



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

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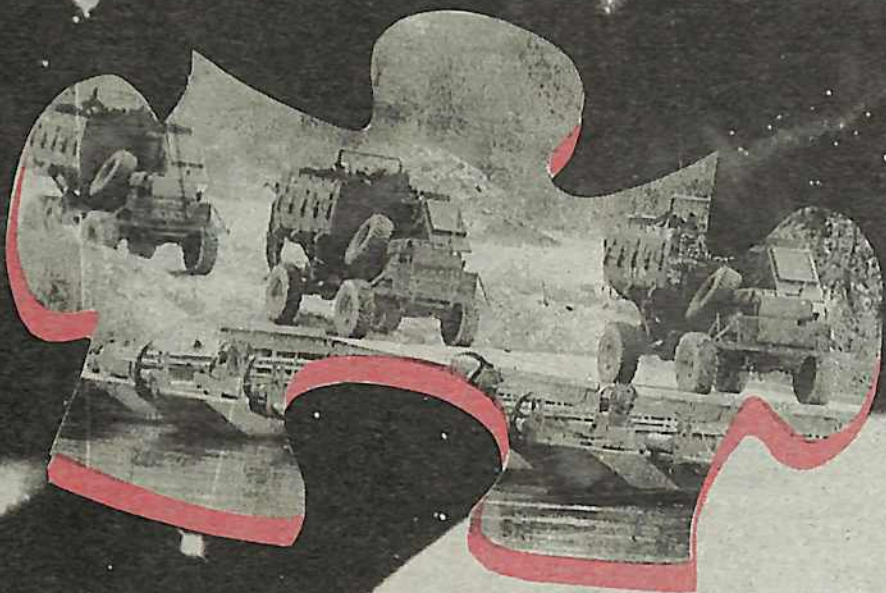
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## South Africa Ends Bloody Occupation in Angola

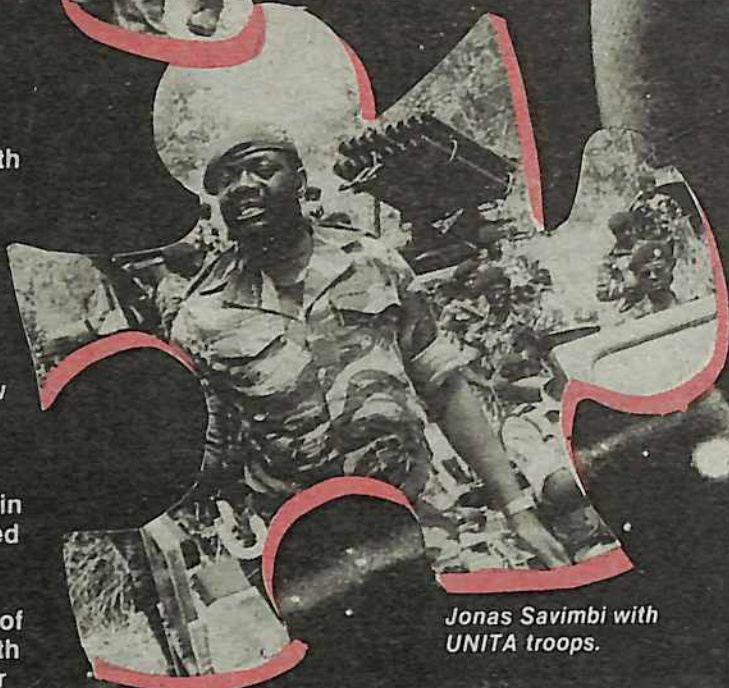
### PIECES BEHIND THE ANGOLA PEACE TALKS



S. African troops leaving Angola.



Cuban soldiers in Angola.



Jonas Savimbi with UNITA troops.

As Angolan, Cuban, and South African military officers shared coffee last week at the Angola-Namibia border, the last of the South African occupation force withdrew from Angolan territory. The South African aggressors had seized territory in southern Angola and worked with the pro-U.S. army of UNITA to attack the Angolan government and cause much devastation among the people. Now the South African withdrawal is described as the first step in a "peace process" involving various forces in the complicated situation in Angola and Namibia. With the United States and the Soviet Union as the ultimate dealers, negotiations are going on for the mutual withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and South African troops from Namibia and for the "independence" of Namibia. But South Africa, the attack dog for the U.S. in the region, is still poised to strike viciously at any time, and the reactionary UNITA forces are still getting Western support. Behind the talks of "peace," both the East and the West are conducting military deployments and buildups which could set the stage for even bigger clashes in the region.

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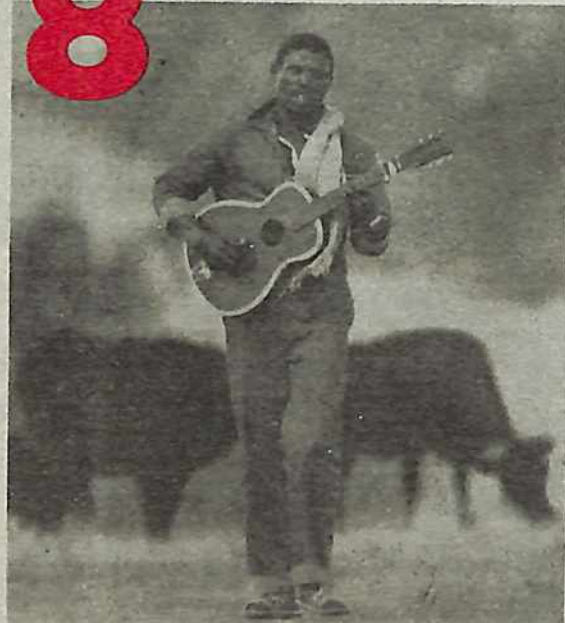
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SPECIAL TO THE RW



## WAR STORIES

a report from South Africa

Part 10

# Three Main Points

by **Bob Avakian**  
Chairman of  
the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation — here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.

