

IBULLETIN no.1.

LESSONS or THE MARCH DAYS.-

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_,The seventeen days that shook South Africa and, indeed,
_ the entire world from March 21st this year have forced an irrevocable
turn in the history of the country. For a brief but glorious moment
the nation's urban proletariat actively intervened in the destiny of
their affairs and ushered in a new period, rich in historical perspec-
tives and pregnant with political possibilities, for the democratic
movement. ' t' a

a , That the heroic protracted strike and militant demon-
strations - deliberately called 'riots' by ruling class circles and
democratic nannies alike - for higher wages and the abolition of the
pass laws were doomed to failure became indubitable as the dramatic
events of the March Days unfolded. It is true that the authority of the
state was overthrown in a number of locations. It is true that the
State was forced to retreat by suspending the pass laws. It is also
true that by withholding their labour power the workers rocked the
economy of the country. Yet nowhere did the workers seriously en-
croach upon the sovereignty of the State by setting up and expanding,
on a territorial basis, their own illegal 'sovereignty. There was,
in brief, no dual power which is the political essence of a revolu-
tionary situation. The State accordingly had the situation well in
hand and retreated for aetical reasons, to be sure, but made no concess-
ions which would certainly have been fraught with the greatest peril
to its existence, It appreciated the Machiaevellian warning : 'The
most dangerous moment in the rule of a despotic government is the
moment it begins to reform. For reforms, conceded under mass
pressure; act as a landslide in that the oppressed, tasting the fruits
of their struggle and therefore realising that there is no need for them to
re-imperiously demand and struggle for a thorough renovation of
society.

a . - If therefore the situation represented a crisis, a his-
torical watershed, then this must not blind ourselves to the fact that
it is short of a revolutionary crisis. The elements that conspire
to produce a revolutionary situation are the following : first, the
breakdown of the productive forces and means of distribution as well
measured by the grave disparity between what the workers receive and
what they produce. The intolerable conditions of the people as ex-
hibited in their demand for a living wage testifies to the presence
of this element in the South African situation.. Second, a revolu-
tionary situation is evidenced in the lack of immediate homogeneity on
the part of ruling class parties over policy. The objective effect
of such dissention over methods of rule is loss of prestige of the
ruling groups in the eyes of the people, increasing restlessness and
"a growing awareness of an impending social cataclysm. This too was
much in evidence even prior to the March events. Third, a revolu-
tionary situation manifests itself in growing class consciousness and
struggle which tend to overcome racial, religious and other immater-
ial differences, also in strikes, riots and militant demonstrations,
and in the disintegration of the traditional blind obedience on the
part of the oppressed. This element dominated the national scene
. During the crisis: i

t
i v . In two crucial respects the situation in South Africa
_ failed to measure up to a revolutionary crisis. First, it is not
necessarily necessary that the people should find it impossible to go on
living in the old way and demand changes; for the revolution to
succeed it is necessary that the rulers should find it impossible to
go on ruling in the old way, that they should consequently become
confused, divided, paralysed, and thereby lend objective aid to the
revolutionary forces.. This prerequisite for revolution was clearly
absent in March as the governing classes were able to close their

franks and prevent by force of arms the illegal sovereignty of a number of locations from expanding. The Western Cape, storm centre of the conflict, did not gain sufficient support from the Rand, Durban and Port Elizabeth to help produce an all-national crisis embracing the exploited and exploiters alike. The old property relations could still contain the imperious productive forces. In a word, the old order has not sufficiently exhausted itself. Our March was certainly a far cry from an October;

The other fundamental pre-requisite for radical social change is a revolutionary party which can forge a link with the objective revolutionary situation by exploiting every lead towards the assault on the summits of the State. Such a requisite political instrument which, by drawing in layer after layer of the exploited into the struggle, can speak on behalf of the nation and show a way out of the impasse, was sorely lacking in the country. The resilience of the old society is partly responsible for the absence of this subjective factor. In point of fact those political groups - the PAC and Liberal Party - which were leading the struggle were orientated towards a despotic State in an endeavour to gain concessions and effect a compromise. Herein resides the essential reason for the defeat of the struggle.

VICTORY IN DEFEAT.

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It is none the less indubitable that every mass struggle, especially during a crisis, teaches in a few days those fundamental lessons which in relatively normal times invariably take years and even decades. Indeed, history testifies that there are times when it is better for the morale and political education of the people that they should give battle and go down heroically to defeat than that they should abstain from a struggle merely on the grounds that they cannot win. There can be no gainsaying the fact that as a result of the March Days the movement has emerged with certain dearly-won gains and learnt certain precious lessons which must give more direction to later struggles and invest them with a richer ideological content.

The oppressed are becoming aware of their crucial role in the economy of the country and accordingly alive to the tremendous political possibilities that lie in mass strike action. They are perceiving, too, as a corollary to this, that the sten guns of the police and the army have shattered the illusion of peaceful demonstrations and passive resistance as effective means of forcing the rulers to concede their demands. They are beginning to realise that the policy of sending the leadership to jail, the heroism of this act notwithstanding, is suicidal to a people bereft as they consequently are of any guidance in their battles. The lesson is also being driven home that, in their endeavour to force the State to raise the wage rates, this institution reveals itself as an instrument of class rule by riding out in defence of the bosses. There is accordingly the realisation that it is impossible for the non-owning classes to negotiate with a State that in times of crisis reveals so glaringly its true character: as the executive committee for carrying on the affairs of the bourgeoisie.

The crisis in South Africa is the crisis in the relations between capital and labour. The free working class, whose movements are curbed and controlled by the pass laws, whose freedom to sell their labour power is restricted by the industrial colour bar, is waging a relentless struggle to effect full integration on a national scale with the centres of urban production. It is this struggle for economic integration and hence also for political and legal equality by the labouring masses that seeks to accomplish the national unification of the country. What the crisis has shattered is the idea that the national struggle is the demand by certain none

class racial groups for democracy now, and then perhaps for a separate state existence afterwards. The national struggle is rather the form in which the class struggle is expressing itself. The 'community of class interests of predominantly labouring masses is cutting across the ethnic ruins of so-called national groupings by their demand to be recognised on a national scale not as Africans or as Non-Europeans with a distinct way of life, but as a modern working class with the same rights, the same culture and the same civilisation enjoyed by those in any modern democratic country.

'There are people who are necessary,' observed a French historian, when writing of the wilful but futile suppression by foreign powers of Polish and Italian cultures and traditions. The March Days have proved the economic, political and hence the psychological indivisibility of South Africa. All are therefore following or trying to be integrated with one main cultural stream. There are no special people in the land who are necessary. The utter obsolescence of multi-racialism and Non-Europeanism and the anti-historical claims made in their behalf consequently stand exposed to the light of day. If the powers who were given such a jolt are again entrenched as firmly as ever, then all these lessons represent a victory in defeat and justify the struggle if anyone imagines that it needs justification. Slowly the physical and psychological wounds of defeat are being healed. The next phase of the struggle begins anew - but on a higher plane.

The crisis came at a time when the process of being transferred to working class ranks, the Africans have well-nigh been deprived of all income they had hitherto extracted from the soil to supplement the starvation wages they earn as migrant workers in the cities. It is this irrevocable divorce from the soil that is forcing them to look to the cities as a way out of the impasse by fighting for the abolition of the pass laws and for a living wage. They must now, in ever-growing numbers, step into the industrial arena with the only commodity they can offer to gain a livelihood - their power to labour.

