

RESISTANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. We face a formidable, despotic and dishonest enemy. Formidable, because it commands the resources of an advanced industrialism and is supported economically by great powers; despotic because the white minority regime, representing at most a bare fifth of the population, employs fascistic techniques to keep the voteless majority in subjection; dishonest, because it does not scruple to conceal its despotism behind a camouflage of benevolent paternalism.
2. Our cause will triumph. But the struggle will be hard, bitter and violent. That is not of our choosing. For fifty years, since our formation in 1912, the African National Congress sought to bring about change by non-violent means. Our record of political struggle is one of deputations, petitions, demonstrations, strikes; of attempts to mobilise our people for constitutional action, and to persuade the white minority of the justice of our cause. Our people were patient, tolerant, and long-suffering - some might say, to excess - but they never wavered in their determination to abolish all forms of racial discrimination as the first step to the creation of a free, non-racial society.
3. We made much progress. Our movement was deeply rooted in the lives of our people. It reached out across the racial barriers and forged links with Coloured, Indians and also white South Africans. Our ideal of a non-racial society, in which South Africans of all ethnic groups would participate on equal terms, received wide support. Corresponding to the realities of an integrated society, the ideal was infinitely superior as a moral system to the narrow, intolerant and discriminatory policies of white supremacists.
4. The more progress we made, the greater was the resistance we encountered. While our people died or went to jail for freedom, successive governments used the all-white parliament to confine us, to frustrate our attempts to advance, and to cripple our organisations. Year after year parliament churned out colour bar laws that deprived us of all the basic freedoms specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

5. Our demands for emancipation became more urgent, our pressures more intense, as the wave of liberation from colonial rule swept through Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. Our cause gained adherents from all sections of the population, including English- and Afrikaans-speaking whites. We received a sympathetic hearing and much active encouragement at the United Nations and in many of its member states. We had reason to believe that our policy of militant struggle, which included passive resistance and defiance of unjust laws, would succeed without a violent racial war.

6. The Nationalist Party Government has ruled out any possibility of a peaceful solution. That government represents and expresses the outlook of the most bigoted and reactionary elements in the white community. The Party has won every general election for the past twenty years by appealing to national and racial chauvinism. Manipulating an electoral system which confined the vote to whites, among whom Afrikaners form a majority, the government has utilised the state's resources to inhibit social cooperation and intercourse between members of different ethnic groups. Afrikaner nationalism and racial oppression are the corner stones of the Nationalist government's power structure.

7. Our people are excluded from that structure. Elections are fought on issues of life and death to us: our liberties, our position in the body politic, our claims to land, employment, education and social services; but we have no part in the process of decision-making. Responsible only to the white electorate, the rulers have persistently ignored our demands and sacrificed us to the material interests of the white oligarchy. The government has consolidated its political backing by reducing our people to the position of helots, under a crude form of colonial exploitation.

8. To rationalise a social order that has been universally condemned, and to provide it with a semblance of morality, the racists rely on the concepts of decolonisation: the right to cultural autonomy, self-determination and secession.

secession. The white minority asserts an exclusive right to 89 per cent. of our country's area, the entire wealth of its known mineral resources, the accumulated capital of our cities and towns, our lines of communication, ports and strategic centres. We are told that we can never become more than 'temporary sojourners', work-seekers and labourers in this, the 'white man's country' ; and that we must look to the poverty-stricken reserves, the so-called 'Bantu Homelands', for permanent residence, citizenship and the fulfilment of individual ambitions or national aspirations.

9. Our people have never accepted the myth of 'separate development'. We shall never abandon our claim to participate, fully and freely, in the government of our whole country, and to share the wealth and amenities created by means of our labour. We owe this to ourselves, our children and generations yet unborn. Our people can become free, independent and full-grown not by 'separate development', but through equal participation in all sectors of public life. That is the central issue in our struggle against white domination and racial oppression.

10. The white minority regime uses the methods of a totalitarian state to crush our movement. Armed with unlimited powers and operating outside the ambit of courts of law, the government invades every sphere of social life in order to isolate our people from the rest of society, to prevent cooperation between racial groups, and to perpetuate the myth that we are 'uncivilised' and a menace to the ruling whites. Our organisations are banned and driven underground; our leaders are imprisoned, banned, and exiled. A vast bureaucracy ~~controls our movement~~ is maintained to limit our freedom to ~~travel~~ move from one place to another, to reside on farms or in towns, to seek and take up employment. We are under the constant surveillance of police, spies and informers. Conscripted and organised into a military force, the whites occupy the position of a garrison that maintains guard over a population defeated but ^{not} ~~un~~subdued.

11. ~~Those are the circumstances and reasons that impelled us to embark upon armed struggle against the regime.~~ Thousands of our members have been imprisoned on charges of belonging to the banned African National Congress, or for acts of sabotage, or for violating laws that prohibit all concerted efforts to put an end to racial oppression and colonial exploitation. Our will has not been broken; our people continue to resist; but they have had to improvise new methods of struggle under conditions of illegality. This is hard and dangerous; it calls for skill, courage and patience. We are satisfied with the progress made, but we do not expect spectacular results.

12. The experience of resistance movements in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany showed that a totalitarian state cannot be defeated by an internal rising unless it received material aid from without. Buttressed by satellite states and white minority governments on its frontiers, white supremacists in South Africa have not yet had to face the challenge of an external assault. We are resolved to break through the defences and carry the war into the enemy's camp, and have taken the first step towards that end by joining with the Zimbabwe African People's Union in an armed struggle against Rhodesia's illegal government.