# BIKO LIVES!



Michael Rose, Ikey C. and Pablo Moses during Biko Lives! Festival, 1987.

**Saturday, September 24**  
**12:30-7:30 p.m.**

**St. Mary's Park — 147th & St. Ann's, South Bronx**  
**(Raindate: Sunday, September 25)**

**Azania on Fire! Take It Higher!**  
**Free South Africa! Free the South Bronx!**

**Proletarians of the Free South Africa/Free the South Bronx Network,**  
**July 1988**

Endorsers of the Biko Lives! Festival include:

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Oku Onuora  
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania

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Michael Rose  
Archie Shepp  
South West Africa National Union  
Stetsasonic  
Tony T  
Trouble Funk  
Edwina Tyler  
Ujima Sound Productions, Ltd.  
Ray Vega  
Jawole Willa Jo Vollar, Assistant Director, Urban Bush Women\*  
Professor Yaa-Lengi (Zairian pop musician)

\*for identification only

Subway directions to St. Mary's Park:

5 train to 149th St. & Third Avenue, walk east on 149th to St. Ann's, then right to 147th.  
6 train to Brook Avenue, walk east on 138th St. to St. Ann's, then left to 147th.

To contact festival organizers, leave message at 212-969-0681

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# Ethiopia: Dergue in Trouble

Over the past several months the Dergue (the military junta ruling Ethiopia) has suffered serious battlefield defeats in its reactionary wars against the armed insurgents in Eritrea and in the Tigray, Gonder, and Wollo provinces in northern Ethiopia. So far the Ethiopian regime has not been able to decisively reverse these defeats. Backing up the Dergue is the Soviet Union, which supplies most of Ethiopia's military aid. But there are signs that the Western powers also want to help the current Ethiopian rulers survive while at the same time they try to drag the regime back under their control. Meanwhile millions of people in Eritrea and Ethiopia face the threat of famine. It is possible that the Ethiopian regime could sink deeper into crisis, and this situation is making the knot of contradictions in the strategic Horn of Africa even tighter.

## Rebel Victories

In March the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) broke through the Dergue's lines on the Nacfa front in Eritrea. According to various press reports, the EPLF killed or captured some 18,000 Ethiopian troops. They also captured three Soviet military officers and a large part of the Dergue's military hardware—fifty tanks, over 100 military vehicles, and many rockets, artillery, and light arms and ammunition. This was quickly followed by another EPLF victory at Halhal. The EPLF reported that it took one-third of the Dergue's army in Eritrea out of action through these battles.

Reports in the *Washington Post* and elsewhere have described how "the morale of Ethiopian troops and officers in the north, already poor, collapsed," with government troops abandoning their positions in many parts of the region. The EPLF fighters have long controlled most of the rural areas, and after the March

victories they advanced to the gates of Keren, Eritrea's second largest city. On May 14 the *Washington Post* reported that Eritrean rebels "are now within eight miles" of the city of Asmara, the largest population center and capital of Eritrea.

The popular insurgency in northern Ethiopia has also dealt severe blows to the reactionary regime. In late March there were reports that rebels under the leadership of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) had taken the two major towns in Tigray province. And in Wollo province, fighters from the multinational

Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) are reported to have defeated two battalions of government troops.

Besides the recent military defeats, there have been reports that the Dergue is facing growing problems within its army, including large-scale desertions by the troops. There are signs that sharp splits and contradictions are beginning to appear within the Dergue itself. Over the past couple of years a number of high-level government officials have defected

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Refugees  
in Ethiopia.



## U.S./Soviet Dergue Switch

Headed by the U.S.-trained Lt. Col. Mengistu H. Mariam, the Dergue came to power in 1974 when the long-time U.S. lackey Haile Selassie was overthrown by mass upheaval. The Dergue set about consolidating its rule through the use of reactionary terror and repression. Government troops systematically rounded up and murdered over 10,000 of Mengistu's leftist opponents, mostly students, in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital.

The Dergue, which claims to be "revolutionary," also followed in the reactionary footsteps of the Selassie regime by using brutal violence to enforce the privileges of the dominant nationality over the vast majority. Although itself dominated by imperialism, Ethiopia is a kind of "prison house of nations"—its

history has been one of brutal oppression against the Tigrayan, Oromo, and other peoples. In the 1950s Ethiopia took over Eritrea with the backing of the imperialist powers. When the Dergue came to power, far from uniting with the demands of the masses for freedom and equality, it continued the bloody wars of reaction against the just struggle for Eritrean independence and the struggles for national self-determination of the Tigrayan, Oromo, and other oppressed peoples within Ethiopia.

The Horn of Africa is located on the southern end of the Red Sea; on the northern end is the Suez Canal, making the Red Sea a "choke point" in the sea lanes from Asia and the Pacific to Europe. Because of the Horn's strategic location, various big powers have fought

for control of the countries in the area, especially Ethiopia.

In 1977 there was a dramatic shift in the military and political alignments in the region. The Soviet imperialists suddenly abandoned their phony "support" for Eritrean independence and their praises for "socialism" in neighboring Somalia. A deal was struck, and suddenly Lt. Col. Mengistu began calling himself a "Marxist-Leninist" and was praised as such by the Soviets and their allies around the world.

Ethiopia remained economically dependent on the U.S. and its bloc, and today the West continues to have its hooks in the country in a number of ways. But soon after the 1977 switch, military hardware and advisers from the Soviet-bloc countries began pouring into Ethiopia.

Soviet-made napalm replaced U.S.-made napalm; Soviet, East European, and Cuban "advisers" replaced American, West European, and Israeli "advisers" in training the local troops in the vicious techniques of counterinsurgency warfare. Meanwhile the U.S. began backing the reactionary regime of Siad Barre in Somalia, and the U.S. Navy has been able to use the facilities at the Somali port of Berbera.