During the twelve years of Nationalist rule we have witnessed the murderous application of racialist ideologies. To those who abstract 'race' from the sum total of material life, which gives rise to it, it must therefore be explained, the colour legislation of the regime would appear to be motivated by sheer lunacy. Racial policies, however, make sense only if we regard them as the ideological form in which class interests assert themselves. It is worthy of note, for example, that the spate of discriminatory legislation corresponded with a period of the most remarkable capitalist development in South Africa of the most rapid proletarianisation and impoverishment of the people; Hence the anti-colour legislation of the regime must be seen as a class war, as a war by capital to exploit labour more efficiently and to coerce it more rigorously. The laws of the past decade especially have been designed to divorce the people from their traditional subsistence economy, to press them into the employ of capitalist enterprises and crush any resistance by them to their impoverishment in the process of being proletarianised.

The keystone of the whole system of labour organisation is the pass laws. Their purpose is to shunt labour to and fro, hither and thither, to meet the competition for cheap tractable labour by the three sectors of the economy: mining, agriculture and manufacturing. They are the effective means of regulating the labour supply in each productive centre to paralyse collective bargaining by the workers, to freeze their wage rates and control the size of the

industrial reserve army on the land, ready to be released periodically and sent forth to meet any sudden labour requirement of any sector of the economy. 1

THE CLASS LINE-UP IN THE STRUGGLE

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The campaign for the abolition of the pass laws and the increase of the minimum wage rate to \$8.3.4. per week was consequently calculated to strike at the very root of the system under which capitalism exploits the country - the industrial colour bar with its two prongs: the migrant labour system and low rates of pay based on so-called colour considerations. '

We must pause here to depict the attitude of the various classes and their political representatives to this campaign. For it is precisely in times of crisis that a nation is rent in twain and constitutes itself into two mutually antagonistic camps: the one consisting of those classes which stand four-square behind property and the social relationships which cement it; the other comprising those who seek to smash these relationships in order to effect a radical redistribution; if not an equitable diffusion of the social wealth.

. The forces of law and order which in relatively normal times mask the property interests they serve by the use of democratic phrasemongering, nailed their colours to the mast amid the sound and fury of the struggle. The United Party, understandably enough, stood firmly for the strongest measures against the strikers. The Progressive Party, formed in order to canalise the labour movement and avert popular revolution by a policy of appeasement, advocated the status quo and expressed their hostility to all extra-legal methods by the democratic forces.

. It was the capitalist farming class who, through Nationalist Party organs, exhibited the most overt implacable hostility to the abolition of the pass laws. And for good reason. The land barons depend for their profits largely on an immobilised, cheap and tractable labour force which the pass laws can alone guarantee. They accordingly had every reason to fear that the abolition of the pass laws would lead to the most rapid transfer of the liberated rural labour force to the cities where manufacturing, commerce and transport offer them higher rates of remuneration. It is common cause that the land barons can run a wasteful system of agriculture as a profitable "concern only by relying on heavy state subsidies, price and import control and above all, on a labouring class earning very low wages. The same attitude must have been expressed in the inner circles of the government by mining, the most powerful and "caphmlkw" class. By paying the State colossal sums in taxes, used largely to subsidise agriculture, by having great investments in industry and landed property and making manufacturing and agriculture loans into the bargain, mining is the fly wheel of the economy, a prime generator of wealth. Moreover, it furnishes a lucrative market for the goods of the two other sectors of the economy. In a word, the latter are connected by a number of threads with, and dependent for their development on, the financial bourgeoisie. Every government stands or falls by its attitude to the mining industry.

The financial bourgeoisie depend for their great profits from mining on the employment of migrant labourers who are recruited at about \$4 per month by Chamber of Mines agents in the Reserves and elsewhere. It stands to reason that the industry depends on the pass laws to recruit such labour on its own terms and prevent at the same time the diversion of their potential recruits into avenues offering higher rates of remuneration. And since a wage of \$1 per week cannot

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minister to the needs of the miner's family in the City, it is in the interests of the financial bourgeoisie to secure through the pass laws the retention of the migrant's family with uneconomic holdings in the Reservesa --

Because of this mutual dependence of mining and agriculture on the pass laws, the State, as their executive organ, was instructed to make no concessions on them,

It may logically be contended that manufacturing, youngest of the capitalist family, by its higher wage rates, had the most to gain from the abolition of the pass laws. The representatives of secondary industry have indeed maintained that they stood for higher wage rates to expand the local market, as well as for the abolition of the pass laws to create a stable labour force with continuity in industrial experience. The events of March belied the apparent logic of this reasoning

When the strikers demanded from the State that it should force the industrialists to negotiate with them for wage increases this so-called progressive bourgeoisie maintained the silence of the grave. They made no move at all to meet the strikers, but in fact sought refuge in the strong arm of the State. e

The truth is that while the bourgeoisie often reaches logically and come to important conclusions theoretically on capital-labour relations, their class position as owners of property robs them of all consistency in the heat of political battles. They fear that labour demands, once conceded under pressure, give people confidence to struggle for more and thereby endanger the existing ownership and distribution of wealth. That they are now prepared once more to discuss and propose increases is proof of their pusillanimity. The method of the bourgeoisie is slow reforms from above so that there is utter dependence on them from below. They may, in short, agree with the aspirations of the workers, but oppose the means used to realise them and admonish the toilers not unlike Burke in his 'Letters on the French Revolution': 'At present you seem in everything to have strayed out of the high road of nature. The property of France does not govern it.'

In the final reckoning, therefore? there is an identity of interests between mining, agriculture and manufacturing when it comes to the question of defending property and keeping the toiler chained to it.

In South Africa this identity of interests is not only based on their joint legal title to the means of production. It flows from the financial dependence of manufacturing and agriculture on mining. And all gain real security against a labour revolution in a colour bar whose function it is to decimate the ranks of the workers and crush all resistance by them to improve their lot.

The colour bar is, in sum, both the mode of operation and mode of domination of capitalism in South Africa.

Of the politically oppressed classes the African workers, especially those without locus standi in the Cities, had the most to gain from the abolition of the pass laws. It was precisely this stratum of rootless workers that evinced the most tenacious resistance to the reactionary forces arrayed against them. The transformation of their implicit opposition to the passes to one of explicit struggle was hastened by the implementation of the declared governmental policy to unwind the spool of urbanisation in an endeavour to realise the Bantustan dream and guarantee

abundant farm and mine labour at depressed wage rates. This anti-historical trend has been manifesting itself in mass evictions from the cities of those Africans who, though having in most cases severed all connections with the Reserves, are not allowed to settle permanently in urban areas. In the Western Cape this policy was more rigorously executed than elsewhere. This is in consonance with the Eiselen Line; and it is therefore not surprising that the most sustained resistance was encountered in that area. The PAC accordingly was all-powerful in the Cape.

It is significant that the people of Nyanga were the last to submit despite the terrible beatings which they suffered at the hands of the police. There was cause for their valiant struggle which earned the admiration of the world. They comprise those workers and their families who, though having lost their holdings in the overcrowded reserves, are regarded by the regime as temporary urban dwellers until arrangements are made for their transfer to the newly-established rural villages. These are a euphemism for labourers lodged in barren areas where they would be condemned to bondage conditions.

The same protracted resistance for similar reasons was displayed by the Langa 'bachelors' who, without family responsibilities of their own, had in most instances irrevocably severed connections with the Reserves. The PAC was given an urban character by this working class layer.

