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**SURVEY ON THE FRENCH POLITICAL
SITUATION
IN REGARD
TO THE ANTI APARTHEID SOLIDARITY**

Paris, juin 1989

This survey has been written by members of the Bureau of the MAA, in their individual capacities and has to be considered as such.

INTRODUCTION

After the sad events which occurred during the commemoration of Dulcie September's assassination, dire necessity compels us to examine the question of the urgency to develop a large and united anti-apartheid front. Whereas international popular consensus condemning a regime recognized guilty of committing a crime against humanity is becoming ever more important and powerful, the antagonisms between French organizations appear increasingly deep and hard. That people fighting against the same evil, devoted to the same fundamental values, undergoing similar campaigns, supporting the same legitimate representatives of the SA people's struggle, can resort to physical violence between themselves during a ceremony of mourning for an ANC dignitary.....proves the point of our progress on the road leading towards the absurdity of never-ceasing Franco-French political quarrels. What are the reasons of such an antagonism? Where does it come from? How can it be remedied? None of these questions can be answered without an analyse of the specificities of the general French political situation and its consequences for the state of things concerning anti-apartheid struggle in our country. In order to obtain the most accurate a description as possible, it will be of course necessary to break the barrier of silence and disinformation fostered by political parties and efficiently amplified by the medias.

Particularly worthy of note in France is first of all the situation of increasing infantilisation of the population, withdrawing from the public field the crucial problems affecting our lives and planet, to put them into the hands of a technical/economical/political elite. Hence our country,

contrary to most of our European neighbours, is not a good example for mobilization, and especially notorious for its habit to never take into account the feelings of the people "down below" towards state policy and the way the latter manages "his" affairs. By the way, we are in a good position to assert that concerning Human rights as well as our foreign policy, it's not because the French people are never consulted that they have nothing to say.

Since the last world war the French political scene has been dominated by four large parties who monopolize most of the "democratic" debate. With the steady losses suffered by the Communist Party (PCF) these past years, the only important transformation of the French political landscape, has been the trend towards a bipartite situation, unfortunately resembling more the American model than the English one.

This polarization on the state and the political parties originates also from a certain number of conjunctural specificities. As a matter of fact, the famous 1974 petrol crisis reinforced in the minds of our fellow-citizens, a feeling of insecurity prompting them to turn over to the state to solve their problems and conflicts. This political demobilization is encouraged by the struggle between the majority and the opposition as well as by the faction quarrels inside each of these groups. The existence of a "political class", with its rites and communication standards, regardless of ideological differences, maintains a complicity code which excludes "popular" participation. The disgust, expressed by a significant disinterest for politics, is particularly pronounced with the youth which were sarcastically referred to as belonging to the "Bof generation".

There developed a certain amount of fatalism, diminishing the stray revolutionnary impulses and the political "engagement", which lead the French people to become increasingly sceptical towards the main schemes for a "better world" as well as humanitarian campaigns. While the Cuban refugees were massing to reach the American coasts, the invasion of Afghanistan, approved by the PCF, hastened the burial of the Marxist eldorado myth. These facts encouraged people in their individualistic orientations. From now on, peace and liberty were values to be applied in the family; concretely without trying to make any long term plans. Since elsewhere things are worse than here and tomorrow, darker than today, let's live on a day to day basis and go on holiday.....in SA.

1) HISTORICAL "APERCU"

In the sixties, the mobilization against apartheid in France has been mostly the work of two organizations : the **Movement against racism, Antisemitism and for Peace (MRAP)** (which has changed the meaning of its acronym, some years after, to: **Movement against racism and for friendship between peoples**), which, as its acronym suggested and still suggests, has been struggling on issues encompassing the anti-apartheid struggle, which militated (and keeps on militating) on a lot of other fields, adjoining the anti-apartheid one. In particular, MRAP worked on the israelian/palestinian issue, on all the "immigration" and racism related issues.

The mobilization was also the work of the **Anti-Apartheid Committee (CAA)** which was created in the mid-sixties, to the initiative of different personalities such as Lawyer Jean-Jacques de Félice (of the **Human Rights League (LDH)**), Elizabeth Mathiot (known for her unrelented work on Israel/South Africa links), and with the support of Jean-Paul Sartre.

When the **Anti-Outspan Campaign (CAO)** -which was to become the **Anti-Apartheid Movement (MAA)**- had been launched, with the support of ANC, in 1975, the Anti-Apartheid Committee, which had become not much more than a secretariat publishing press releases, saw in it its legitimate successor. So, in the mid-seventies, the information and mobilization against apartheid was essentially done by the MRAP, of which the leadership was clearly aligned to the french Communist Party (PC). Later, a group of people, inside the leadership, has been trying to make disaligne MRAP from the PC and make it more independant, in relations to the french political forces, and they succeeded promoting some pro-socialist personalities at the top (as the Chairwoman, the lawyer George Pau-Langevin). This time, in the early eighties, there was a lot of tensions between MRAP and PC, especially regarding the israeli-palestinian question. MRAP was considered as too inclined in favour of Jews and Israel, not reliable in the eyes of the PC which created, through the personal involvement of its General Secretary, Georges Marchais, the **"Committee for Defense of Liberties and Human Rights"**. This launching has been perceived as a gesture of distrust towards their organization by MRAP membership.

