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AN INTERVIEW WITH COMRADE OLIVER TAMBO- PRESIDENT  
OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA

Interviewer:

This evening we are with Comrade Oliver Tambo, President of the African National Congress of South Africa. Could you tell us Comrade Tambo, on this occasion, to what extent you feel that the African National Congress is active inside South Africa today?

Comrade O.R.

It is very active. And is indeed constantly active, although it has not always been possible to report fully on those activities. They have not always been obvious, because in South Africa, the African National Congress is an illegal organisation, it's banned, and therefore can't engage in overt political activity. But it achieves these, through its underground network, which works with and among the people. And there is a great deal of militant mass political action in the country, involving the workers, the youth in various mass organisations of the people. All this is guided, influenced by the African National Congress. In addition, the strategy of the African National Congress, embraces armed struggle. This has been our strategy since the early '60's- a strategy which was adopted by several other liberation movements on the African continent. And in this era, the African National Congress has been very effective, notwithstanding the considerable difficulties of operation, arising largely from the fact that for our armed struggle to grow and develop, it is necessary to have firm rear bases, provided by the States adjoining the country in which the struggle is being waged.

We are not quite in that position in South Africa. Our neighbours are comparatively weak at this stage, they are threatened by this fascist regime, which has demonstrated its ruthlessness by its constant bombings in Angola and has participated in bombings in Zambia and Mozambique; and which has given the Smith regime the capacity to attack and kill people in Botswana.



It is that kind of a regime, and its character therefore has made it difficult for African Independent States who would otherwise be providing the kind of rear bases which Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Angola had provided to Liberation Movements. Rear bases such as those provided by Guinea to PAIGC. Evidence of the activity of the African National Congress in South Africa is being provided of course very very recently, by a long trial of our cadres, members of Umkhonto we Sizwe, who were charged with High Treason, and were sentenced not so long ago, with one of them getting a death sentence while the others were sentenced to periods extending from 1 to 19 years. These trials are going on all the time, many of them secretly. Even this one was largely secret. But there are many others going on involving our cadres. There are many of our cadres who are active in the country, who are harrassing the enemy, attacking, striking. And it is the South African regime which frequently concedes the fact that the African National Congress has really become a serious threat to the survival of the regime. So that is a position as far as the activity of the African National Congress in South Africa is concerned.

Question;

People are of the opinion, at least some people, that South Africa's military power is so great that it will be impossible for the Liberation Movement like the African National Congress or even other supporters tackling (toppling) it. This is the kind of impression people seem to be having. Are you of the impression that the South African regime is invincible, this invincibility theory that the South African regime cultivates?

Comrade O.R.

Not at all. Infact any people who Qntertain this view of this military capacity of the South African regime, would be the first to admit that this is only a superficial impression. Because the history of liberation struggles shows that the decisive factor is not a military might of the oppressor regime at all.



It is the determination of the people to win their freedom. That is something about which military strength can do very little. We saw this demonstrated very dramatically in Vietnam. I mean Vietnam is a lesson that will endure for all generations. After all here was the United States, with all its might aimed against this small people. And they won, they really did. And all around the world we see great military powers like the Shah of Iran, suddenly being overthrown by the people who were barely armed really in comparison to the strength of the army. It was a modern army with most sophisticated weaponry. But that is no deterrent. And I think that this is simply because; when once people reach a stage when they are defiant of death, and it doesn't matter how many of them are killed (we are even witnessing this in Zimbabwe), it doesn't matter at all. If they are determined to win their freedom, they will.

And we in South Africa, must be. We started quite some time ago. We have marched abreast of all liberation movements all over the world. We have been demanding exactly the same thing. We have prepared to die for it and we have died for it in large numbers indeed. We have had our **massores**.

And as I say, persecution is the order of the day in South Africa, but it is no deterrent. This trial that I've referred to, which suddenly began - a trial of people who are alleged to be guilty of High Treason, is in fact a trial of people who have committed offences, if they are offences at all, which have been committed before. For many years it has been the same thing. But they have found that those trials have been no deterrent. They were charged with the Suppression of Communism Act, the Terrorism Act, and all sorts of acts. But it has been no deterrent.

And these trials are going on daily. Now they have introduced a new terminology - that these offences constitute High Treason. They are hoping that this is going to be a deterrent. And their own experience should tell them that it is not going to be a deterrent. The might of their army is no deterrent, it has been not.



And there is only one end result, and it is Victory for the people.