Far less militancy was evinced by those migrant workers who come to the cities periodically to supplement the incomes they receive from small-scale farming in the Reserves. In point of fact, many of them considered that the strike was interfering with the main business for which they had come to the cities - to make as much money as soon as possible and then return to their primary livelihood as peasant farmers. It is understandable therefore that the task force of PAC had to use drastic measures against this minority group when it strove to break the strike. Many simply left for 'home' when the strike was at its height.

In the course of the strike campaign it became clear that a minority of African strikers required the support of the majority Coloured workers if the struggle was to meet with any success in the Cape. The Coloured workers are moreover employed in certain key industries and thus a display of solidarity by them with the location dwellers would have forced the State and the industrialists to open negotiations with the strikers.

Attempts were made to draw in the Coloured workers by the distribution of pamphlets issued by anonymous bodies. There was hardly any response. The traditional Coloured political bodies proved that they had no roots in the working class. The Coloured trade union movement itself was tied hand and foot to the trade union bureaucrats - those sergeant majors of capital in the ranks of the labour movement. They brought out a police-inspired statement calling upon the workers to ignore the strike campaign and attend work daily. In the absence of any political work by the liberatory movement to wrest control from the trade union bureaucrats, to politicise the workers and break down the location walls separating them from their African brethren, the Coloured workers felt there was no community of interests between their relatively privileged positions and the socio-economic problems of Langa and Nyanga.

The problem of gaining Coloured support in the Cape was aggravated by the explicit statements of the PAC that the struggle was by Africans and for Africans alone. The ideology of African nationalism helped to isolate the strikers in the Western Cape.

It was only in the Worcester area that the Coloured workers showed their solidarity with the strike movement when 60,000 of them stayed away from work for a few days. This militancy most Coloured and Africans in that part of the country. They live cheek by jowl and were hospitable to PAC propaganda.

Little is known about the struggles of the rural workers during the emergency. News did however filter through that the more settled peasants in the reserves were putting up a determined opposition to the Rehabilitation Scheme and Bantu Authorities. The struggle of the Pondos is a case in point. But as far as the workers on European farms are concerned the authorities' apparently had the situation well in hand. It is clear however that the extension of the emergency regulations to a number of rural townships meant that the Africans of these areas were taking a lead from the urban centres.

The Coloured petty bourgeoisie of the Cape - traders, contractors, shopkeepers, highly-paid artisans with middle class livelihoods and aspirations - and their political and literary representatives - teachers, students and doctors - displayed their fear of the strike campaign in various forms, depending on their individual positions. It is necessary for working class education that we scrutinise under the lens of historical materialism this motley grouping that by virtue of its intermediary position in society exhibits bristling contradictions in political ideas and practices; contradictions which are rendered more complex by their racial fears and prejudices vis-a-vis the African masses.

The petty bourgeoisie is a transitional class in which the conflicting interests of labour and capital meet to be neutralised. This results in a non-class approach to political problems as evidenced in the use of such terms as 'herrenvolkism', 'the unity of the oppressed', 'Coloured and African sectors', and the like.

They demand democracy not in order to do away with the two extremes of capital and labour, but in order to weaken their antagonism and reconcile them. They certainly demand the change of society in a democratic direction but within the bounds of small property and enterprise. Hence their demand for an equitable distribution of the land and the right to buy and sell fixed property freely.

They mask their petty bourgeois interests with radical and even revolutionary phraseology, but the content of their ideas always remain the same. Just as we have to distinguish in private life between what a man says and thinks of himself and what he really is so in politics we have to distinguish between what a person says and what he exactly means, between the phrases and political notions of parties and their organic interests and role in real life. Such a distinction will show the petty bourgeois fear that class struggles and mass movements will jeopardise their interest in the harmonious evolution of society so that small property, small enterprise and bourgeois professionalism can be protected.

It would be artificial to aver that the political and literary representatives of the petty bourgeoisie wish at all times to promote the egoistic class interests of shopkeepers and traders. What distinguishes the political and educated representatives of the petty bourgeoisie from this class itself is that in their ideology and ideas they do not go beyond or counter to those interests which the petty bourgeoisie represent and strive for in real life; that these democratic representatives of small property are theoretically driven to the same tasks and solutions which the material interests and social position of the petty

bourgeoisie drive the latter to do in practical life. In the light of this the antiquarian erudition of the teachers, traditional spokesmen for the small middle Class, becomes clear, when we examine their periodic pronunciamentos. Thus they gave a left wing cover for their abstentionism from the struggles by warning against playing on the conscience of the rulers by means of passive resistance, and by calling for a more 'responsible leadership'. The petty bourgeoisie breathed a sigh of relief.

Some sections of the small middle class tried to gain security against the location workers and an anticipated racial pogrom by closing their businesses and sending food to the besieged African townships. 'Beware of the Greeks when they send you presents!'

The behaviour of the various classes during the crisis is therefore of great value to the working class and their political leadership.

It is not only necessary to teach the workers forms of economic exploitation and political oppression about which they in any event have first hand experience. It is not only necessary to show them how and in whose behalf the State acts. It is moreover necessary to reveal to them the anatomy of the various classes and how these reveal their 'soul' at a given and crucial historical moment.. The lessons of March are in this respect very precious ones.

THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE PRODUCTIVE FORCES AND THE RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION.

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The crisis in the relations between capital and labour in South Africa comes at a stage when it is no longer possible on the basis of the existing distribution of income for the oppressed workers to sustain themselves by their own institutional handiwork. It is therefore fundamental to this inquiry to determine what elements enter into the composition of wages and how the point is reached when the needs of the workers outstrip their income, forcing them consequently to take to the road of class struggle. 4

Under ideal or typical conditions of capitalist production the minimum wage rates are determined by the cost of the worker to produce the material necessities of life -his'food, his elothing,his shelter- and the cost to reproduce himself or, in other words, to maintain his family. eThis is central to what has been called the iron law of wages.

It is of the essence none the lessthat under capitalism the wage worker produces surplus value; or to put it another way, that he produces over and above the equivalent of his wages an amount for which he is not paid. This unpaid portion takes the form of profit, rent or interest. Surplus value is not however appropriated in its entirety at the point of production but in the course of the whole process of capitalist production, Circulation and exchange, by the working out of immanent economic laws.

To say however that surplus value accrues to the employers by the operation of impersonal economic laws is erroneous-for such a point of view forgets that man is at the root of prodnction. The worker can therefore gain a portion of this surplus social product by active political struggle., Hence it is necessary to press the point of the iron law of wages a little deeper lest we be guilty of a gross over-simplification. If the value of labour power is determined by the value of the means of subSistence to sustain the worker, what, it must be asked, is necessary to his sustenance? Obviously, the gratification of his natural wants. But are his wants fixed and determined by nature?

The number and extent of man's wants are ultimately historically conditioned. They depend on the extent and degree of civilisation of the country. For the needs of men and the way in which they are satisfied are rooted in society. And as man is a social animal they are measured, not in relation to the satisfaction they bring, but in relation to the general standards of society and the stage of its historical development. Needs and their satisfaction are therefore relative. The meaning of a subsistence wage is continuously being transformed by the general march of civilisation. And this historically-conditioned meaning of a minimum wage can again be transformed by the political struggles of the workers to wrest from the owning classes a portion of the surplus value. The class struggle of today determines the wage rates of tomorrow. A historical, political and, if you please, a moral element enters into the composition of wages.