In the middle of the seventies, there was also existing an **Anti-Apartheid Collective** composed of the leftwing parties and mass organizations, which were meeting occasionally to discuss of some possible commun initiatives. The so-called "leftist" organizations were excluded, at the exception of the **United Socialist Party (PSU)** which was, at this time, a pivot between "left" and "extreme-left". This Collectif has been, for example, organizing a demonstration against the 1974 Springboks match, a few days before it.

The launching of the CAO, with its stated intention to strive for mass and grassroots sensibilization and information work, has been the initiative of a ten of people who happened to be members, or sympathisers of the PSU, and who'd started to work on the project in the framework of a typical structure of the anti-imperialism activism of this period in France, the **Centre of anti-imperialism studies (Cedetim)**. This grouping of leftist intellectuals had been and was very active in solidarity mobilizations for peoples of Latin America, Northern Africa, Black Africa, or for imigrants workers in France, and was publishing a lot of liflets on all these peoples, countries and issues.

But the launching itself has been the work of a grouping of organizations, which had got together for this purpose, with notable absences of the PC, the PS (at this time inactive in the anti-apartheid solidarity struggle), the trade unions' federations CGT and CFDT, as well as MRAP. This one, after having refused to participate in the anti-outspan campaign and collaborate with the MAA-CAO, which it labelled a "leftist" ou "trotskiste" organization, indeed a pro-PAC or pro-Black Consiousness movement, has several times afterwards stated its

refusal to participate in several collectives of campaigns set up by the MAA, as a refusal based on a basic refusal to participate in any coalition supposed to work on on-going campaigns, not limited instances. (Looking at the subsequent MRAP participation in another coalitions, on other fields than the anti-apartheid one, one can think this "principle" was a very pragmatic one.)

The CAO member organizations which were also part of the Anti-Apartheid Collective asked for the admission of the CAO as such, which was refused by some other Collective's members. As a result, they withdrew from the Collective which was, *de facto*, dissolved.

1975 onwards, the mobilization was mainly the work of MRAP and MAA-CAO. A kind of emulative competition was taking place, on concrete issues, but without any form of cooperation, until 1979.

In 1975, a new organization has also been created, in the sphere of influence of the Communist Party: the **French Association for Friendship and Solidarity with Peoples of Africa (AFASPA)**, which can be characterised as a grouping of communist intellectuals wanting to give information, reflection and publications on Africa, colonialism, imperialism, development, policy of cooperation and all related issues. Some years afterwards, AFASPA started willing to play an active role in the anti-apartheid struggle, although its role couldn't be compared to MRAP or MAA's role, because of its size and nature (especially the fact that it has no relay in provinces).

It is through the impetus given by the director of the **United Nations' Information Office** in Paris, Mustapha Tlili, that MRAP, MAA and AFASPA started, in 1979, to cooperate in the framework of initiatives as for the October 11th Day of Solidarity, or for the 1980 campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela. This cooperation extended over such limits to become a privileged way of intervention, for all the three organizations, as far as solidarity against repression, hangings, etc. was concerned. The three have been initiating common demonstrations, all the other organizations being called to support (as, for example, campaigns to save James Mange, Solomon Mahlangu, in 1979-1980, Manana in 1982, etc.). The three have been encouraged in that way by Alexandre Moumbaris, when he was laying the foundations of the ANC Bureau in Paris, as well as by Neo Numzana, the first official representative of ANC in Paris (1982-1983).

The situation was to change a lot since the 1984/85 years, the last common demonstration organized up to now having taken place on the 1986 16th of June, in a deteriorated context. There is no more coordination, except on the sports anti-apartheid field where a collective is still existing, at least on paper, in 1989. The setting up of a front gets back to 1983. MAA had been vigorously campaigning against south african rugby teams' tours, especially the Springboks one which was on the cards. It had given priority to inform both sports' officials and journalists -completely framed by the complexity created by the regime- about the situation and, in particular, the struggle of non-racial sportsmen. It had invited several times Sma Ramsamy, Chairman of SAN-ROC, and introduced him to, amongst others, the **Labour Gymnic and Sports Federation (FSGT)**, closed to the Communist Party, and the **Physical education teachers' union (SNEP)** whose leadership was (and still is) closed to the PC. A close collaboration has been established between them and the MAA, et the FSGT in particular kept up its relationship with SAN-ROC and SACOS, to the extent of establishing permanent working relations with them.

It is by this way that it has been possible to gather FSGT and SNEP with MRAP, AFASPA and MAA, (and to years later, with the **Sports Commission of CGT and National Meeting Against Apartheid (RNCA)**) in order to organize the counter-attacks against initiatives of collaboration with apartheid sport. Unfortunately, the initiatives taken in that framework have been rather disappointing, mobilizationwise (as, for example, the one during the 1988

Roland-Garros Tennis tournament). The reason for this being, as we think, that unitarian mobilization was necessarily dependant on the more global plight of the relationships between french political forces.

The situation had considerably been modified following the conjunction of several factors which can be summarily sum up as following :

- The withdrawal of the three communist ministers from the government and the rupture of the Leftwing Union, laboriously re-settled following the victory of François Mitterrand in the 1981 presidential elections, and, afterwards, at different occasions offered by the electoral process (1986 legislative elections, 1988 presidential and legislative elections, and 1989 municipal elections in particular). From 1983 to 1988, the conflict between PC and PS had been more and more tense.