The big flow of Soviet-bloc weapons allowed the Dergue at first to change the military balance in its favor against the rebel forces and enforce a measure of reactionary "stability." But with the recent military defeats and other difficulties, the Dergue's seat on the throne is looking increasingly shaky. □

# A Woman's Questions: Who's Oppressing Who?

We received the following letter:

To the RW:

I never cease to be surprised when I hear Black men putting out the idea that Black women are helping white society oppress them. For some time I thought this was just another "fluke of capitalism," like white women who think we're "niggers." But I'm beginning to see that, as Avakian says, your views of women's oppression indicates your program for liberation: do you want to smash all oppression, or do you "want in" on a place within this rotting system?

I view this contradiction (of oppressed race men playing the oppressor OF women) to be really critical because so much of a future revolutionary force in the U.S. will consist of Black (and other

oppressed race) men, especially from the Black nationalist forces. Since this backwards view of women persists among these brothers, it is a sign that many of them are fighting for something short of the thoroughgoing revolution. I also think this question will become a battleground in the struggle over revolution vs. reformism.

An example is the speech made by a reformist Black nationalist on African Liberation Day; he spoke entirely on the oppression of "The Black Man." He gave statistics on deaths, homicides, health, working conditions and economic conditions of Black men, implying to the mainly Black audience of perhaps 70 percent women that women of color are NOT oppressed.

But the "muse" of this angry letter is

an article in *Essence* magazine (clearly a "patch-up-the-little-flaws-of-the-system" magazine for Black women) entitled "Men Talk (No Women Allowed)." First off — imagine the uproar of Black men if this magazine ran "Whites Talk (No Blacks Allowed)" maybe as an article of white women and their gripes with their Black sisters. What's the difference? And of course the article gets worse. "When *Essence* invited six fine brothers to a plush hotel and gave them lunch, wine, and 100 questions to answer about their feelings on love, sex, relationships, and Black women," they jumped right into a point that sisters must "become sensitized to the peculiar way we are oppressed. Black men are under an unbelievable amount of stress... (having been defined and judged) by white male society." "And the woman?" "She buys the measuring rod and beats you over the head with it."

The discussion details for us their feelings about having to work hard all day and then have us asking for help with the kids and the garbage ("I want her to be able to handle that without me [saying] 'how come you didn't do this?'"); about the "frustration because I don't have the luxury of being able to articulate problems... that have been bothering me on the job"; about feeling "threatened when you hear her footsteps sneaking up on whatever professional success you may have achieved" and "Black women are outstripping Black men academically and economically because of the way they've been socialized to achieve, to achieve, to achieve"; the difficulty they have in committing to one woman and

their possible responses to finding their mate unfaithful ("I would kill her" and "... would probably get rid of her"); and about birth control ("If a man got pregnant it would be the responsibility of the man," "the woman is responsible for her actions").

This article overall is by far the norm for mainstream Black-run magazines in handling the contradictions between Black women and men. Last year *Ebony* ran a feature on the "phenomenon" of Black women outnumbering Black men in the U.S.; they interviewed many brothers about this, and asked some "social experts" what's going on. We got to see photos of macho men flanked by sexy competing Black sisters, and we read quotes of men who are involved with many women at once, one who said he was "trying to do his share" to help the imbalance. "Experts" told us that we women must stop having high standards or else we will continue "pricing (our)selves right out of a man."

The ideology of "fight this oppression first — even if we are leaving another form of oppression untouched within our own ranks," is present also in the feminist movement. This has led to a section of white women who sincerely hope ALL women will be liberated from patriarchy, but who work only among white women and leave other women to fight our own battles; for example, demanding legal abortion while ignoring (or worse) forced sterilization of minority women. My point is that fighting for the interests of one portion of the oppressed as priority will eventually lead you to stepping on other oppressed groups to achieve your goal. This is what is happening among those who are trying to fight the oppression of Black people mainly by uplifting "Black Manhood."

I do see a basis to end the contradictions between Black women and men; when people are working to defeat the system that causes and thrives off ALL oppression, they do not prioritize their political action by their own individual anger but by their understanding of the nature of this parasitic system. Black men who are truly about revolution DO struggle against the line of oppressing women to win a firmer position of power in the system. They aim their daily anger at the source of this way of life, where it belongs.

A supporter who's tired of being attacked and held down by chauvinist brothers



From A Horrible End, or An End to the Horror? by Bob Avakian

## Dividing Line Among the Oppressed

### The Woman Question and the "Two Radical Ruptures"

In many ways, and particularly for men, the woman question and whether you seek to completely abolish or to preserve the existing property and social relations and corresponding ideology that enslave women (or maybe "just a little bit" of them) is a touchstone question among the oppressed themselves. It is a dividing line between "wanting in" and really "wanting out": between fighting to end all oppression and exploitation — and the very division of society into classes — and seeking in the final analysis to get your part in this, the difference between real revolutionaries and Ah Qs.\*

### Black Women

The suppressed position of Black women in the '60s movement of Black people (and this was true for women generally, but there were particular expressions of this concerning Black women that hold some valuable lessons, by negative example) and the rationalization for this are something which cannot go — and indeed have not gone — unchallenged. From straight-up bourgeois scholars to so-called revolutionaries (including some women, such as the impostor Angela Davis, as well as many men), the notion has been propagated that inequality between women and men and the oppression of women by men does not exist or apply in the same way among Black people as among others — or even that it is reversed! This includes the idea (whether stated straight-up or slightly disguised) that the "emasculatation of the

Black man" has created a situation where it is necessary for him first to realize his "manhood," including by lording it over women, and then maybe the question of equality between the sexes can be taken up.

It is a truth and a searing indictment of America that Black men in the U.S. have suffered barbarous oppression — including literal emasculation — at the hands of slaveowners and other white oppressors. But oppression has assumed forms no less barbarous with regard to Black women. And the answer to the centuries-long oppression of Black people, women and men, in the whole historical development and present-day reality of the U.S. (an oppression which has, however, had different features in different eras) is not to "restore the rites" of patriarchy. Patriarchy and "male rights" serve imperialism, the bourgeoisie, oppression, exploitation, and the division of society into classes and everything that goes with them: they will never serve the struggle to abolish these things.