The present wage rates of the oppressed in South Africa belong to that period in South African history when, emerging from tribalism and entering the labour market without skills, the needs and comforts of the Africans were rudimentary in a country that was just being ushered into modern times by mining and whose degree of civilisation was therefore low. This circumstance gave their low wage rates historical justification. Their wage rates were given additional justification, also on historical grounds, by the fact that they retained connections with pockets of their subsistence economy where they could supplement their industrial incomes to meet the cost of maintaining their families.

We can now grasp the secret why capitalism has been able to flout the iron law of wages by paying the oppressed worker a wage rate below the subsistence level and freezing his income into the bargain over a number of decades. The secret resides in the fact that capitalism has hitherto shouldered off on the worker himself the responsibility for supplementing this income to meet the production and reproduction of the material necessities of life. And it has done so by forcing the migrant worker to retain connections with small-scale farming in the Reserves and labour tenancy on European farms.

This partially transferred responsibility by capitalism for the maintenance and perpetuation of the worker by extra-industrial means argues the retention, in part at any rate, of the old tribal subsistence economy. This law of combined development, of combining, that is, pre-capitalist social forms with the last word in modern industrial techniques, has not only made it possible for the pinch-penny mining industry to rattle a profit and a wasteful system of agriculture to survive; it has enabled manufacturing to make tremendous progress over the last few decades and reap great profits. The law also has this great merit from the point of view of the ruling classes, that it averted the class struggle between labour and capital, because a rootless proletariat, shackled by obsolete tribal institutions could not effectively assert their claims for recognition as a free modern working class with the right to a modern living standard and the right to improve them by collective bargaining. And in the circumstances the struggle by the workers to increase his wage was curbed, rendering his income static and securing for the entrepreneur, middleman and banker the overall profits accruing from labour - the source of all value.

It is in the nature of capitalism, however, that it breeds its own contradictions. For it is an inexorable law that it must continually corrode and assimilate all pre-capitalist social forms in order to swing into its orbit more dispossessed labourers to meet the need for labour and to expand its fields of investments and markets. This process of primary accumulation, of what in South Africa we may call internal colonialism, has been rigorously

executed by the Nationalist government to minister to the needs of the different sectors of the economy. The last decade has accordingly seen the eviction in hot-house fashion of cultivators from their holdings, the enclosure of grazing lands, the culling of stock and the forcible transformation of squatters and labour tenants on European farms into full-blown labourers.

The crisis came at a time when this process of internal colonialism, of assimilating, that is, the remnant of the tribal subsistence economy has come to an end for the vast majority. And with it has arrived the depletion of that supplementary source of income for the workers to maintain themselves and their families. They must now either effect full integration with the industrial centres and assert their claim to a living wage or they must perish amid the ruins of their traditional economy. But in this struggle for full integration they are frustrated at every turn by a superstructure of obsolete laws which regulate social production suited to the state of the productive forces of an earlier historical period. The dynamic productive forces are coming into open conflict with the static productive relations.

The growth of the productive forces is evidenced in the rapid acquisition of skills and techniques by the workers and consequently in the rapid transformation of their consciousness. It is also evidenced in the growth of technology and the expansion of the system of exchange and distribution. These forces are violently coming into collision with the static property relations (the legal term for the productive relations) which include the industrial colour bar, the migrant labour system, the pass laws, the location system, and political forms of oppression to buttress economic exploitation. The class struggle develops whenever in the course of production an exploited class finds that it cannot sustain itself at the level to which it has been accustomed. In South Africa this struggle is on the order of the day. It has been hastened also by the transformation of the meaning of a subsistence wage under the impact of the forward march of Civilisation. There is, in other words, a growing cultural disparity between those who own and benefit from the means of production and those who have to slave at them. This disparity the workers are finding more and more intolerable. Gradually the collision between the productive forces and the property relations is penetrating their consciousness and transforming it, making them aware of the issue at stake.

As long as the exploited people obtained some sort of livelihood from fragments of a subsistence economy, they clung to the idea, like the English workers during the early period of the Industrial Revolution, that they could escape the 'evils' of capitalism by retaining connections with, extending or returning to old-fashioned agrarianism by a partition of the land. Capitalism has shattered all these dearly-held illusions by severing their ties with the land. This objective development has in turn enabled them to broaden their historical vision and set their historical sights higher in accordance with an ineluctable historical process. We perceive their new outlook in the struggle to make a permanent transfer to the cities. This is how it was in every country that has taken the road to industrialisation. And this is how it must be here inasmuch as History has not yet devised any preferential treatment for people to escape the purgatory of capitalism. It is in this spirit of self-confrontation, of self-consciousness, that the workers have ceased to be a class-in-itself. They have become a class-for-itself.

THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS AND THE LIBERAL PARTY

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It was the Liberal Party which seized the opportunity to fill the political vacuum created by the collapse of the major tendencies of the democratic movement. To be sure, long before the crisis the liberals were feverishly busy building bridges between the rulers and the oppressed. This is their traditional role in mass struggles. Such contact between the ruler and the ruled the liberals consider necessary to prevent labour from asserting itself as an independent force and becoming a danger to bourgeois property relations. In an endeavour therefore to limit the democratic strivings of the people to the boundaries of capitalism and bring them under the rule of (bourgeois) law, the liberals advocated phased democratization with the aid of UNO troops. To bring the movement under the heel of property the liberals arrogated to themselves all the traditional political slogans associated with the democratic movement: non-racial democracy, political and social equality, and the like. 'The enemies of the people,' said Robespierre, 'speak with the voice of the people in order to betray the people'. The liberals held before the people the prospect of fighting alongside property in order to live under property. PAC furnished them with the necessary mass base for the dissemination of their ideas and the task of canalising the movement into constitutional channels.

As a breakaway organisation PAC was initially formed in 1980 as a bitter reaction to the opportunistic policies pursued by the Congress Movement. Its rapid development within the space of 9 years testifies to the sufferings of the people who were clearly looking for an alternative leadership. PAC drew tremendous inspiration from the tide of African nationalism sweeping the African continent, and was given a plan of campaign by the recent Accra Conference at which both they and the Liberal Party were represented. ' .

It will be recalled that the Accra Conference advocated a United States of Africa and expressed its belief in the method of passive resistance as the most effective to secure democracy and independence. Both the Liberal Party and PAC acclaimed these decisions and came away convinced that these were the perspectives and method of struggle for South Africa.

While we salute the PAC leadership for having lived up to their motto of 'Service, Sacrifice and Suffering', we believe that their failure must firstly be attributed to an amazing pre-occupation with the methods of passive resistance the effect of which was to emasculate the all-powerful strike weapon and relegate the demands of the people to the background. And secondly, they failed because they pinned their faith on the efficacy of African nationalism, largely for emotional reasons, as a rallying point for labour. We believe that they saw the problems of industrial South Africa largely through the prism of the pre-industrial emergent end emergent Africa states; ' .