- The launching of RNCA, in 1984/85. Informed on the last minute and placed in front of a *fait accompli*, MAA refused to become a member of RNCA, which appeared, right from the beginning, to be the instrument of the PC's political will to drive and control the action against apartheid, by the way of an umbrella organization, supposed to go beyond the borders of the Communist movement. The launching of RNCA was also a gesture of distrust against MRAP, which did not enter it (it sent its sister organization, "**MRAP-Solidarity**"). With the help of AFASPA, RNCA imposed itself on the coordination troika between MRAP, AFASPA and MAA, as well as on coordination structures which were to be set up at european or international level.

- The appearance of SOS-Racism in 1984/85. This movement, launched by a group of young activists coming from "extreme-left" activism, in such structure as the trotskist **Revolutionary Communist League (LCR)**, and trying to find a new way to make politics following the collapse of the sixties' type of extreme-left militancy, had at once a tremendous impact on french youth, through ways of propaganda reflected and organized according to the mass media "logics": a logo (open hand, as for stoping aggressive people), a moto: "Don't touch my mate", and one objective: organize a free concert which would demonstrate the extent to which youth leaving in France was opposed to racism and "lepenism" (the extreme-right fascist **National Front (FN)** of Jean-Marie Le Pen). SOS-Racisme recorded a rush of would-be members, scattered in the provinces, and organized itself to last.

Intervening on the anti-racist field, SOS-Racism entered in a tense rivalry with older organizations working on it, such as MRAP and the Human Rights League (LDH). The conflict was not only of generations, but, adding arrogance to inexperience, supported by controversial personalities (some of them being anti-communists activists, such as the so-called "new philosopher" Bernard-Henri Levy), enjoying, from the very first concert (June 1985, La Concorde square) lots of support from the highest leaders of state, SOS-Racisme was to be seen, more and more, as an ally or worst: an instrument of the socialist party and, even more, the Elysée. Very soon, SOS-Racisme had become the *bête noire* of PC. Nevertheless, in the less politicized opinion, the movement has kept lots of sympathy and is having the mass medias' ears.

- The stalling of MRAP. All this happened as MRAP had entered a difficult period (of which it hasn't yet come out), following departures which left its anti-apartheid section without any experienced person in charge and official. It has lost its capacity of action in that area. The erosion of MRAP influence was to contribute to the growing polarization of the anti-apartheid action field, between the Communist movement at one pole, and MAA and all the non-communist or non-aligned forces at the other. All the more so since MAA had started working relations with SOS-Racisme which signed the "Charter for the complete isolation of the apartheid regime" (proposed, since 1983, by MAA), as well as the main Students trade union, **Indépendant and Democratic National Union of French Students (UNEF-ID)**.

UNEF-ID, SOS-Racisme and MAA gathered, at two different times on October 1985, thousands of students to oppose the hanging of Benjamin Moloïse (parallel demonstrations were organized by the **Youth Communist Movement (MJC)**).

In that context, thinking that it was urgent to take account all these changes, to reduce as far as possible the un-coordination and dispersal of lots of anti-apartheid initiatives, and to get the means to overcome the growing negative consequences of the political polarization, MAA suggested to enlarge the troïka, not only to RNCA, as already done, but to other organizations which could pretend to be part of it on the same feet than MRAP and AFASPA, namely LDH and SOS-Racisme. But this broadening of the coordination didn't take place, because of vetos from both the partners ; and the coordination faded away. (M. Tlili was to leave Paris a few years afterwards, et since then the UN Office in Paris has played no more active role in the mobilization against apartheid.)

Progressist and anti-apartheid french forces were more and more divided, right at the time the mass mobilization and uprising in South Africa was to provide a very big boost to the sensibilization of french public opinion. MAA's membership and impact has leapt forward. New anti-apartheid structures were created here and there, numerous uncoordinated initiatives started to be organized. MAA struggled to keep as far as possible control of SOS-Racisme initiatives and to coordinate rest, but fell short to get the support of the ANC representative, Dulcie September, in that attempts. Serious difficulties have arisen with organizations like **Frères des Hommes** (a third world NGO, coming from catholic origin), which exemplified the way french groupings were to intervene on the anti-apartheid field for their own profit (for their image as well as for the money made available by the ECC "positive measures" program) and in the complete ignorance of ANC. That's the way, in particular, "Free the children" campaign hadn't reached the level of mobilization and impact it could have did, despite the margest collective ever formed in France for such a campaign. The anti-apartheid struggle became a field for french forces (political forces especially but non exclusively) to exploit, in terms of membership and image.

Since South Africa has got high in the international political agenda, heavier pressures were applied on the government and the political forces, all the more so since apartheid became a french politics' issue -and, necessarily, a french internal policy issue. A few other factors were to contribute more spectacularly to the polarization and politicization of the south-african issue in France :

- The mesures decided by the Laurent Fabius government (july 1985), which was under heavy attack from the PC (which labelled it "hypocrisy").

- The arriving in force of the Communist Party, which, as such or through the Youth Communist Movement, had started a campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela, and initiated in 1986 one for the release of Pierre-André Albertini.