Question:

You mentioned the difficult conditions that the African National Congress finds itself in as far as the armed struggle against South Africa is concerned. Considering the weak nature of the countries around South Africa, and the aggressive nature of the South African regime itself; given that weakness, what do you think are the positive factors for the African National Congress regarding the political structure inside South Africa itself?

Comrade O.R.

Again, the relative, I should say temporary weakness of the states, is going to be done away with, by the rising tempo of the struggle in South Africa. Although these countries are militarily weak, and economically weaker than South Africa and sometimes dependent upon it, the governments and peoples of these countries support the struggle for liberation in South Africa unreservedly. This is an important fact. It means therefore that the time is very far away when South Africa can hope to recruit these countries onto its own side, against the liberation forces. What is going to happen is what happened in Zimbabwe, when the struggle against the Smith regime started.

One would have said that Botswana was comparatively weak. It had only just become independent. It had no army. But Botswana has grown with the rising tempo of the struggle in Zimbabwe, and has taken up positions, has even defended itself with arms against invasion and aggression by the Smith regime. This is what is going to happen. African countries and people in these countries, will rise up and support the struggle because they do support it now. Therefore this is a factor that we must take into account, that at present they are relatively weak and therefore to that extent our struggle is difficult. But how then do we proceed? For the moment we are developing our effective striking capacity



within South Africa. This depends on the mobilisation of the people around their numerous grievances against this regime. And the people are responding.

It is an astounding feeling that although there are many legal organisations in South Africa, and the African National Congress is the one which is illegal, yet the support for it, the African National Congress atmosphere, in the whole country, is very intense, which means that the people are gearing themselves to wage the struggle, whatever difficulties exist.

The fact that we might not have the kind of support we would like to have from neighbours, only means that to that extent we have got to make a lot of sacrifices. We are prepared for this. But as a result of these sacrifices, the struggle is going to rise, and as it rises, the support, international support, African support for our struggle will itself increase and manifest itself. So we are quite confident that this progress of the African revolution is unstoppable.

There may be what looks like a lull, but under cover of that lull, the forces of revolution are building up. And there is only one trend-- and it is towards the total victory against the forces of reaction, and even in South Africa.

Now having said that one must warn that we in South Africa are fighting not just a Botha regime or the Vorster regime before it, or just a white minority regime in South Africa.

Rooted in the soil of South Africa are the interests of the big western powers-- economic interests, interests of their global strategy. All these center around South Africa, meaning that the South African regime has a powerful ally in the combined might of the imperialist powers. And this is not theory, it is reality. To such an extent is it reality that even the problems of Zimbabwe and Namibia, but particularly Zimbabwe, are in fact caused by imperialism's concern about South Africa. And the struggle that is being waged so valiantly by the Zimbabwe people against Smith is a struggle in which the imperialist are involved and it is a struggle to win a strategic victory of tremendous importance for the whole region of Southern Africa.



And that is saying particularly, it is supposed to determine the outcome of the conflict of forces within South Africa. So that is part of our problem, and it has been part of the problem of the Zimbabwe people. The South African situation is in the interests that the imperialists have in South Africa. So it is never going to be easy for us, but imperialism is getting defeated. The just cause for which we fight, is increasingly winning the support of the whole of mankind, and with the people in South Africa rising and striking at their immediate enemy, complications are going to rise for imperialism resulting in the expulsion of the imperialists from our region, and the seizure of power by the people of Southern Africa, and their exercise of that power to build a new future for the people.

Question:

Comrade Tambo, you mentioned the inter-relationship between the situation in South Africa and Zimbabwe. To the extent that the imperialists are cooperating in Zimbabwe and South Africa; so we assume the progressives in Zimbabwe and South Africa also cooperate. And my question here is, what kind of a solution in Zimbabwe is then fitting for the struggle in South Africa?

Comrade O.R.