The idea of a United State of Africa is scientifically insupportable and politically indefensible, if not impracticable. It is scientifically insupportable because it assumes that states at different levels of historical development - tribal, semi-tribal, plantation and commercial levels - can somehow be integrated together with industrial South Africa on the basis of African nationalism - an emotional force which claims to transcend class ideologies. It does not take into account, furthermore, that as the only full-blown industrial country on the Continent of Africa, South Africa cannot put the clock back and lower her historical sights to see her own peculiar problems through the eyes of communities who have still to meet some of the problems she has already solved or is in the process of solving. "-

The slogan of a United States of Africa is politically indefensible because the emergent African States are the creatures of British and French Imperialism which, under the guise of granting them some measure of independence, continues to exploit these territories, gaining in many instances greater economic and financial and military control over them. These are the tactics of imperialism in decline, of what has been called the 'New Colonialism'. Let us pause to consider this new trend. " v -

Every constitution, declares Lassalle, reveals on the juridical plane the real relations of power. An examination of the constitutions of these African states will show that this new colonialism, by granting de jure independence, secures for the imperialist powers a continuing hold over the states by special treaties calculated to protect their investments, their military bases and align them in imperialist military blocs. 1

These constitutions, to be sure, did not emanate from the people themselves, but were the result of protracted negotiations between the foreign powers and the new colonial bourgeoisie whose support is enlisted to stem the tide of colonial struggles in return for a share in the more intensified exploitation of the peasants and workers.

Every step forward in constitutional development was motivated by the desire of imperialism to win over the colonial bourgeoisie. The continual chopping and changing of constitutions, the regular conferences held with national leaders, the slight constitutional advances made as a result of these deliberations - all these are in the nature of imperialist experiments to prove in how far the upper class elements are willing to play ball (Ghana, Nigeria, etc., Nyasaland). And only when the imperialist rulers are satisfied that their new allies now installed as the government - are willing to cooperate by protecting imperialist interests and deal with their own working classes, only then is constitutional progress carried a step forward, from self government to responsible government, from responsible government to Dominion status, from self government within the French Community to 'Independence' outside of it. v

These political changes are essentially by-products of the colonial struggles for they do not affect the domination and intensification of exploitation. Witness to this is the imperialist exploitation of West Africa where there has been a sharp rise in the surplus of exports over imports. Witness to this also is the provision of marketing boards in Nigeria and Ghana, for example, to control the prices of peasant products and rake in for imperialism and the colonial bureaucracy and middlemen the lion's share of their world prices. Today the share of the world prices accruing to the peasants is much smaller than that obtained prior to sealed independence.

The emergent African states are, in a word, imperialist economic-power blocs donning the cloak of political independence. They now occupy a higher rung in the Colonial ladder. And it is against this background that we have to view Pan-Africanism and the call for a United States of Africa.

In so far as the manifestation of African nationalism was a struggle by a more or less undifferentiated African mass, prior to clear class stratification, against various forms of imperialist domination it was progressive because it tended to weaken the hold of the foreign power over the colony. When, however, the classes began to crystallise, the emergent colonial bourgeoisie began to use African nationalism as a bargaining counter to extract concessions for themselves from imperialism and ultimately enter into alignment;

with it for the joint exploitation of the Colonial masses. Having been installed in power the bourgeoisie used African nationalism as an ideological and emotional outlet for the misery and dissatisfaction of the people. The Colonial bourgeoisie now call upon the exploited workers and peasants in the name of African nationalism to bury class differences and subordinate these to the idea of national unification within the prescribed imperialist social framework.

It is noteworthy that the imperialist-inspired Colonial governments have belied the ostensible homogeneous masses whom the blanket term 'African Nationalism', supposedly covers by suppressing with contempt the working class and peasant struggles and depriving them of elementary civil liberties. The anti-democratic activities of Nkrumah, arch-Pan-Africanist, are a case in point.

The call by these governments for a United Africa therefore conspires to strengthen the hold of the Colonial bourgeoisie over the people and render impotent the struggle of the people for full independence.

It is clear that the labour movement of South Africa cannot subscribe to African nationalism. We must necessarily stress class differences and help cut the cord that ties the Colonial people to their bourgeoisie. And; a fortiori, we cannot be party to the move for a United States of Africa: Our call, as socialists, is rather for the complete liberation of these states from the tutelage of imperialism. Thereafter the workers and peasants can come to grips with their own bourgeoisie and, having liquidated them, usher in a United Socialist States of Africa.

The advocacy of passive resistance betrays the same ignorance of the traditional weapons used by the working class. Socialists approach the question of weapons from the point of view of their efficacy and intelligent use to achieve the ends of the working class. They do not exclude the use of a particular weapon on abstract moral grounds. And if they do stress the importance of some weapon over others, then this is because that weapon has proved effective under given circumstances. And it is in this respect that the PAC lost a golden opportunity to make the most effective and intelligent use of the strike which, short of an armed insurrection, is the most powerful to achieve their demands. For a strike gives the workers that growing consciousness of their economic power on which the governing classes and, indeed, the whole society is dependent. The use of this weapon consequently also makes them conscious of the political power they can wield for social-transformative ends,

The Liberal Party, on the other hand, has introduced into the movement the use of Gandhi's soul force and passive resistance for this method is in consonance with their political philosophy of collaboration with the ruling classes and winning concessions by negotiations and playing on the conscience of the rulers. Passive resistance is a denial of the class struggle. It is a denial that the interests of labour and capital are diametrically opposed. It is a denial of our view that only by independent struggle and a firm reliance on the dynamic strength of the movement can liberation be won.

The Liberal Party offered Gandhism to PAC in the firm belief that only thus could the Labour movement be contained and prevented from endangering capitalist enterprises and vested interests. Attention was drawn away from the strength of the masses by the Liberal Party call on them to place their faith in a

change of heart by the rulers; in negotiations with the authorities, in the efficacy of supernatural forces. It is now searingly clear that the Liberal Party gave objective aid to the authorities in their bid to end the strike. Philip Kgoeana, under daily instructions from the Cape Town Liberal Party offices, consigned the demands of the people to cold storage by dissipating their energies in pointless demonstrations against police tyranny and in an endeavour to sit down with the Cabinet to negotiate a deal. Finally PAC achieved their purpose by getting the State to arrest the whole leadership, leaving the people without guidance and confused about the issues at stake.

It was due to passive resistance that no effective steps were taken to destroy all passes when the State temporarily retreated before the organised might of the strikers. It was due to passive resistance that the employers were not forced to intervene and take a stand on the wages question.

These are the cogent reasons for drawing the conclusion that PAC failed because of their collaborationist orientation. The Liberal Party and Gandhism must bear the blame for this defeat. It will be our duty to strive for an independent movement by measuring swords with liberalism and exposing it as the hidden enemy within our ranks.

The South African State cannot be intimidated by Gandhism. It represents the great vested interests of a number of imperialist powers, not to mention growing local capital. All gain real support from a large white minority who, because of their privileged positions? have a real interest in the perpetuation of the present system. .And in the event the State could with nonchalant ease meet their mass protests with bullets and their demand for negotiations with intransigence.

THE DEMIeEWQE mm 13mg IALISM Aim NbN-EUROPOQANistL

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If the crisis laid bare in dramatic fashion the character and driving forces of the struggle, then even more dramatically did it expose the obsolescence of the programmes and policies, the slogans and ehibboleths, of the socalled Congress and Non-European Unity Movements. Every crisis has, however, the nasty habit of revealing which political groups and cabals, by espousing obsolete doctrines⁹ are ready to be consigned to the rubbish heap of History. It took a young proletariat to demenstrate with shattering clarity that the struggle is not one involving the Claims of national groups or those of a specially designated 'raoe.' These constitute so much ethnic trash and historical offal which our dynamic productive forces have trampled underfootu They have no place whatsoever in the struggle between capital and labour. For concomitant with the development of the productive forces we discern the development of the workers' Class.conecmusness which bids fair to cut across those artificial lines of racial division and the conseimxnmss of racial status which corresponds to them.