- Extreme-rightwing forces initiatives. The progress made by Le Pen's National Front and the entreme-right as a whole on the french political scene had given a room for references to South Africa and the apartheid regime in french polical debate. The so-called "information's tours", by extreme-right or rightwing MPs, organized by the National Front, and the statements they made on their return about the "disappeareance" of apartheid, made a big noise and aroused public opinion anger and press to protest.

In that context of overpoliticization and division between progressive french polical forces, all the efforts made to reach unity of action in the anti-apartheid struggle were a matter of the impossible attempt to solve political french divisions by the way or in the framework of the anti-apartheid struggle. As one of the very rare issues which were at the disposal of the

progressive political forces to put people on the streets, the anti-apartheid cause had become precisely a cause for divisions... The rare laboriously set up common initiatives, as for PW Botha's visits in France, were to fail, and to lead to cacophony and physical fightings, provoked by Communist people shouting anti-governemental slogans ("Botha murderer, Mitterrand accomplice" or the like).

All the more since ANC had appeared, through its representative in Paris, taking side in the french political conflict, explicitly boycotting the french MAA -labelled as an "anti-ANC" movement-, entertaining very distant relations with the PS and all the non-communist or even non-aligned forces, and developing close working relations with the Communist movement.

Conditions were laid down for pitiful incidents to take place during the funeral of Dulcie, as well as during the Memorial, one year after.

2) FRENCH POLITICAL FORCES AND ANTI APARTHEID SOLIDARITY

a) Communist Party

Although it did manage to put the opposition back into power after more than 20 years of right wing domination, the short-lived "left wing union" brought very different results for the two parties who decided to tactically join their forces. For the socialists this was the boost to become the largest party in France, whereas for the communists the union was just a necessary compromise in order to obtain political legitimation. As soon as it became clear that the primary benefits of this "entente" were going to a very "social-democratic" policy totally opposite to the PC's line, the latter walked out from the government scorning the PS for it's treachery.

However, being back in a downright opposition to both the PS and the Right wing parties did not induce a raise in popularity. To the contrary, each subsequent election illustrated a steady decrease of the percentage of communist votes. Paradoxically, the leadership refused to debate the reasons of this decline and stifled all attempts to question the Party line. A large number of top ranking members were forced to either abandon their desire to "renovate" the PC from the inside or simply resign. The alternative of creating a new party to the left of the PS, although occasionally popular, never managed to gather significant audience from either the disappointed electorate of the PC or the PS.

Partly because of it's diminishing influence on the institutional level, the PC decided to apply pressure on upholding its grassroots militant organizations and campaigns. Without questioning the sincerity and validity of its two major recent popular campaigns (disarmement and free Mandela) one can also analyze the strategic motives behind this militant highlighting. Firstly, by supporting popular demands which go beyond traditional political differences, this enables the PC to try to attract a much larger audience than the circle of it's sole communist militants. Also, in regard to its potential of manoeuvring beside the PS, making the anti-apartheid struggle one of their central themes allows them to appear in a much more comfortable position. No longer holding any governing responsibilities enables them able to adopt a very critical tone towards

the compromising Socialists. Hence, the PC can fully develop its rhetoric: the PC is the only truly left-wing party and proves this by its upright anti-apartheid struggle; the PS is not worth much more than the right-wing parties as it declares itself against apartheid but maintains its ties with SA.

On each of these fields of intervention, the PC promotes officially distinct organizations of which the leadership is in fact largely made up from Communist officials. As for the peace organization "Mouvement de la Paix", the name "Rencontres Nationales Contre l'Apartheid" illustrates their wish that these NGO's appear as gathering people without regard of political beliefs. Apart from the fact that the MAA had already been on the scene for more than fifteen years, this might be partly true on the grassroot level but it certainly doesn't alter actual situation of control exerted by the PC on the leadership of RNCA.

The main counter-effect of the massive and openly Communist involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle, is that it has greatly rebuffed the general public and even at times discredited anti-apartheid militants as a whole. To understand this one must keep in mind the especially pro-soviet attitude taken by the PCF in the past: approval of the Soviet invasions of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Afghanistan in 1981. Adding to this the role played by the medias who tend to adopt a particularly anti-Communist stand, it is not uncommon that the public opinion takes for granted that people advocating Mandela's liberation are presumably Communists with a remote possibility that they therefore be undercover KGB agents.

The fact that the anti-apartheid struggle in France is closely assimilated to the Communist party is even more discouraging for the public in general and the intelligentsia in particular, that the image of the USSR in our country is much more negative than in our European neighbours. (see P. Hassner; Western European perception of the USSR). Possibly reacting against their former too strong and blinding faith in Stalin's motherland, French intelligentsia turned round on their former idols. There followed a very strong polarization dividing the intellectuals into two groups viciously opposing each other: the Communist one fond on defending the value of "peace", and the others more concerned about "freedom" (in its liberal perception). All this makes it a very difficult task for the people engaged in anti-apartheid activities to transcend the opposition and divisions characterizing the French political scene.

b) Socialist Party

Certain general remarks concerning the PS particularities need to be underlined in order to comprehend its specific policy and attitudes regarding South Africa. A central aspect of this is that the PS does not benefit from a wide militant grassroots base as does for example the Communist Party. It is a party consisting mainly of professional political representatives where the absence of militant base is replaced by action on an institutional or media level. As such the PS attaches the utmost importance to opinion poll surveys rather than militant mobilization while stressing party policies through the use of official declarations and odd individual stands.