Secondly, the oppression of Black people has never resulted and does not result today in a situation where Black women have a position of equality with — nor still less that they have a superior position to — Black men (or any other men). The fact is, Black women are oppressed — by Black men as well as more generally by men and most fundamentally by the whole system. (Of course individual cases where women have fucked over men can be cited among Black people as well as in general, and the same could also be said in terms of individual Black people fucking over individual white people, but we are talking about basic social relations here.) And the ending of these unequal and oppressive social relations between men and women is an integral and indispensable part of the overall struggle to end all oppression: the emancipation of the proletariat — and of mankind itself from the fetters and evils of class-divided society — is impossible without the emancipation of women. If you think being free means or must include having a woman (or more than one) to oppress, then you are still striving for the "freedom" of capitalism, not the emancipation of communism — you are still an Ah Q, not a proletarian revolutionary, you are only against corrupt officials, and not against the whole empire.

\* Note from the RW: Ah Q was a character created by the great Chinese revolutionary writer Lu Hsun. Mao made the comment, "Actually, all Ah Q understands by revolution is helping himself to a few things just like others." The essential point here is that unless people who rebel make a leap to thoroughgoing opposition to the whole system and its ideology, ways of thinking, and values, they are liable to end up serving that same system, against revolution.



A Vietnamese village after U.S. bombing

Cleveland, August 18-20. Organizers estimated 50,000 to 150,000 would participate in yet another welcome home parade for Vietnam vets. The theme this time — “Firebase Cleveland” — was especially and openly reactionary. A firebase in Vietnam was a center of attack from which patrols were organized to go out and burn villages and terrorize the population. The logo for the event was a helicopter gunner descending on downtown Cleveland. And the keynote speaker was none other than the defeated ruler of South Vietnam, General Nguyen Cao Ky.

But such reaction didn't go unopposed. Opening ceremonies weren't even through the national anthem when demonstrators appeared, passing out leaflets and carrying signs like, “Would you buy a used war from this man” (Ky) and “No More U.S. Wars of Aggression.” The demonstration was organized by “Life-base Cleveland,” also known as the “Coalition to Stop the Rehabilitation of the Vietnam War and Oppose All Future Imperialist Wars.” Angered by weeks of full-page “Firebase” ads in the local papers, a small group of activists had issued a call to demonstrate.

The call pointed out: “There's a very urgent point to raising this opposition. An April 14th *New York Times* article quotes sources for the Joint Chiefs of Staff as lamenting the fact that they could not use U.S. troops to invade Panama because of the Vietnam syndrome, which they define as ‘irrational fear of war’ by the U.S. public. With a full-scale U.S. funded war going on in El Salvador now, U.S. troops spread from the Persian Gulf to the Philippines, now is the time for us to spread and encourage the Vietnam syndrome.” The statement urged people to oppose the political basis of “Firebase” and called on people to unite around two points: that the massive slaughter of Vietnamese people was *not* less important than Americans killed there; and that the true heroes of the Vietnam War were those who opposed U.S. aggression, in both Vietnam and the U.S., including GIs. Vietnam Veterans Against the War (Anti-Imperialist) was also invited by the coalition to join opposition to “Firebase.”

The small but lively demonstration at the opening “Firebase” ceremonies caused an immediate stir. It was attacked by a handful of patriotic vets, but protesters stood their ground and continued to talk with the vets and their families who had come for the program. Demonstrators made it clear that the attempts to reverse correct verdicts on the Vietnam War and “welcome home” vets as heroes was not going to go unopposed. One member of the coalition, a student activist in the anti-interventionist movement, put it: “The Vietnam War can never be justified. . . . This is part of the whole reactionary agenda to say you're proud to be a vet and everything else. We must make a distinction, a very big distinction, between supporting veterans and supporting the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was a genocidal war. Two and a half million Vietnamese were killed in that war. Fifty-eight thousand GIs were

killed. . . . They were used and abused by the U.S. government. We feel this parade and reunion is an attempt to justify the Vietnam War.”

The call to protest “Firebase” was controversial within the social movements. Some opposed the coalition's call, saying that the veterans had to be “separated” from the war they fought in. There were also some who felt that “Firebase” should not be opposed because it would “alienate” some vets. But people in the coalition struggled to bring out the importance of opposing “Firebase” and exposing that the purpose of such parades is to “welcome home vets” exactly in order to uphold the U.S. crimes against Vietnam.

The demonstration brought out students active in the anti-interventionist movement, pacifists, artists, students, youth, and revolutionaries. The coalition even got a call from a 70-year old woman who came late and missed the demonstration. She said she had been threatened by a group of reactionary vets who said they'd kill her if she didn't leave. The media could not ignore the demonstration, and in fact news of the event was dominated by coverage of the confronta-

## UP AGAINST “FIREBASE CLEVELAND”



tion at the opening ceremonies. Also, the day of the parade a member of VVAW(AI) was interviewed on a local radio talk show.

The demonstration went up against — and correctly so — those vets who uphold U.S. crimes in Vietnam and their role in the genocide. One reactionary vet quoted in the *Plain Dealer* proudly acknowledged his role in attacking the demonstrators and commented on how things lined up: “They [the demonstrators] belonged in our parade as much as James Brown belongs in a Klan meeting.” (Was he comparing the parade to a KKK meeting?!)

To the disappointment of “Firebase” organizers, only around 5,000 marched in the parade. And coalition activists again made sure that opposition to “Firebase” could not be ignored. A huge 30-foot by 16-foot banner made by local artists was held right up in the middle of the festivities. It read, “2.5 Million Vietnamese War Dead 1963-1975.” This banner made many who had come to see the parade stop and think. One Black man after reading the banner said, “That's why I feel very strongly, all those people who died. I've been thinking about all the

children who died. That's why we shouldn't be doin' this shit, all these parades and shit. It just never occurred to me before that so many people died. The Vietnam War was nothing but a waste.”