The best solution for the struggle in South Africa would ofcourse be if the Patriotic Front won a total victory, a victory which permits of no compromises which involve their surrender of some of their positions, that would have been the best. But failing that best, we have great confidence in the leadership of the Patriotic Front and we think that they have demonstrated this quality of leadership magnificently during the struggle- armed struggle- and now during these negotiations in London. We are confident that although the dice is heavily loaded against them, they have fought bravely. And I think they are reaching a position in which they will be able to continue the fight, and ensure that Zimbabwe falls under power of the people of Zimbabwe. And if that is achieved, (and this doesn't depend on who



is Prime Minister, it depends on the people of Zimbabwe). If Zimbabwe can said to be independent, even if not independent in the terms that the Patriotic Front would have wanted, but if it can be reasonably said to be independent, then that will be favourable to the development of the struggle in South Africa. An African independent State today- can hardly oppose the African trend, the trend in Africa, it can hardly avoid being a true and honest member of the Organisation of African Unity and in the Organisation of African Unity there is unity on this question. Although there are slight deviations, but by and large the OAU has supported these struggles. And countries who we thought had reason to be hesitant in their involvement with certain of the positions taken by the OAU, have in fact stood shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the continent; and support the positions favourable to the progress of the struggle in Africa.

Question:

But critics would say that there are some countries in Africa that are really offenders regarding trade with South Africa; and so on. How sure are you of this support from African countries? Certainly the service of the OAU is certain, but to what extent are you expecting serious support?

Comrade O.R.

I think that the support that the Organisation of African Unity collectively has given, has been very valuable. You know support for S.A.O and support for the Patriotic Front has been support for the African National Congress. Now there are ofcourse individual positions. There are countries which were born to/into economic relationship with South Africa which they could not shake off, and it would be a process before they were able to run themselves independently. We would have accepted this position. The African National Congress has accepted these positions. There are



There are ofcouse offenders, that's true, I think there are countries which have been carrying on surreptitiously but there are also examples of countries which, when they discovered that there were some companies in those countries who were trading with South Africa, have taken action against those companies. I am thinking for example of Nigeria. It has taken action to stop these things. I feel that on the whole, inspite of South Africa's claim, the evidence or the instances of OAU support for our struggle overrides any breaches of the resolutions of the Organisation of African Unity in regard to trade with South Africa.

Question:

Is it true Comrade Tambo, that the new government in the Central African Republic is interested in diplomatic ties with South Africa, as the South African radio seem to have said at the time when David Dacko took power, or what evidence to you have of this?

Comrade O.R.

Well he was reported to have made that statement. But then he said he had been mis-reported and that, that was not his position. That was the last I heard of it. We were of- course shocked that any one assuming the position of leadership of an African country would begin by annou- ncing that they would defy African positions on the question of relations with South Africa. We thought this was incredible, but shortly after that an announcement was made that he has been misquoted, that that was not his position.

Question:

When we look at the situation in Zimbabwe and see the level of unity within the two wings of the Patriotic Front, mea- ning Zapu and Zanu, and then relate it to the situation in South Africa, could you say that there could be a working alliance of interest or an alliance that could



go far between the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress, or do you feel that the issues that separate these two organisations are too difficult to handle?

Comrade O.R.

No. I don't think that at all. You know, you asked me at the beginning about the activities of the African National Congress in South Africa. Now I think if you asked any one else—what organisations are involved in the liberation struggle in South Africa, or which one, I think most of the people would say the African National Congress. From our point of view, this is not a problem at all; it just doesn't arise. Our pre-Occupation is the struggle in South Africa, the unity of the people in South Africa. We have that unity. People are united. And they are not divided over this question at all. Therefore it is not something that we see as an influence in the course of the struggle. Certainly not in all these years. It has not been a problem inside South Africa. The youth organisations, the Women Organisations, the workers, even the churches, just about any one you would like to name, are all really following the line of the African National Congress. There is no quarrell about this.

Now recently, the Chief of the Security in South Africa, was talking again about the African National Congress, which they do just about everyday. But he had reason to refer to the PAC. And he said, (it is not my words), he said 'The Pan Africanist Congress is a spent force'. Now he should know. He knows what his problems are there. And quite honestly, for years now, the South African government, the Head of the Security Police, the Minister of Police, the Minister of justice, all these people have been talking about the African National Congress, and the African National Congress only!



So I would suppose that the people who are members of the Pan Africanist Congress which there are in South Africa, themselves accept this united approach. And they see no differences at all. Nobody in South Africa is questioning the political line of the African National Congress. No one. Infact it is creating a lot of problems for the regime. So this question is a bit academic; for us who as I say, are pre-occupied with the problems of running the struggle inside South Africa; not arrangements which serve the ends of convenience, not that.