It is very difficult to analyze the PS without taking into account the government's policy because of the obvious ties between the latter and the governing party. However that does not mean that government and party policies are strictly identical. To prove this, one just needs to remember the distance that existed between Jospin's declaration in 81 and the stands taken later by Prime Minister Mauroy. More recently Mr Louis Le Pensec, PS National Secretary for foreign affairs, made a declaration demanding that the Chirac government "break off from its policy of complaisance and reenforce the sanctions taken in 1985.

As a whole the Socialist Party (PS) has never really adopted a clear stance towards the question of its relations with the RSA. Whether it was situated in the opposition or at the head of the French government, the PS has almost always been characterized by the absence of any official political platform concerning its policy towards Southern Africa. However, certain details illustrating the evolution of the party policies are necessary in order to have a clearer approach to this otherwise very muddled situation.

-In becoming the central figure of the PS, and more recently, in trying to position himself above the traditional left/right separation, Mitterand has certainly contributed to giving the Party a centrist steer. This meant that regarding French policy towards SA, as in other fields, the inclination

was to adopt "moderate" positions where negotiation was always considered better than sanctions and economic boycott.

-The first public engagement of support for economic pressure on the land of Apartheid occurred shortly after the 1981 general elections won by the PS. This took place at a conference organized by the United Nations where Jospin (PS National Secretary) expressed the party's solidarity with the liberation struggle led by the people of SA. However this declaration was very vague concerning its actual implications for the French government concerning limitation of economic relations and was not accompanied by any concrete measures of sanction.

-Since 1981 the PS policy has been to develop good relations with frontline states (especially Angola and Mozambique) whilst keeping the dialogue open with Pretoria. The government deemed itself invested with a mission to communicate or even to conciliate the frontline states with SA which meant that they should avoid getting tough with the latter. The Socialist aim was the stabilisation of southern Africa, by proposing an European Social-Democratic alternative to an area undermined by East/West tension. The PS maintains good political and economical relations to discourage Pretoria from continuing to destabilize its neighbours, find new markets for the industry and maintain a dialogue accompanied by simple political pressure. Botha's "reformist" policy may have given the Socialists the illusion that this policy was succesful. What is certain is that the PS deemed it sufficient to tighten its relations with countries opposing SA in order to be discharged of any accusation of compromising with the racist regime. Of course, by tightening its relations with the front line countries, France is acting to seize the new opportunity of political and economical intervention in regions like Angola, withholding on a long term an important commercial and industrial potential.

-Several stands taken by government officials from the Foreign Office show the unambiguous opposition of the PS to applying any type of sanctions towards economic relations. In 1981 through the voice of Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson, the government declared itself firmly opposed to boycotting SA: "France will honor all its political and commercial engagements". Whereby France delivered in July 1981 the second part of the Koeberg nuclear reactor, as well as enriched uranium in November of that same year. Foreign Office counselor Jean-François Lyonnois stated that,

"France would never follow those who plead for sanctions". In the same spirit Roland Dumas said "with regard to eventual sanctions, if the French government did not think it necessary to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly recommending economic embargo towards SA, this is because these measures would not be adapted to the specific needs of SA and furthermore that they would not be of any real efficiency and that they might even be contrary to the goal intended."

-Hence, the sanctions imposed by Laurent Fabius in July 1985 came as a very big and sudden surprise in comparison with the discreet but unaltered relations maintained until then between France and SA. However this diplomatic change of policy did not seriously injure the pursuit of the concrete commercial collaboration.

-The defeat of the PS with the 1986 elections did not induce any noticeable change in their attitude. Although they were momentarily placed back into an opposed position, they remained reasonably confident that they would come back into office with the next elections. This factor added to the impression of neutrality that Mitterrand was successfully trying to attain, and encouraged them to adopt a moderate "responsible" potential government party attitude.

-Since 1986, the PS has more or less abandoned the field of the anti-apartheid struggle to the communists, realizing that they were in no position to compete with them on a subject which has been made into one of the main issues of the PCF's public campaign. Having no militant mobilization base to compete with the PC, the PS was incapable of developing significant political ties with the liberation movement representatives in France. This was aggravated by the absence of close working relations between ANC and the PS, partly because of Dulcie Septembers privileged relation with the Communist Party.

These general remarks about the PS should be tempered by the analysis of the different trends existing inside the Party. However, one needs to keep in mind the fact that certain of these ideological trends do not adopt significant positions toward SA policy which is therefore not always determinant towards party factions development. Furthermore, previous

ideological streams have evolved into competing presidential groups which are actually more centered around individuals than on political affiliations. This has meant that the policies these different groups take are generally motivated in the power play context of strategic options opposing competing officials to high ranking positions. The main evolution these last ten years has been a relative unification of socialist politicians behind their undisputed president-leader. This has meant the softening of formerly strong inner debate between the various representatives of these factions.