A Black vet standing on the sidelines told of how he was drafted but got out of going to Vietnam. He said, “I got put on the Army basketball team. I guess I would have gone to jail otherwise, 'cause I wasn't gonna go over there and do that shit. . . . I wasn't gonna be fighting and killing people on their own land! My mind was made up. If they had called me to go, I was goin' to jail — there was no justice in that war. Blacks are third- and fourth-class citizens in this country, then they're expected to go fight and die? That's bullshit! It was an atrocious war, all those lives were given in vain.” Another Black vet who'd been in Vietnam and spent six years in the Marines said he had been personally invited to march in the parade but had outright refused. He said, “I'm not about to go down there and celebrate this stinking thing. The war was a total mistake.”

A couple of white youth with “Firebase Cleveland” T-shirts were also drawn to the coalition banner. One youth had a shirt which read, “My dad is a Vietnam vet and I'm proud.” The youth said they had gone to see the display at the convention center which had endless tables of blood-drenched Vietnam War memorabilia, home movies of Vietnam, medals, and Jane Fonda hate stickers. They said they had been disgusted by it all, hadn't found much to be proud of, and decided they wouldn't do what their fathers had done.

The night of the “welcome home” parade a forum was held called, “What Are the Lessons of Vietnam Today.” The coalition worked on this forum which was sponsored by the Central America Coalition of Northeast Ohio and the CSU Students for Central America. The crowd of sixty people which included high school and college students, Black nationalists, and Central America activists, watched the movies “Witness to War” and “Only the Beginning” and heard a talk by a VVAW(AI) member. Some people came to the forum after seeing the demonstration on TV, including a minister active in the Pledge of Resistance who drove up from Akron and said he wished he had been at the demonstration.

Debate continued over whether it was correct to oppose “Firebase.” During the discussion some people said they thought maybe the demonstration had been wrong because they were attacked by reactionary vets. But one Black nationalist countered this view, saying, “I don't think you can be too concerned with that. Number one, the Vietnamese people were the ones that suffered. . . . You can't put your hands in the air because you're afraid somebody might beat you up. . . . you can't let that make you afraid to speak your mind.” Another person got up and said the coalition action was the most tremendous thing he'd seen in a long time. He said, “I'm very glad these people had the courage to go out and confront those people. Thank you.” □

# East vs. West in Angola and Namibia



Cuban soldiers guarding Chevron oil wells in Cabinda, Angola.

A look at the recent background of East-West contention over Angola and Namibia is helpful in getting a grasp on the complex situation and maneuvers of the U.S. and Soviet blocs in the area today.

### Angola — From Portuguese Colonialism to Soviet Neocolonialism

November 1975 marked the official end of centuries of Portuguese colonial rule in Angola. But what replaced colonial rule was not an independent and liberated society. The Portuguese withdrawal came in the middle of a fierce struggle for control of the country between several Angolan forces backed by the major powers. The U.S. supported the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA. These pro-West factions were aided by the South African army, along with troops from Zaire and assorted mercenary forces. The Soviets backed the MPLA and sent in hundreds of "advisers" and thousands of Cuban troops. By February 1976 the MPLA established a government, and the Soviets had gained

their first major foothold in southern Africa at the expense of the West. They quickly turned Angola into a heavily fortified military garrison sitting in the heart of an area very important to U.S. strategic plans.

The Soviets carry out their domination in Angola through their influence over the MPLA, which controls the state bureaucracy and military, as well as through the presence of thousands of Cuban "advisers" and troops in the country. However, large and important sections of the Angolan economy remained under Western control even after MPLA came to power. One stark example of this was given by Nicholas Cummings in the article "Angola: A Case Study in Soviet Neocolonialism" (*Revolution*, Spring 1984): "Nowhere is the involvement of Western imperialism more evident than in the oil industry, which provides 80 percent of Angola's foreign exchange earnings and approximately 65 percent or more of the total government revenue. Gulf Oil, which produces 80 percent of all the oil produc-

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## PIECES BEHIND THE ANGOLA PEACE TALKS

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Since early May the U.S. government has sponsored a series of meetings between the South African apartheid regime and the pro-Soviet governments of Angola and Cuba. The Soviet Union has been involved as an "unofficial observer" in these negotiations, pledging to "lend its prestige and influence." The first part of the "peace settlement" involved a cease-fire between the Angolan military and the South African military, which had been occupying southern Angola, and the withdrawal of the South African troops. This has now been carried out.

The participants have also announced that they have agreed in principle to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and implementation of UN Resolution 435, which involves withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia and holding of UN-supervised elections. And there was a report last week that Cuba's UN ambassador met for two days of secret talks with a delegation from UNITA, the U.S.- and South African-backed army led by Jonas Savimbi which is waging war on Angola's MPLA government. But there is a sharp disagreement between Cuba and South Africa about the timetable for the withdrawal of the Cuban troops. According to the latest reports, South Africa is demanding that all Cuban troops get out of Angola by June of next year, while Cuba wants a phased withdrawal over eighteen months. This could be the one issue that torpedoed the whole agreement.

Why are the U.S. and Soviet blocs now coming to some agreements in Angola and Namibia after years of conflict and contention? And just what are they agreeing to?

### The Soviets "Cleaning House" in Angola

The recent talks and agreements followed a year of heavy warfare in southern Angola in which both the Soviet-dominated MPLA government and the U.S.-sponsored South African and UNITA forces suffered some serious losses. In August 1987 government forces launched a major assault against the city of Mavinga, a UNITA stronghold. Only a massive intervention by the South African Defense Force saved UNITA. The South Africans in fact beat back the MPLA forces and forced them to retreat to Cuito Cuanavale.