The system of racial categories first appeared on the South Afriean-scene with the opening of the mining period in the History of the country. They were used to designate a more or less undifferentiated African mass arriving in industrial society without skills and modern cultural forms. Race was used to justify and perpetuate their super-exploitation. With the passage of time it was translated into terms of political oppres-sion and social segregation. And in conformity with thctime-hallowed imperialist policy of divide and rule this system of

racial division was extended to embrace the Coloured and Indians as well. Like all elements of society's superstructure, these racial categories; while finally traceable to economic causes, began to develop a logic of their own while at the same time they assert their influence on the economic base by arresting the development of the means of production, of industrial skills, of modern cultural institutions, They have even infiltrated into those voluntary political organisations within the ambit of the democratic movement where people are organised into separate racial kraals on the grounds on their separate needs and interests.

In the meantime the class stratification of society is proceeding apace as a result of the expansion of the means of production and the system of exchange and distribution. As a result of this the workers; in acquiring skills and assimilating that culture which feeds on the juices of industry, are developing a class consciousness in opposition to a race consciousness, a national outlook in opposition to a separatist one. They are consequently seeking to burst through the racial integument to complete the national unification of the country. This is the objective role of that emotionally charged slogan, 'Izwe lethul' In a word, the barriers of 'race' are now so many fetters on the development of the productive forces. And it is in this light that we have to examine multi-racialism and Non-Europeanism.

- The Stalinist and neo-Stalinist school of thought fastened on tomhltrracialism in order to promote the traditional collaborationist and opportunistic policies we have come to associate with this leprous camarilla. Much of the treachery, the collaboration, the sell-out, of the Stalinists is inspired by the rapid shifts and changes in Soviet foreign policy which now seeks to come to agreements with the imperialist powers at the expense of the Colonial struggles (Algeria), now to instigate such struggles (Cuba and the Congo) to force the big capitalist powers into some sort of agreement on international problems to suit the needs of the bureaucratic-controlled deformed socialist economy. And just as the Soviet Union uses _ Colonial struggles as a bargaining force, so the local Stalinists sought to gain control of the liberatory movement and use it for collaborationist ends in the interests of Russia. eIt is clear, however, that the local Stalinists developed an inner logic of their own even if; in the final analysis, their policies are dictated by Moscow. Havrmg found political divisions based on 'raoe', they contrived to keep the movement divided in order the better to control and manipulate it, now to launch a mass mOvement to intimidate the white electorate into effecting a mere change in government; now to impress anti-Nationalist middle class organisations with their rmight in order to effect all sorts of unprincipled combinations with them. The Stalinists had, in brief, no political perspectives, no intention of building up an independent mass movement. lhtie racialism suited them because it tended to keep the labour movement divided. They feared nothing more than an independent proletarian movement for this would rule out their Bonapartist policy of manipulating both governing and exploited classes. - .

What gave their multi-racialism moral sanction Was the publication of 'The Formation of a National Community among the South AfriCa Bantu"t by Professor I.I. Potekhin, the alleged Soviet expert on African. In it the learned Professor argues that two .societies are developing towards separate nations: that of the Anglo-Afrikaner and that of the Bantu. He even anticipates that the Indians will form a separate nation. Potekhin's thesis came as a god-send to the multi-raoialist Stalinists who blandly applied to South Africa 19th Century national struggles for independence by viable national groups.

At the height of the March Crisis the Stalinists

apparently had second thoughts about the correctness of multi-racialism as a rallying slogan when they called for a non-racial democracy. But it would appear that they were merely contriving to outflank the PAC who repeatedly called for a non-racial democracy. It seems unlikely therefore that the Stalinists are capable of learning. At this very moment they are reverting to the same all-time low level of politics by calling for the removal of the Nazi Verwoerd from office. They have no other perspectives. Like the Bourbon dynasty, the Stalinists will learn nothing and forget nothing. . ' - v '

It was in line with their multi-racialism that the Stalinists have supported racial trade unions, the Industrial Conciliation Acts and the principle of 'no politics' in the trade union movement. They have supported Gandhism in the Defiance Campaign, for this method eminently suits the Stalinist line of building up; then breaking down, when their collaboration ends have been attained. It is therefore inevitable that in the struggle of ideas they exhibit anti-intellectualism and rule their followers with 'the dictatorship of the lie.' '

The ominous anti-white feeling which smothered the PAC displayed during the struggle is directly attributable to the bureaucratic hold which the leading Stalinists, as member of the 'white' national group, came to exercise over the organisations of the Congress Movement. It was indeed the height of political cynicism for these organisations to have been given political instructions and their Stalinist marionettes (the Congress leadership) to take full responsibility themselves for all the political debacles that ensued. Much work will have to be done to eradicate this racialism in the mass movement.'

The Non-European Unity Movement displays all those _ bristling contradictions in political thought and practices which are inseparably linked with the psychology of the radical petty bourgeoisie. Sandwiched as they are between the irreconcilable classes of capital and labour, this small middle class assimilates the inimical ideas of these groups in an endeavour to effect a reconciliation; even an identity, of mutually antagonistic interests. The result is a petty bourgeois socialism which deceives healthy intellectuals and honest workers alike. The petty bourgeois socialists are therefore heard to speak the language of proletarian democracy on many noteworthy occasions. This is however a mere cover for pursuing in practical life the narrow and vested interests of small property and professionalism. -

_ The NEUM took over the racial categories and sought to weld them together, but without merging them, under the banner of Non-Europeanism or 'the unity of the oppressed and exploited.' By some federative looseness, as a concession to racialism, separate organisations are provided for Africans and Coloureds. There is in truth, diversity in unity, a diversity which gained its logical development in the split along racial lines between the Anticad (Coloured) and AAC (African) affiliated bodies. . '

Their concept of Non-Europeanism and its corollary, 'the unity of the oppressed and exploited,' is a political contrivance to reconcile conflicting class interests by pretending that there is a permanent community of interests between worker, peasant, farm labourer, trader, shopkeeper and the professional man; that all these class categories are subsumed under the term, 'nation', 'oppressed' or 'Non-Europeans' or 'people.' - 'Inasmuch as the unity of the classes composing this Non-European combination can be effected and maintained only by relegating the interests of one or more of them to the political backwaters, the NEUM came to be

dominated in practical political life, in the implementation of their IO-Point Programme, by the 'educated' and literary representatives of the petty bourgeoisie. Under the blanket term, 'unity of the oppressed and exploited', the workers have in fact to submerge their identity and lose their class independence in an avowedly non-class and, what is more, a racial movement. They placate the working class by making adventitious provision for labour interests in Point 9 of their Programme, but except for the overthrow of one trade union bureaucrat for another in a Certain Cape Union they studiously avoid organising the workers and fighting the problems of economic exploitation in factory and communal life. They are heard to advocate socialism for the working class, but proceed to split among themselves on the forms of landed property the peasant petty bourgeoisie should enjoy. They advocate non-collaboration with the oppressor but stubbornly work apartheid Provincial educational ordinances and have their hands outstretched for the plums of office. They have become a parvenu class which, by making progress under apartheid, has more to lose than their chains in mass struggles. In a deed, they will more readily pardon an attack on nine-tenths of their Programme than the deprivation of one-tenth of their income and property.