-When the MAA undertook the contacting of PS delegates running for office so that they take a clear stand in favor of sanctions only 15 candidates bothered to reply (5 from the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche). The reactions from those who did reply illustrate by their differences an absence of reflection inside the coalition. The only point on which they all agree is that of unconditional support for the Fabius government policy. J.Monier (Mayor of Angers), JP.Michel (70), R.Leborne (71), JP.Bequet (95), J.Laurains (51), G.Saumade (PS Federation of Herault) support MAA's stand to demand a vote for a law imposing sanctions. Michel Rocard (78), André Bellon (04), Alain Vivien, R. Le Foll and JP.Fourre (77) are representative of the more ambiguous position held by an important part of the PS, which is to appear largely sympathetic to the anti-apartheid cause without offering any concrete action to back-up their declarations. Most of the PS officials take side with Mauroy to advocate that "certain measures have already been adopted, and that international measures are more efficient" making reference to the restricted area of intervention of the head of government.

-Laurent Fabius appears, because of the sanctions he applied in the past, as an anti-apartheid figure among the PS. However, for those who have been waiting for signs of a follow-up in this field, his progressive aura is beginning to fade quite seriously.

-Chevènement, then Minister of Industry has been one of the top ranking PS officials to take public statements against economic sanctions. Defending the industrial contracts with SA made by French industries in Alsace, he advocated that the interests of the French population should be the primary concern, referring to the risk of unemployment in case of sanctions. This

appears to have been largely motivated by electoral reasons, as in other fields he represents a somewhat more radical ideological stream.

Much more straightforward were the attitudes taken by Jean-Pierre Cot and Claude Cheysson advocates of the Rocard stream. One of the reasons why JP Cot resigned from the Ministry of Development and Cooperation was his refusal to endorse the government's decision to undertake negotiations with SA concerning the renewal of a nuclear contract. Although Africa is not a privileged field of intervention for the Rocard stream they adopt an approach which appears more theoretical, global, thoughtful and finally more critical than others. This is most notable in their wish to reconsider French intervention in Africa away from the traditional former colony or French speaking terrain.

It is worthwhile to note the positive evolution of the PS towards the ANC. In these last years they have come to adopt a position of explicit formal support towards the ANC.

The trend which appears to be the most advanced in support of anti-apartheid struggle appears to be the group named "Socialisme et Republique". This group led by Chevènement, functioning inside the PS is very strongly present in most of the international appointments held by the socialists and the MJS (Mouvement des Jeunes Socialistes). Through the MJS, the MAA maintains very good contacts with this branch of the PS which has kept the strongest ideological values concerning human rights and other fields. Being the ideological backbone of the PS also makes these people the closest group to the Communist Party.

-Finally, there is also the parliamentary group established by the PS and led by J-M. Bockel called "Groupe d'Etude sur l'apartheid et l'Afrique du Sud" designed for action in favour of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Although these MP's generally only act as a doorway for communication with the French government as they are hardly up to date or well informed about the SA issue, they are basically very sympathetic. It might prove very useful for the ANC to develop a direct and close contact with these people who could come in handy for applying pressure on French government officials concerning certain specific issues. Our personal experience is that state officials are more likely to react when questioned directly by delegates of their own party. This MP study group has allowed the MAA to get answers (even if these were generally negative) from high ranking officials in the past. ANC collaboration would undoubtedly facilitate and strengthen the expression of an anti-apartheid lobby with Socialist government.

c) Religious organisations -

In France, churches have generally demonstrated a cautious or even wary attitude towards the South-African issue. Compared to some of the other churches in occidental countries their stands remain very timid, revealing a great deal of contradictions and strategic considerations involving church and SA. It seems as though they haven't yet fully grasped the importance of the part they could and should play in a struggle against a regime which declares itself "christian".

These general remarks have to be tempered by the traditional protestant/catholic opposition, which introduces a great deal of differences. The catholic church has been almost totally mute concerning the question of apartheid. There has never been a single official declaration emanating from the catholic hierarchy. The latter has actually gradually drifted towards right wing positions, particularly since the Lefevre affairs. This evolution tends to make Mgr Gaillot, with his very engaged and progressive views, look like a rather lonely and extremist character.

The only catholic organizations really active in this field are the CCFD (Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement) and the Commission Justice et Paix. Although it has always been very seriously engaged in the anti-apartheid struggle, recently the CCFD has been having problems undermining their work capacities. These problems originated from a very strong criticism campaign lead by right wing opinion groups, outraged by the fact that a catholic organization could dare offer active support to liberation movements undertaking armed struggle. This pressure put on the CCFD had a strong negative effect towards the decrease of the amount of donations which this NGO depended upon. Whereas, this budget decrease led the CCFD to limit its personnel which in return, accounts for a certain drop in activities these past years.

In order to convey a more thorough examination of the situation, It would of course be necessary to portray all the different components who indirectly participate in the anti-apartheid struggle in France. Regretfully this cannot be dealt at length in this brief and global presentation. Several key aspects must however be brought up.

-Apart from the Communist orientated CGT, trade unions have been very silent and discreet in their support of anti-apartheid action. The CFDT is very reluctant to get involved in this field other than by a direct communication channel with the black trade unions opposing the regime in SA. There are however some federations which show more upright engagement than others. This is especially true in the educational field, where student and teachers unions are engaged in active support for economic sanctions and boycott measures. The same holds for most sport federations and in particular the FSGT.