The combined South African and UNITA forces then launched a major attack of their own on Cuito. At this point the Cuban troops intervened in order to save the MPLA military from defeat. This was the first time that the Cuban troops stationed in Angola had gone head to head with the South Africans since the original battle for Angola in 1975-76. The attack on Cuito Cuanavale developed into a long siege described as the largest conventional battle ever fought in southern Africa. But the South African military lost the battle and, for the first time ever, reported large numbers of casualties among its white troops.

For the Soviets, the defeat suffered by the MPLA troops at Mavinga underscored the mess they had on their hands in Angola. The recent developments made it clear that any attempt by the Angolan army to wipe out UNITA would not only be unsuccessful but could quickly develop into a very explosive military situation. The Soviets faced the possibility of being sucked directly into the Angolan situation in a much bigger way.

But to leave things as it is in Angola is also impossible for the Soviets. The MPLA government is in deep trouble. Thirteen years of war with South Africa and UNITA has devastated much of the country, including large areas of the most productive farm and mining areas. Nearly one-third of Angola's people has been displaced or severely affected by the war. The population of the cities has mushroomed as war refugees seek security and safety. According to UN statistics, Angola has the highest number of amputees in the world; most of these people have lost one or more limbs to land mines planted by UNITA and South Africa. Angola now has a foreign debt of at least \$4 billion, mainly to the West, while more than 65 percent of the annual budget is eaten up by the war effort. Angola's food needs for the next year will only be met by massive imports of food. Even the production of coffee, once a mainstay export crop, has been reduced to a trickle by the war.

Because of Angola's strategic importance, the Soviets have continued to back the MPLA regime even though Angola is no longer able to pay for the large amounts of Soviet arms. But it is not just a question of Angola being a drain on Soviet resources. If things continued to deteriorate in Angola, the Soviets faced the danger of a collapse of the MPLA regime and the loss of a key outpost in central and southern Africa. So they are maneuvering to cut their losses and minimize their risks.

In May a Soviet diplomat stationed in Angola said, "We want to clean house. In the area of regional conflicts, we are in favor of political solutions." The recent Soviet moves in Angola and Namibia are part of the overall political and military

adjustments that Gorbachev has been pushing internationally. This does not mean that the Soviets are simply pulling out of all the drawn-out conflicts they are involved in. Rather, they are trying to "clean house" in Angola and make some tactical adjustments in order to strengthen their ability to contend with the rival Western empire. They hope that a break in the military conflict would enable the MPLA regime to survive, even with the withdrawal of some or much of the Cuban troops, and that the agreements may even open up some opportunities for economic "aid" from the West into Angola.

Although the Angolan government follows the orders coming out of the Kremlin, it seems that there are some worries within the MPLA and the forces influenced by it about the intentions of the Soviets and the effects of their moves. While the Soviets publicly support the MPLA in its refusal to deal with UNITA, there are also reports that Moscow has been pushing the Angolan regime to cut a deal with Savimbi. The difficulties faced by the pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan after the Soviet troops began pulling out of that country earlier this year seem to be adding to the worries. The *Journal de Angola*, a newspaper controlled by the MPLA government, even had to run a front-page editorial which criticized any comparisons between Angola and Afghanistan as "pure error, carelessness or bad faith."

### U.S. — Taking Advantage of Soviet Moves

For South Africa and its U.S. backers, the battles at Mavinga and Cuito Cuanavale also highlighted some difficulties they faced. Especially with the unprece-



Angola, 1975.

## Who's Who in the Conflict

• **Angola:** Soon after the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule in 1975, Angola became a neocolony under Soviet domination. Since then the pro-Soviet Angolan government has been supported by billions of dollars in Soviet arms and thousands of Cuban troops. The Angolan military has been fighting against the pro-U.S. UNITA army which controls big sections of eastern Angola and against the invading South African forces.

• **MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola):** One of the three original groups opposed to Portuguese colonialism. It was politically and militarily very weak at the time of the collapse of Portuguese rule, but with backing from the Soviet Union it rose to power as the new government in Angola.

• **UNITA (National Union for Total Independence of Angola):** Another of the three original anti-Portuguese groups. Since the rise of MPLA to power, UNITA

has waged war against the government. UNITA is closely aligned with apartheid South Africa and receives military aid from the U.S.

• **Namibia:** Also known as South West Africa, Namibia was a former German colony that was put under the control of South Africa after World War I. Its economy, government, and military is basically dominated by South Africa.

• **SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization):** The pro-Soviet opposition

group in Namibia. SWAPO launched an armed struggle in 1967, but after the organization came under Soviet influence in the mid-1970s it only conducted sporadic sabotage as a pressure tactic against the government and South Africa. This is based on the Soviet strategy for setting up a power-sharing scheme with the West in Namibia. □

dented casualties of white soldiers, the war in Angola was beginning to create opposition even within the apartheid rulers' social base inside South Africa. For example, the Dutch Reformed Church, the main Afrikaner church, came out to publicly question the South African occupation in Angola.

But the U.S. maneuvers in the Angola/Namibia "peace" talks are also based on an attempt to take advantage of some of the shifts and adjustments that the Soviets are trying to make in Angola and the region as a whole in order to push forward Western interests. For many years the Soviets have rejected the idea put forward by the U.S. government for so-called "linkage" in any political settlement for the region — in other words, that South African withdrawal from Namibia and elections in that country must be linked to Cuban withdrawal from Angola. But now the Soviets have had to accept this in principle.