In that classic, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon', the founder of scientific socialism characterises with his usual scorching irony the political behaviour of the petty bourgeois democracy during the 1848 Revolution in France. His passages characterising the small middle class and their professional and educated representatives are very apposite also in respect of our own petty bourgeoisie. Here are some of his observations on the French motley crew with citations from the stock political phraseology of our petty bourgeoisie in parenthesis. '- -

Says he: 'they find their vocation in patience ('It's a long and thorny way to liberty') and counter their present defeats by prophesying future victories ('The Herronvolk are becoming insane; the world is on our Side'); they find their strength in their own weakness ('We do not fight particular issues') and their respectability in the contempt it calls forth ('Nothing in the situation has changed for us to get excited') heroes without heroic ideas; history without events (i.e. dynamic abstentionism), developments whose sole driving force seems to be the calendar ('Time is On our side') He proceeds: "the democrats, because they represent the petty bourgeoisie... concede that a privileged class confronts them, but they along with the rest of the surrounding nation form the people ('Non-European oppressed'). What they represent are the people's rights ('We build a nation'); what interests them are the people's interests ('Do not gamble with the people's lives; beware of a blood-bath'). Accordingly, when a struggle is impending, they do not need to examine the interests and positions of the different classes ('Non-European oppressed versus the Herronvolk') ... the democrats come out of the most disgraceful defeat just as immaculately as they went into it innocently ('It is not we but they people who are not ready'), with the newly-won conviction that they are bound to conquer ('With the boycott we can win'), not that they themselves have to give up the old standpoint, but on the contrary that conditions have to ripen in their direction." ('The whole nation must be organised before we can begin').

We have focussed attention on the multi-racialist Stalinists and Non-Europeanist petty bourgeoisie because they had helped to corrupt and demoralise a whole new generation of fighters who are now lost to the cause of liberation and socialism. These two political tendencies are not so much organised groupings as a way of life which gnaws at the Vitals of the movement. To the extent that the intellectual and political level of the movement

is raised and the class consciousness of the workers developed by an ever-growing socialist tendency, to that extent only will the work of the Stalinists and the None Europeanists be rendered nugatory. In every democratic movement-hitherto the working class, urban and rural, were a minority of the nation which comprised mainly small peasant holders and City middle class elements interested in the development of society in the direction of laissez faire capitalism. -As industry was still in its incipient stage, the workers, being scattered and unorganised, could not push their own demands. Their interests were of necessity bound up with the progress of bourgeois capitalism. And even if they played the most revolutionary role in the struggle against the feudal incubus, it was inevitable that the small and big bourgeoisie should have come to dominate the social and economic life of the new Society. The workers could, in brief, not assert their class independence; They needed the petty bourgeoisie even in their subsequent struggles against big capital, . . . The specific weight of the working class in this country, -their numerical strength, the fact that the minority peasant petty bourgeoisie are in a state of dissolution; the fact, moreover, that the struggle for 'democracy' involves a class war by labour against . . . big capital - these considerations are sufficiently cogent and potent to demand for our proletariat their independent class organisation and the maintenance of their distinct identity at all times. 'Cooperation with the petty bourgeois democracy on specific issues must be strictly subordinated to the requirement of a workers' socialist party. . . . It is as a result of this call for unity of the oppressed classes in all political contingencies that non- and anti-working class elements had come to dominate the political scene; - The workers have, in truth, become the forgotten men of liberatory politics.' ' A strong and independent working class will, indeed, give the oppressed and exploited petty bourgeoisie more hope in the future and make them more revolutionary. Under the wing of the workers they will act more consistently and not demand guarantees for political victories before they are prepared to embark on struggles. The petty bourgeois democracy approaches the effectiveness of a political campaign on the arithmetical basis of numbers drawn into the struggle. 'Socialism asserts that an all-national unity has never been realised in history- There are always some strata of a population, even a section of the working class, that steers clear of the struggle. - We assess the role men can play in politics by using as a yardstick their role in the economy of the country. The history of capitalism shows that the country-side is dependent on and dominated by the industrial cities, that consequently either the industrial bourgeoisie or the industrial workers have the rural population in tow. Why? Because in the cities reside two fountains of independent wealth: the bourgeoisie with the wealth they appropriate by virtue of their control over the means of production; and the working class with their capacity to produce wealth. In the sphere of formal democracy, to be sure, the vote of one worker is the equal of a poor peasant's or a farm labourer's. But in the heat of political battles the hollowness of this equality is exposed. "We cannot, for example, equate a strike say, 10,000 workers concentrated in key-industries with the defiant non-cooperation of 50,000 or even 100,000 scattered reservists scratching mere morsels of land over a wide area. The strike of the workers during the March Days rocked the South African economy because of their economic and hence political concentration, and had its repercussions on the international stock-exchange, causing perturbation in London and New York. The action of scattered poor peasants:

neither-affects the capitalist system of agriculture nor industry. The crucial political centres for us are accordingly those urban centres like the Rand, Western Cape, Port Elizabeth and Durban where political action will be decisive for the social transformation of the country. The urban workers will appear as the liberators of the rural masses and encourage them to set free the countryside.

— Instead of unity of the oppressed, the socialists emphasise working class unity. On the Rand and Port Elizabeth working class unity amounts to the mobilisation of the African workers. In the Western Cape working class unity requires the merging of a minority of African workers with a majority of Coloured workers. And in Durban and certain parts of Natal unity means the merging of Indian and African workers. This is how we conceive of unity. This is our reply to the abstract unity of the petty bourgeois opposition.

THE CHARACTER AND TASKS OF OUR MOVEMENT.

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The immediate task that confronts the movement is to bring the property relations into line with the needs of the dynamic productive forces. This involves three things: the abolition of the colourbar in industry which will give all the opportunity to dispose of their labour power freely in any field of human endeavour; the abolition of the so-called Reserves and the abolition of the restrictions on the possession or ownership of landed property; and thirdly, following from the free contractual capacity implicit in one and two above, the extension of political and legal equality to all. The realisation of these demands will consummate the democratic phase of the struggle. ,

The term 'democratic', not 'bourgeois democratic' struggle is here used. And with set purpose. 'Bourgeois democratic' is the term used to characterise those struggles of the 18th and 19th Centuries in Europe as well as the Colonial struggles of the 20th Centuries when the bourgeoisie as the rising class, by virtue of their ' economic pre-eminence and intellectual leadership, could alone initiate and carry forward the revolution against the old order. Moreover, they represented and were interested in the small property right of the peasants who everywhere represented laissez faire landed rights within the ambit of capitalism. As these peasants constituted the majority of the nation, the land question was the sub-soil, the fundamental problem of every bourgeois democratic struggle. ,

Our whole analysis has shown that in the light of the ' above our struggle cannot be characterised as bourgeois democratic. For our movement is directed against the bourgeoisie and the driving force is a proletariat that, having been uprooted from the land is forced to sell, in ever greater number, their labour power to capitalist enterprises. And inasmuch as the process of proletarianisation is irreversible, the land question is not the basis, the 'i driving force, of our movement.

If our immediate demands are not only compatible with but the expression of classical capitalist democracies, then we must be mindful of the fact that the struggle is being waged by a working class who, in the process of consummating the democratic struggle will, under property socialist leadership, refuse to limit their historic mission to the framework of capitalism, but on the contrary shatter it to inaugurate a classless non-exploitative society. The dynamic tie-up of the democratic and socialist phases must therefore clearly be perceived. - .