-The solidarity organizations from third world type NGO's to humanitarian groups are too numerous and varied for laying down general characteristics. A few of them are involved in projects in SA. One can only say that most of them have only just recently become involved with anti-apartheid campaigns and solidarity projects concerning SA. One has therefore to sort out to what extent for some their engagement on an increasingly popular theme does not hide a desire to seek self-benefits for reputation or credibility. Another difficulty is in dealing with the different perception that many solidarity organizations have of their role in SA as in any situation of human suffering. Not all these realize the necessity of tying their action designed to help people from within with active involvement in isolating SA which implies pressing for sanctions at home.

-The pacifist and ecologists have generally been quite supportative of anti-apartheid action, accepting the ANC's decision to abandon solely non-violent strategies, due to their realization of the SA specificities. Of course, they focus their attention on opposition to conscription inside SA and action towards ceasing of military and nuclear collaboration. Considering the mounting importance of the Green Party on the French political scene this support can prove effective and enriching.

AN ATTEMPT TO CONCLUDE

-Concerning the MAA: The influence of the MAA suffers from liabilities inherited from the 84/88 period (polarisation of the french anti-apartheid political field and difficulties with ANC/MAA relations), which has not allowed it even in a favorable context, to impose itself as a rallying force of the anti-apartheid struggle beyond the group of non-communists forces. It's assets are nevertheless the legitimacy that it has acquired during 15 years of unrelaxing work, it's capability of coordinating work with a large spectrum of organizations, it's knowledge of the question, it's unique information and publication work.

In terms of purely autonomous forces the MAA accounts for several hundred members and a few dozen relay-groups in provincial cities. It appears that despite its unceasing activities, information, lobbying, campaigning and mobilisation, press releases and media interventions, the MAA is handicapped in its developement of mobilisation and campaigns on a national scale, due to the fact that it remains unsufficiently well known to the general public; because of this, the developement of its initiatives varies greatly from one town or region of France to the other.

Due to the difficulties existing in France of organizing and establishing independantly based and lasting anti-apartheid mobilization (among other things because there are always many other concerns expressed on matters perceived, rightly or not, as closer to the French, ie: Poland, Lebanon etc...), the MAA has always privileged the mobilization of organizations capable of relaying anti-apartheid action in their field of intervention: political organizations, humanitarian, anti-racist, religious, trade union, associative, etc , and has always centered its interventions towards establishing organization collectives or fronts, local and national, in the frame of specific campaigns.

Since the launching of the National Council in January 1989, the various partner organizations of these campaigns have integrated its direction, and face all aspects of the different solidarity struggle campaigns: against repression, in favor of isolation and sanctions, on all fields.

One of the MAA's major strength is also its principal weakness: its real independance and ideological non-alignment enables it to undergo long term work and campaigns, in relative independance in regard to the hazards of the French political situation, by regrouping a very large span of organizations; however it deprives the MAA, because of the French situation, the means to organize spectacular mass mobilization- that necessarily goes with political organization relay.

It will only be possible to exit this political dead end through the rise of a powerful and independant anti-apartheid movement. Which in turn can only be attained, in our minds, by an open cooperation between the ANC and the MAA, considering it be the only French organization to be both non-aligned and in charge of all long term aspects of anti-aprtheid solidarity work. For this it might be possible for the ANC to initiate on a practical level, that the MAA becomes its natural and privileged French partner.

-Importance of direct exchanges and contacts

The example of the spectacular change of position of Laurent Fabius, then Prime Minister, in July 1985, illustrates particularly well, how the progress that has been attained by certain French officials, towards a more acute perception of the true nature of the problems and stakes layed down by the apartheid regime, and of the urgent need for serious measures in favour of pressure and sanctions, has been entailed by crucial meetings with partners of the democratic movement from the inside.

Hence, the MAA beleives that the progress of anti-apartheid conscience and action in France can only be favored by a multiplication of this type of exchanges, visits and meetings, that play an irreplaceable role in the French context.

LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1975 MEMBERS OF Anti Outspan Campaign.: 14 organizations
-Amis de la terre-Artisans du monde-ASTI-CEDETIM-CIMADE-CSCV-FEANF-
Groupes 1% tiers monde-MAN-MAS-MCP-Redistribution impôts-Révolution
Afrique-UGTSF-

1982 NAMIBIA CAMPAIGN: 9 organizations
-Artisans du monde-CEDETIM-CFDT banques-CIMADE-CITIM-MDPL-SCI-SGEN CFDT-
UCODEP-

1987: 20 Organizations (+-ACAT-AAFT-CRIAA-CSCV-CIDAA-Frères des hommes-
GSI-MAN-MRJC-MCP-Peuples solidaires-SNI PEGC-SNESup-UNEF ID-Vie
nouvelle-/retired: -CFDT banques-CITIM-MDPL-UCODEP-)

1982 ISOLATE APARTHEID CHARTER: 36 organizations
-AAFM-AFT-AIDA-Les Amis de témoignage chrétien-Les amis de la terre-
ASCOFAM-CEDETIM-CFDT banques-CFDT caisses d'épargne-CIMADE-CSCV-Droits
socialistes de l'homme-Ecole et tiers monde-FASTI-Fédération Léo
Lagrange-FETRANI-FOL-Frères des hommes-GUPS-JCR-JOC-LCR-MAN-MCP-MDPL-
Mouvement gaulliste populaire-MRJC-MTI-PSU-SGEN CFDT-SNEP-UCODEP-UGTRF-
UGTSF-Les verts parti écologiste-