If the problem arose, and I think some people have been trying very hard to create it, I am sure that the African National Congress is mature enough to be able to handle that question. Because in the final analysis, the African National Congress was an act of unity of the oppressed in South Africa. We have developed this unity. We have brought in other ethnic groups in South Africa. We have encouraged white progressives and democrats to join in the struggle against the racist fascist regime. We are uniting the entire people-every class. And there are people there who already are in organisations which have their own programmes, they are legal organisations. Those programmes are not identical with the African National Congress. And some individuals are perhaps even critical of our political line, but we support all of them. We think that there is a basis for unity against general-stream- the revolutionary stream for the overthrowal of the fascist regime. I don't know when last this kind of question was raised with me, but its quite a long time outside here.

Question:

Now you mentioned inside the country. Does the existence of let's say the Pan Africanist Congress, create problems for your diplomatic activities outside the country?



Comrade O.R.

Not at all. No, we have not found that problem anywhere, not anywhere, not in any country.

Question:

Now you mentioned the fact that the African National Congress has included the different ethnic groups of South Africa. We understand from some reports that the Students were very vociferous during the 1976 Soweto Movement, and since then seem to have a racial in their minds- that is the Black versus the Whites type of attitude. Do you feel that the situation of race in South Africa has poisoned the minds of people to the extent that they are looking at it as a Black-White problem rather than a problem that affects all races, a problem that is a product of the system?

Comrade O.R.

Well there are degrees in which this tendency manifest itself. First of all the social structure, the economic structure, the political structure in the country emphasises this race consciousness. Anyway, you can't get away from it. You have to go and live in Soweto, not somewhere else, because you are black. All sorts of things happen

to you because you are Black, so you naturally are conscious of it. In the struggle, the Black people, say the Africans who are at the bottom of the rung really, are united among themselves by the fact that they are the most exploited. And that is a fact, and it tends to galvanise them as an entity. Then you have different levels.

What we call the Coloured People, then you have got the Indian people. But they are also Blacks. And there is a whole structure that divides the society in the country into the White and Black. So to that extent the Blacks are united.



But at the higher levels of the struggle when you are now actively engaged, (and this is the important thing; you are politically engaged, fighting) you have to determine who your enemy is. It's a starting point. What is your objective and who is the enemy that prevents you from achievements of that objective? Now it is in the definition of the enemy that the African National Congress finds all these to be allies regardless of race. But young people in their early days see the immediate enemy; the man who kicked them in the street, and who was white, the man who says make tea for me and you can't, they react to that. But they outgrow this, and there are many Y<sub>o</sub>uths in the African National Congress, in the country in South Africa; well clandestinely and everywhere else. We have come to accept that in the definition of the enemy, but this question of race begins to disappear because in practice these are your comrades in arms, they fight with you, they are opposed to the enemy and therefore they are not your enemies by reason of colour, they are your comrades.

So in South Africa, the youth started this way and we accepted that they had to start somewhere. I mean we were not there to tell them what it is all about, because we were banned. But they have come to learn, they have come

to understand the fact of the need for the unity of the oppressed and the exploited. It's still part of the South African reality. I mean the Blacks are still excluded, they are not part of South Africa. The land has been taken away from them. They are foreigners in that country. They have got a cause that binds them together as a force and we ourselves attach a lot of importance to this unity.

But it is not a unity that is racist in its character, it is political. It relates to considerations of strength in

fighting the enemy. So this problem is disappearing and an increasing number of Whites are opposing this regime. Even some of their soldiers are deserting, and they are identifying themselves with the positions of the ANC.



And this is influencing the youth as much as it is influencing the general trend throughout the country.

Question:

Comrade Tambo, the elements of the White establishment seem to have realised at this late stage, that due to economic reasons, Apartheid is illogical, this is from the economic standpoint; that the inclusion of the Black society in South Africa into the White main stream, may not be that bad after all. Now when they make a decision like this and this is something which we keep hearing in the press about, do you feel that it could hoodwink such elements of the Black population, to get a feeling that they are getting a better deal and hence no need for a revolution?

Comrade O.R.

Well that's rather an important point; because some circles of South African opinion have always argued that the reality of economics will destroy apartheid and therefore, the more they invest in South Africa, just developing the economy, the sooner will apartheid disappear. "Therefore that is really all that we need to do, all this armed struggle and other things are not necessary. Just leave it to the laws of economics." Well that's part of the story-economic necessity. And we have seen the South African government do a number of things like the detente dialogue in the early '70's. It was trying to solve the economic problem by creating markets, consumer markets in Africa. And leaving a vast population in South Africa which was not a consumer market, at all. Because in order for them to become consumer market, they had to break down apartheid barriers so as to increase their earning capacity.

