebuilding Europe rather than throwing good money after bad into Africa.

Small wonder that Mr Henry Kenney, of the Wits Business School of Economics, who appeared on the same programme as Mr Slovo and Mr Tito Mboweni, was prompted to say that it was the 'prospects of plunder' which was attracting support for the ANC-SACP alliance!

All that is happening is a highly dangerous build-up of totally unrealistic hopes in the minds of millions who believe that what is euphemistically called 'the will of the people' will mean they can grab what they like when the time comes.

Naturally, in all this, it is only to be expected that people are asking which of these two organisations is the horse and which the rider, especially when Mr Nelson Mandela, his hopes of bringing peace to his own country in tatters, traipses round Europe and North Africa offering of all things to mediate in the Middle East crisis!

And when it is disclosed that the SACP still has 16 active but undeclared members within the ANC's national executive committee, which with the nine who openly acknowledge their SACP loyalties, means they have an overwhelming majority in the 33-member committee, there would appear to be little doubt who is running the show.

No, all Mr Slovo's and Mr Mboweni's hints of what's to come are likely to achieve are to turn off the financial money taps, swell the ranks of the Right and send hundreds more whites scurrying to set up their escape routes.

Plus, of course, cutting away more of the vital middle ground President de Klerk seized on February 2.

It is not a very attractive scenario.

But what really sticks in the craw is the way these people with their recipe for instant disaster appear to assume they are the only characters on the stage, and that when the time comes the Government will simply roll over, and hand over to them.

Thank goodness, theirs is not the only option — and the sooner that is brought home to them the better.

16/1/11

M. A. R. M. J.
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**Mandela not ready
to meet Buthelezi**

LUSAKA—Nelson Mandela said yesterday he was still not ready to meet Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The ANC deputy president said any meeting would 'be a serious mistake' at the present time.

'We can not meet a man who wants to see the blood of black people, that we can not do,' Mr Mandela told reporters on his arrival at Lusaka airport.

Today Mr Mandela is scheduled to attend a one-day summit of heads of the Frontline States bordering South Africa to discuss the

political situation.

In the past, Mr Mandela has blamed Dr Buthelezi for the violence that erupted on August 12 between Xhosas linked to the ANC and Zulus tied to the conservative Inkatha Movement.

Since then, at least 516 have died in vicious mob battles in the townships surrounding Johannesburg.

The two groups oppose South Africa's apartheid system of racial separation but are divided by leadership rivalry, tribal loyalty and differing visions of a future South Africa.

— (Sapa-AP)

Violence Grows in South Africa

By Michael Clough

When President Frederik W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela announced in Pretoria on Aug. 7 that they had reached an agreement to make it possible for South Africans to begin to negotiate a new constitutional order, the world cheered. "In South Africa: The Nightmare Ebbs," one U.S. newspaper said.

Three weeks later, with more than 500 people dead from factional fighting in black townships, another U.S. paper reminded its readers it had long argued that the end of white rule was likely to transform South Africa into another Lebanon.

Which view is correct? Is South Africa on the road to becoming a peaceful, democratic society? Or is it on the verge of a long and bloody civil war?

Given the ideological, socioeconomic and cultural diversity of black South Africa, it was inevitable that the end of apartheid would intensify political competition. What is troubling is that the competition is becoming so bitter and violent. There are several factors.

First, the creation of the apartheid system and the consequent struggle between those seeking to preserve it and those attempting to overthrow it has created an intolerant and violent political culture.

Ethnic and other class divisions were deliberately fostered by the architects of apartheid in order to divide blacks and justify their absurd claim that there was no such thing as a black majority in South Africa. By creating separate tribal homelands and co-opting local black authorities in the townships, successive National Party gov-

ernments spawned a group of black "insiders" whose power and privilege is now threatened by the imminent end of apartheid.

Moreover, by banning opposition parties and criminalizing normal political activity, the government enhanced the influence of those within the African National Congress and Pan-Africanist Congress who believed that armed struggle offered the only sure means of ending apartheid. In the late 1970s, thousands of black youths fled the country to join the guerrillas. In the 1980s, hundreds of thousands were brutalized by state authorities. In these circumstances, the violence we are now witnessing should not be surprising. Violent proclivities nurtured by more than two decades of repression and revolution cannot be changed overnight.

The most recent fighting has pitted supporters of Inkatha, a Zulu-based politico-cultural movement led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi that has recently declared its intention to become a national political party, in opposition to the ANC and its affiliates. Inkatha's Zulu base and the fact that Mandela and a number of other prominent ANC officials are Xhosas has given plausibility to claims that the recent violence has tribal roots. Such claims ignore four points:

— The ANC leadership and membership includes large numbers of Zulu and other non-Xhosa.

— Since 1986 the principle battleground in South Africa has been in Natal Province, where more than 90 percent of the black population is Zulu and almost all of the combatants and victims there have been Zulu.

— Only in the case of violence over the past few weeks in black

townships surrounding Johannesburg has fighting taken on an explicitly tribal character.

— Violence similar to that in Natal and the Transvaal has occurred in other parts of the country where there are few Zulu or Xhosa.

Tribalism is a source of conflict in South Africa only in that it has been used in some areas (and almost solely by Inkatha) to mobilize support.

What makes recent events so worrisome is that the violence in Natal has spread to the Transvaal. Most reports indicate that the initial fighting in the East Rand townships was initiated by Inkatha supporters, most of them migrant workers living in single-sex dormitories. ANC officials have charged that these attacks were deliberately planned as part of a campaign by Buthelezi to fight his way into the negotiations between Mandela and de Klerk. But these charges have not been documented.

In the storm of accusations, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the violence has been fueled by objective realities that go beyond the rivalry between Inkatha and the ANC.

In Natal, local Inkatha authorities, most of whom are older, less educated, more rural and more conservative, stand to lose a lot of power and privilege in the transition to a post-apartheid South Africa. It is not at all clear that they would follow orders from Buthelezi to call off their impis, or war parties, unless their own future positions were guaranteed. Buthelezi's desire for national recognition means little to them; their concerns are much more local.

In the East Rand townships the problem is primarily economic.

As more and more people flow into these areas in search of a dwindling supply of jobs, housing and basic service, tensions inevitably grow. Hostility develops between those already in urban areas and those newly arriving. Added to this equation is the fact that unemployment rates of 50 percent or more create a ready pool of militant recruits for all parties to the conflict. Political agreements that do nothing to address these underlying economic problems are not likely to have a lasting effect.

It is thus a mistake to expect, as Buthelezi is arguing, that a meeting between himself and Mandela will halt the spiraling violence. He is clearly worried that he will be shut out of negotiations and as a result be denied an important role in a post-apartheid South Africa. That is why he has insisted that Mandela meet with him and recognize his role in the anti-apartheid struggle. It is also clear that the ANC is resisting such a meeting because members would be just as happy to see Buthelezi left out in the cold.

What is the alternative? Buthelezi's supporters in the United States and elsewhere should encourage him to drop his parochial demands for personal recognition and prove he deserves a leadership role in a post-apartheid South Africa. He could act unilaterally to control his followers and defuse hostilities.

Finally, there is an urgent need to address some of the socioeconomic issues that will largely determine the prospects for stability and democracy in a post-apartheid South Africa.

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