On their side of the "linkage," the U.S. and South Africa are not really giving anything up in agreeing to the UN "independence" plan for Namibia. The UN plan does call for South African troops to get out of Namibia, but it says nothing about the South West Africa Territorial Force, the 24,000-man army created by South Africa and led by South African officers, or the Koevoet, the secret police commanded by South African police. Nor are there any provisions about Walvis Bay, the only deep-water port in Namibia, which South Africa claims is part of Cape Province. And the UN plan says nothing about the South African economic domination of Namibia. At the same time, guerrillas from SWAPO, the pro-Soviet Namibian group, and Namibian exiles living in camps in Angola are required to go through specific check points when reentering Namibia. As they go through they will be registered and disarmed, and the guerrillas will be largely confined to

camps.

As a result, even if elections were held in Namibia and SWAPO managed to gain some positions in the government, the country will still be under South African and Western control. The UN plan will not lead to genuine independence of Namibia but is a scheme to set up a less-exposed form of South African and Western domination there. For one thing, the U.S. hopes that this will allow South Africa to play a more open part in the Western war bloc (see "Crocker's Secret Agenda").

In Angola the South Africa troops have withdrawn for the moment but the U.S. is counting on other means to pressure the MPLA regime. The U.S. has declared that Angola would have to make even more sweeping internal changes before they are allowed to join the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and become eligible for Western "aid" and loans. Such changes no doubt would increase the West's already substantial economic position in Angola. UNITA is also still very much a threat. In June UNITA leader Savimbi came to the U.S. and received another statement of support from the Reagan administration. Savimbi even met liberal Democratic Senator Dodd who said that UNITA would get "unanimous support" in the Senate if it cut its ties with South Africa. Around the same time the Reagan administration proposed that U.S. aid to UNITA be increased from last year's \$15 million to \$40 million this year. U.S. officials have demanded that MPLA bring UNITA into a coalition government and have declared that the U.S. will not stop aid to Savimbi until the Soviets stop aid to Angola.

And if Cuban troops do leave, they would have to come all the way across the Atlantic in order to come to the aid of the Angolan government again. On the other hand, even if the South African troops get out of Namibia, they can fairly quick-

ly invade Angola again.

The U.S. might also be looking for a way to put more pressure on the pro-Soviet African National Congress in South Africa. One of the "principles" being discussed during the Angola/Namibia talks is the possibility of Angola denying bases inside its territory in return for South African support for UNITA. Such a move would mean that the nearest ANC base to South Africa would be at least 750 miles away. Meanwhile, UNITA would still be able to operate from eastern Angola or bases in Zaire.

### Building Up the Guns on Both Sides

At this point, the agreement on Angola and Namibia could still collapse quickly. Even if the agreement is carried through, there are ominous military developments taking place behind all the "peace" talk which point to brewing confrontations.

In April, just before the talks began, the U.S. launched a joint military exercise with Zaire along the northern border of Angola. As part of this exercise, code-named Operation Flintlock '88 and conducted by the U.S. European Command, AWACS radar planes were used to patrol the northern and eastern borders of Angola, and more than \$50,000 was spent to repair the Kamina air base in Zaire, an old airbase built by the Belgians during their colonial rule in Zaire. Kamina is one of the largest military airbases in Africa and is one of at least six new bases the U.S. has opened along the Zaire/Angola border area. A couple of these bases are concentrated in the little strip of land that separates the oil-rich Cabinda Province — an extremely important area for the MPLA — from the rest of Angola. The rest of the bases are stretched all the way across the border area. The U.S. troops reportedly left a large number of their weapons at these bases after the exercises were over. According to Western diplomats and UN workers in the region, the U.S. is using

these bases to train UNITA troops and open up a new northern front in Angola. So far this year at least 60 percent of UNITA's actions in Angola have taken place in this new front region.

On the other side the Soviets have carried out some dramatic moves of their own in Angola. In addition to a large increase within the past year in the number of the Cuban troops stationed in Angola, the Soviets also approved a strategic redeployment of these troops. Since 1976 the Cubans have avoided combat with the South African forces and remained stationed about 130 miles north of the Namibian border. Just before the talks began, however, the Cubans moved down to positions within twelve miles of the border. They have dug in along a 280-mile-long defensive line and moved huge amounts of military hardware up to these positions. According to one report the Cubans have positioned at least 400 tanks along this line. The Cubans have also been busy constructing airbases across southern Angola that are capable of handling Soviet-supplied MIG jet fighters. Soviet weapons have continued to pour into Angola. In the year before the peace talks began, the Soviets shipped at least \$1 billion worth of weapons into the country. Enough new MIGs have been supplied to the MPLA to give it at least parity with and, according to some claims, superiority over South Africa in the air. The Soviets seem to be confident that even if most of the Cuban troops leave Angola, the MPLA military — battle-hardened by thirteen years of war and well armed and trained by the Soviet bloc — will be able to defend itself against UNITA and South African forces.

The East and West blocs, each with their own interests in mind, have come to some temporary agreements in Angola and Namibia. But these agreements are based on guns and bullets, and sooner or later they are bound to break down and lead to even bloodier wars. □

*"Very few reporters get me fired up for the right reasons; they get me angry because of their ridiculous distortions about the war in occupied Azania and because of their imperialistic chauvinism. However, the RW reporter who brought Azania to the West in the series "War Stories" rekindled my anger on the situation in the country and brought the reality of the war in the streets of Azania alive. When I find truth in the RW about my country, it makes credible what I read about other struggles in other countries in the RW."*

**Amandla!**

*An Azanian revolutionary living in the U.S.*

# WAR STORIES

a report from South Africa

By Michael Slate

Part 10

*For three years a great upsurge rocked the apartheid regime of South Africa. This rising was more widespread and more ferocious than any rebellion there since the youth of Soweto kicked off a countrywide liberation movement in the late 1970s. The apartheid rulers responded with a brutal state of emergency which has been in force in some parts of the country for almost three years. Little news has come of the struggle in South Africa in many months.*