But what is happening now is that the regime is getting encircled by the forces of progress, external and internal.



It's getting encircled, it's under great pressure, it's feeling weak. And this is a process. They're feeling weaker, and weaker and the tide is rising against it. And they begin to see an end to themselves not just to apartheid. Therefore, they have had to adopt new tactics to recruit from the revolutionary forces, from the oppressed, from the exploited, to pre-empt them, to give them a stake in the system- so that they can defend it; to build what they have never had in the history of the country-a Black bourgeoisie- to create this as a buffer between the revolutionary working class, the revolutionary forces of liberation and the regime itself; and therefore to make this their ally. Now in a number of things they are doing this. And it has nothing to do with economics. It's not pressure of economics at all. The economics, the exploiters and others of course, benefit from this in a way, because they are short of skilled labourer, and so on. And ultimately what the capitalists want is profits and if the Black man is willing to be exploited, well he will exploit him. But otherwise it doesn't really care for colour, in the final analysis. So they are benefiting. But the main motivation here is the political survival of white minority rule, the survival of the exploitative capitalist system, survival of apartheid itself. And they are doing this in a number of fields- economically, politically, they are creating these Bantustans and giving individual chiefs power, greater power than they had as traditional chiefs. Now they can surround themselves with cabinets and parliaments. They are recruiting for their army which has been taboo in South Africa, for decades, for nearly hundred years, they would never allow a Black man to handle a weapon let alone be part of the South African Defence Force. No matter what wars they were fighting. But the pressure of the armed struggle has compelled them to recruit these people and get them to fight in defence of the slave drivers. So it's a whole pattern of the victimisation as it were, of the South African situation. And that is its character, and there are numerous instances of this.



Question:

This is the trend as we were saying. Now is this how you would explain that?

Comrade O.R.

Yes. This is what is happening. They are doing this on a grand strategy. There is even this talk of a constellation of Southern African States. This is another strategy aimed against the African revolution, against the liberation movement. It's an attempt to invite many states and embroil them in the whole system of exploitation and oppression and get them to stay far from the struggle of the oppressed, the struggle of liberation in South Africa. It is a grand strategy which is supported by the Western powers although they would not say so because it is perhaps inpolitical to say that now. But they are behind it very much.

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## SOUTHERN AFRICA

# PLANNING FOR A PEOPLE'S WAR

Howard Barrell interviews the ANC's Oliver Tambo (right)

Harare

WHEN AFRICAN National Congress President Oliver Tambo repeated the slogan a third time, the 500 exiled South African ANC members packing the small hall in central Lusaka could be forgiven for fearing that they were to be subjected to a stream of rhetoric.

'La-lu-ta con-ti-nua' shouted Tambo yet again, dragging out each syllable. 'Continua', responded the faithful, fists in the air.

He, like the Blacks and the few whites of all ages sweating and singing in Lusaka's muggy summer heat a fortnight ago to celebrate the ANC's anniversary had to accept the fact that they and their forebears had struggled for 73 years and were still some way short of victory. Tambo told them as much. Indeed, as Tambo's former legal partner, the jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela, once put it, the road to South African freedom is 'no easy walk'.

One hopeful sign is the rising number of white South African journalists, academics and businessmen now either calling for talks between the government and the ANC, or making pilgrimages to the ANC external mission headquarters — down an obscure, littered alley in central Lusaka. One of President P.W. Botha's own MPs, Wynand Malan, is now among those calling publicly for talks with the ANC. He is from a new breed of Afrikaner nationalist, known as a *oorbeligte* — that is, one of the 'over-illuminated'.

Tambo told me in an interview in Lusaka that he sees this snowballing white response arising out of the realisation that 'the Botha government is fast running out of options'. The government's new constitution has failed miserably to attract black support. Far from the ANC being crushed by last year's Nkomati accord between the Botha government and Frelimo in Mozambique — the opposite has happened. Government attempts to keep the rapidly growing black union movement out of politics had failed. Late last year, South Africa witnessed unrest in black townships which Law and Order Minister Louis Le Grange characterised as more serious than the Soweto uprising of 1976. Apartheid's inequalities and the insatiable demands of 'security' were major causes of the country's worst economic crisis in 35 years.

'So, for the regime, things are getting out of hand, and the ANC remains intact. That is basically why these white voices have arisen', said Tambo.