1983: 37 organizations(+LDH-)

1984: 39 organizations(+UNEF ID-SOS RACISME-)

1985: 41 organizations(+AFASPA-PCML-Union de résistance populaire
contre la réaction, le fascisme et la guerre-/ Retired: -UCODEP-)

1984 SCHOOL MATERIAL FOR SWAPO: 26 organizations
-AAFM-AFT-Artisans du monde-CAA-CEDETIM-CFDT Banques-CFDT caisses
d'épargne-CFDT enseignement privé-CIDAA-CIMADE-CITIM-CSCV-Ecole et tiers
monde-FEN-Frères des hommes-GSI-MAN-MCP-MRJC-Peuples solidaires-SCI-SGEN
CFDT-SNI-SNESup-UNEF-Vie nouvelle-

1986 TOTAL CAMPAIGN: 17 organizations
CEDETIM-CIMADE-CITIM-CRID-FEN-GSI-JCR-JOC-LDH-LCR-MAN-PSU-SOS racisme-
CFDT caisse d'épargne-CGT correcteurs-Terre des hommes-UNEF ID-
1987: 23 organizations (+-ASCOFAM-CRIAA-Frères des hommes-MCP-MRJC-
Peuples solidaires-SNI PEGC-SPUCE CFDT-/ retirés: -CITIM-JOC-CFDT caisse
d'épargne)
1988: 33 organizations (+-AGIR-FGA-GAS-JEC-MCS-MIR-PH-CGT Total-UDB-
UTCL-)

1987 CHILDREN CAMPAIGN: 35 ORGANIZATIONS
-ACAT-AFASPA-CCFD-CEDETIM-CFDT FEP-CFDT Justice-CIMADE-CNAL-DEFAP-Ecl.
de France-Ecl.Un. de France-Ecole et tiers monde-FCPE-FEP-Fédération Léo
Lagrange-FASTI-FDH-GAS-Justice et paix-JOC-JEC-LCR-MAN-MIJ-MODEFEN-
Mouv.Christ.social-PS-Syndicat magistrature-SOS racisme-SGEN CFDT-UNEF-
UNEF ID-UTCL-Vie nouvelle-

1989 MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL: 12 groupes
-CEDETIM-CRIAA-FEN-frères des hommes-JCR-MAN-MJS-Peuples solidaires-SNI
PEGC-Tere des hommes-UCJG-UNEF ID-

CLASSIFICATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

Due to the extreme politisation, complexity and diversity of ONG's acting directly or supporting the anti-apartheid struggle, two classifications can be established in order to try to attain a clearer view of the situation.

- 1° with regard to their nature or field of interest one can establish approximately eight distinct categories.
- 2° A more political approach enables to distinguish four categories in function of ideological or personal ties.

CLASSIFICATION BY FIELD OF INTEREST

- 1° POLITICAL PARTIES OR GROUPS
 - a) political parties: LO, MPTT, MRG, PC, PS, PSU.
 - b) political youth organizations : JC, JCR, MJS.
- 2° TRADE UNIONS
 - a) Labor union confederations: CFDT, CGT, FO.
 - b) Teachers unions: FEN, SNES, SGEN, SNI-PEGC.
 - c) Student and youth unions: FIDL, UNEF, UNEF-ID.
- 3° RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
 - a) Catholic: CCFD, CIMADE, JEC, JOC, MCS, MRJC.
 - b) Protestant: Fédération protestante de France, MCP, MIR.
 - c) Free Masson: Grand orient de France.
- 4° SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATIONS
 - a) Human rights: Amnesty International, FIDH, LDH.
 - b) Humanitarian: Medecins du monde, Secours populaire, Solidarité laïque.
 - c) Third-world: AGIR, Artisans du Monde, CEDETIM, Frères des hommes, Peuples solidaires, Terre des hommes.
- 5° ANTI-RACIST AND IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATIONS
 - a) Anti-racist: LICRA, MRAP, SOS racisme.
 - b) Immigrant: ASTI, France-plus, GAS.
- 6° ALTERNATIVES
 - a) Pacifists and non-violent: MAN, MDPL, MOC, SCI.
 - b) Ecology etc.: FGA, Parti humaniste, RJA, les Verts.

- 7° SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTHERN AFRICA
- a) Information, research and support centers: AFASPA, CAA, CRIAA.
 - b) Anti-apartheid: MAA, RNCA.

CLASSIFICATION BY POLITICAL TIES

- 1° CLOSE TO PC
- a) very close: CGT, JC, RNCA, UNEF.
 - b) close: AFASPA, MRAP, Secours populaire.
- 2° CLOSE TO PS
- a) very close: MJS, SOS racisme, UNEF-ID.
 - b) close: CFDT, FEN, LDH, SNI.
- 3° LEFTISTS
- a) Trotskyistes: JCR, LCR, LO.
 - b) others: CEDETIM, PSU, Nouvelle Gauche.
- 4° VARIOUS
- a) mixed influences and ties: FO, etc
 - b) Independent: MAA.