Our struggle, in its immediate objectives, is democratic, rg

but it is to be waged by proletarian methods of class struggle. The main weapon in the armoury of the workers is the strike weapon. We must educate the workers in the use of this weapon and plan our strategy along the lines of building up a series of strikes as a prelude to general strike which in its turn will be a preparation for the conquest of power. a

The task of leading the working class can devolve only on a socialist party. The formation of such a party is the most unpostponable task facing our movement. Without it all our major struggles must come to grief. We have therefore to train a cadre who can constitute the nucleus of such a Party. Such a cadre can measure up to their tasks only if they are equipped with an advanced theory. The establishment of political study groups embracing intellectuals and workers alike is indispensable to this end. -

Having said thus much there remains the question of the role of trade unions and the place they occupy in the democratic struggle. The crisis revealed the limitations of trade unionism as a form of struggle in South Africa. This limited scope for trade union struggles must be ascribed to the very nature of a despotic regime which involves laws to deprive the individual of every elementary right to organise and use collective bargaining to improve his lot. It is for this reason that every economic demand of the worker assumes a political form almost from the word go. Which is proof of the maxim that the more despotic the country the closer is the connection between economics and politics. -

The question of trade unionism, that is, the question of gaining economic concessions from the bosses within the framework of the established order is in itself a question of bourgeois reformism. For it involves negotiations with the class enemy and gaining the assistance of the State to bring about improvements. And as the function of the State is to protect the existing property relations, it is clear that it will make no fundamental reforms. Only in order to avert revolution and canalise the struggle for fundamental rights.

What then is the significance of trade union reforms to revolutionaries, interested as they are in the radical transformation of society? Firstly it is to show workers that there is a 'ceiling' to reforms that can be extracted in an exploitative society: secondly, and flowing from this, the task of the leadership is to show, by the most circuitous route, if necessary, that the question of State power holds the key to the solution of their economic well being and thirdly, in the process of struggling for reforms the workers undergo a fundamental psychological reform of themselves in preparation for revolutionary struggle. Reforms as such must be regarded as by-products of the political struggle. Immediate reforms are not the end in themselves from our programme, but are made the springboard for political agitation in order to intensify the class struggle.

The place of the trade union movement in the struggle becomes clear when we consider the organisational character of the Socialist Party. We conceive of the Party as consisting of a closely knit group of people who subscribe to the Party programme and who personally work in one or other of the Party organisations under Party direction and control. This provision for centralisation seeks to prevent the Party from being flooded by vacillating, wavering elements interested in enlisting the aid of the Party to pursue the material and sectional interests of craft unions. For if the Party is the vanguard of the working class it stands for reason that it cannot be as weak as the working class by giving trade unions free access to it. It must concentrate on organising the most class conscious, the most advanced and courageous elements

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of the working class only.

Without a political party the prospects of extracting permanent gains for us from trade union work must remain dark. Most of the workers are in any case outside the formal trade union movement. Where possible work must be done in the existing trade unions. But because of the more important political work confronting the nascent socialist leadership, it is not possible for us to take the lead in forming new unions or in renovating old ones. We can however give cohesion to trade unionism by sponsoring the idea of a trade union struggle which cuts across craft unionism. The latter has helped to decimate the ranks of the labour movement by setting into motion centrifugal forces generated by narrow material interests.

It will be our duty to lend wherever possible a political character to the workers' demands and form worker study groups inside and outside the trade unions for the intensive politicisation of the workers and the incorporation into the Party of the advanced elements. The crisis has proved that the existing locations, by virtue of their compactness, can be organised effectively as informal trade unions for the purpose of economic and political struggles. On their degree of organisation rests the outcome of many battles that lie ahead.

In the Western Cape we have to devise ways and means of forcing unity between the workers inside the locations and those outside of them. The same applies to African and Indian workers in Natal. Because of the great socio-economic disparity between African workers, on the one side, and Coloured and Indian workers, on the other, it is our duty to raise wherever possible practical issues around which they can unite and monge.

A colossal task in all conscience faces our young and inexperienced proletariat. It will be the duty of the advanced guard to continually raise their level of political consciousness and enrich their ideological life. For this class is being called upon by History to lead the other oppressed groups and speak on behalf of the interests of the whole nation.

A people who, since the wars of dispossession, have not made history for such a long time, is being called upon to make history in a very short time. Political and ideological preparedness is consequently a burning requirement.

Much will depend upon the character of the leadership which must possess heightened courage, heightened determination and the will to act.

It begins to penetrate men's minds only very gradually that the needs of the transformed economic base of society require of them the overthrow of the moments of the obsolete superstructure consisting of legal and political rules, intellectual and moral institutions, of old world conceptions and haunting traditions, which correspond to the system of production of an earlier historical period. This agonising time-lag before the needs of objective development penetrate the minds of men, forcing them to forge a living link with an immanent and ineluctable process outside their volition, is due to the conservativeness of the human mind which follows external events slowly. 'The owl of Minerva begins its flight', says Hegel's fine metaphor, 'only when twilight gathers!'. But however late, it does begin. March was the twilight of South Africa's social order; the twilight, too, of those in the democratic camp with illusions about their projects, with a false consciousness about their role.

'History is the judge - its executioner, the proletariat.'

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Issued 31 - THE WORKERS' DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE.

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of thy working class only.

Without a political party the prospects of extracting permanent gains for us from trade union work must remain dark. Most of the workers are in any case outside the formal trade union movement. Where possible work must be done in the existing trade unions. But because of the more important political work confronting the nascent socialist leadership, it is not possible for us to take the lead in forming new unions or in renovating old ones. We can however give cohesion to trade unionism by sponsoring the idea of a trade union struggle which cuts across craft unionism. The latter has helped to decimate the ranks of the labour movement by setting into motion centrifugal forces generated by narrow material interests.

It will be our duty to lend wherever possible a political character to the workers' demands and form worker study groups inside and outside the trade unions for the intensive politicisation of the workers and the incorporation into the Party of the advanced elements. The crisis has proved that the existing locations, by virtue of their compactness, can be organised effectively as informal trade unions for the purpose of economic and political struggles. On their degree of organisation rests the outcome of many battles that lie ahead.

In the Western Cape we have to devise ways and means of forcing unity between the workers inside the locations and those outside of them. The same applies to African and Indian workers in Natal. Because of the great socio-economic disparity between African workers, on the one side, and Coloured and Indian workers, on the other, it is our duty to raise wherever possible practical issues around which they can unite and merge.

A colossal task in all conscience faces our young and inexperienced proletariat. It will be the duty of the advanced guard to continually raise their level of political consciousness and enrich their ideological life. For this class is being called upon by History to lead the other oppressed groups and speak on behalf of the interests of the whole nation. 4

A people who, since the wars of dispossession, have not made history for such a long time, is being called upon to make history in a very short time. Political and ideological preparedness is consequently a burning requirement.

Much will depend upon the character of the leadership which must possess heightened courage, heightened determination and the will to act.

It begins to penetrate men's minds only very gradually that the needs of the transformed economic base of society require of them the overthrow of the moments of the obsolete superstructure consisting of legal and political rules, intellectual and moral institutions, of old world conceptions and haunting traditions, which correspond to the system of production of an earlier historical period. This agonising time-lag before the needs of objective development penetrate the minds of men, forcing them to forge a living link with an immanent and ineluctable process outside their volition, is due to the conservatism of the human mind which follows external events slowly. 'The owl of Minerva begins its flight', says Hegel's fine metaphor, only when twilight gathers. But however late, it does begin. March was the twilight of South Africa's social order; the twilight, too, of those in the democratic camp with illusions about their projects, with a false consciousness about their role.

'History is the judge - its executor, the proletariat.'

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