OPTIMISM IS A REQUIREMENT of 73 years in the field. And Tambo does not lack it — thought this soft-spoken and thoughtful lawyer is not given to the normal extravagance of most evolutionary rhetoric. He does not doubt that those surrounding Botha (for whom the vision



Camera Press

'Botha is fast running out of options'

of South Africa's future is visible only down gun sights) will soon seek to reassert themselves — to halt this (premature) 'talk about talks' with the ANC.

Tambo rejected press reports that there had already been talks between the ANC and the South African government late last year. There had been no such talks, negotiations, contacts of any kind, he said. He laid down two broad conditions under which talks might occur: one, that Botha agree to negotiate over the 'modalities of putting an end to the system of apartheid' with the goal of a 'united democratic and non-racial South Africa'; two, that the ANC get a clear 'mandate' from its supporters inside the country to enter such talks.

The ANC, Tambo said, is now in the midst of preparations for a major consultative conference this year — the first since 1969. The dates and location are being kept secret in order to avoid a South African raid. Between 100 and 200 delegates are likely to attend. The major focus will fall on military strategy and the need to extend the ANC's underground activity inside South Africa, said Tambo.

Following the anti-ANC security pacts signed by the Botha government with Mozambique and Swaziland, the ANC must develop methods of sustaining and expanding political and guerrilla activity inside South Africa which depend to a lesser extent on transit through, and support from, neighbouring countries.

Tambo is confident that it can be done. 'We have never proceeded on the basis that we are going to rely on the ability of neighbouring states to support our struggle — invaluable as that support is. Armed struggle is coming on within South Africa. There is a lull now, but it is a short lull relatively. That is because arrangements are being made, organisation is taking place. And it is all going to develop within South Africa', said Tambo.

TAMBO INDICATED that guerrillas in the ANC's military wing, *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation), may not be required to exercise quite so much caution in future to avoid inflicting casualties on civilians. 'Over the past 23 years armed struggle has consisted largely of attacking economic and similar targets — of sabotage. Now and again, the

struggle has manifested a shift towards what are called 'soft targets'. The general preference for sabotage in the past is going to come under very serious review', he said.

But the ANC said in an official statement from Lusaka last week that whatever military escalation took place, ANC attacks would not be 'specifically directed at any civilians'. He expected that guerrillas would in future also 'combine armed struggle with political mass actions. We think the two belong together'.

He was unhappy with the way the ANC underground had been operating inside the country. 'We certainly don't think it has been working well'. He hoped that the conference would promote to more senior positions some of the thousands of young black men and women who have joined the ANC since the 1976 Soweto uprising. He came out clearly in favour of opening the ranks of the ANC's top administrative body — the national executive committee — to non-Africans for the first time. The conference would 'test opinion' on this issue.

Until now, a small though significant number of whites, Coloureds and Indians have served on other top ANC bodies with Africans — occasionally authorised to take decisions in the name of the executive. 'But we cannot mark time when we have grown to be the embryo of a future non-racial South Africa. We must move forward and reflect in our structures the kind of South Africa that we say we envisage', said Tambo. He thought it likely that the conference would endorse the political strategy set out at the last consultative meeting in Tanzania in 1969. This is based on the forging of political unity between all sections and classes of the black population (together with South Africa's few 'progressive whites') in a national liberation struggle in which a primary position is assigned to the black working class and its interests.

Left-wing pressure at the conference for greater emphasis on the role of the black working class could cause problems. The issue has been thrust to the fore in South Africa, where some of the major black unions have indicated a preference for 'non-involvement' with multi-class political groups. These 'independent worker' unions did, however, combine with multi-class organisations in a two-day general strike in the Transvaal last November, which brought South Africa's economic heartland to a virtual standstill.

But Tambo expected 'no problems' on this score. He pointed to the two-day strike as evidence of a 'very substantial shift on the part of the workers towards the acceptance of the view that they must be part of the popular mass struggle'.

'I think the conference will (decide) that the ANC must take steps to help in the organisation and mobilisation of the workers, not just in the cities but also among the unemployed and the farmworkers as part of the national liberation effort.'

What Tambo terms 'popular mass struggle' is one area where the ANC appears well pleased. He estimated — probably realistically — that the considerable amount of organisation inside the country over the past two years mobilising Blacks against the new constitution meant about 'two million' people were now involved in the struggle against apartheid in a reasonably active way.