*The Western press has gone right along with the big press blackout imposed by Pretoria, censoring themselves and preventing news of the situation in South Africa from reaching the oppressed people in the imperialist countries. But Michael Slate, correspondent for the Revolutionary Worker, traveled to South Africa where he was able to investigate the current situation, learn more about the upsurge, and talk firsthand to a wide range of revolutionary people. The Revolutionary Worker has been featuring a series of articles on his observations in the hope that this will contribute to hastening the day when the racist South African regime is brought down and genuine liberation for the black people from apartheid and imperialism is achieved.*

*Issues of the RW with the first nine parts of this series are available at Revolution Books and other local distributors. In Part 10, Slate looks at the how the apartheid system has ripped off the land and labor of the African people.*

## Borders

"Well, we can all breathe easier now. We've just left South Africa and entered the independent nation of Transkei. Here black people are free, there is no apartheid." The Azanian revolutionary sitting next to me laughed with a bitter edge in his voice. "I hope you didn't miss the border. Wait a minute — we better straighten up now because I think we just passed back into South Africa again. Was that a border we crossed there? Okay, we're free again — we just drove back into the Transkei." The four of us riding to the capital of Transkei, Umtata, that day had a good laugh. The driver, a revolutionary who was born and raised in the Transkei but was now living in another part of the country, added a serious note, "It's funny, but it is also vicious and insane. Pretoria holds fast to these nonexistent borders. If you aren't qualified to be a permanent resident of one of the urban townships, you'll be deported back to these prisons. If you were born here and were living here when independence was declared, to the Boers you are a foreigner, a citizen of the independent and sovereign nation of Transkei — 'finish und klar!'"

Apartheid has an obsession with borders. There are white borders and black borders, African borders, "Colored" borders, and Indian borders. There are bus borders, train borders, restaurant borders, and toilet borders.

But this is only the beginning. If apartheid was worked out to its final solution, the southern tip of the African continent would consist of ten separate and fragmented "independent Black nations" within something the Afrikaners call the "independent white nation" of South Africa. Even now the madness of apartheid has created a mind-boggling maze of dozens and dozens of borders which have one function: to keep the masses of black people down and the apartheid regime in power.

There are the so-called "international borders," the mostly invisible lines that separate the Republic of South Africa from the four "independent black states." Transkei and Ciskei are both in the Eastern Cape and are supposed to be the home territories of the Xhosa-speaking people. Bophuthatswana, most of which is in the Transvaal Province with a little section in the Orange Free State, is supposed to be the homeland of the Tswana people. And Venda, in the Northern Transvaal, is supposed to be the home of the Vhacenda.

Next come the borders with the other six bantustans, the ones not yet considered "independent" but according to the logic of apartheid, on their way to "independence." These include KwaZulu in Natal, Lebowa in the Northern Transvaal, Gazankula also in the Northern Transvaal, QwaQwa, an extremely overpopulated and very tiny patch of land in the Drakensberg mountain range that straddles the Orange Free State and Natal, KaNgwane in the Transvaal and bordering on Swaziland, and KwaNdebele which is also in the Transvaal.

And these borders are multiplied many times over since most of the bantustans are broken into bits. The original layout of the ten bantustans consisted of ninety-eight different bits. This extreme breaking up of the land





Special to the RW



David Turnley/Detroit Free Press

A girl from a farmworker's family in rural Orange Free State

has been somewhat slowed over the years, usually by adding land to or taking it away from the bantustan concerned. In the early years the government quickly took back any bantustan land that was found to have valuable mineral deposits on it and just as quickly shed itself of no-good farmed-out "white land" by handing it over to the bantustans. KwaZulu today consists of ten different sections separated from one another by islands of "white land." Lebowa and Bophuthatswana consist of six different segments each. Trying to deal with all of these various "borders" on a daily basis is enough to drive one insane. But there is a method to this madness.

## Theft

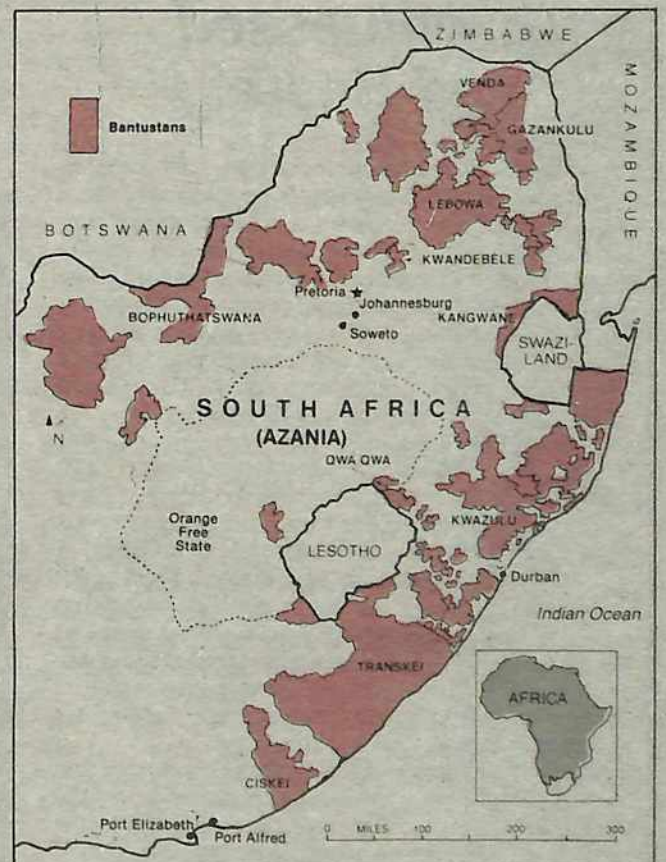
Cattle whose hides stretched tightly over their ribs wandered around in a daze searching for something to eat on the severely overgrazed land by the roadside. As the driver of our car pointed out, there's more than a seeming insanity to apartheid's borders and bantustans. The vicious logic and method of apartheid has been extremely profitable for the South African rulers and their Western backers. And the bantustan system has played an important role in maintaining this whole setup.

Carved out of the country with guns and a series of laws, the original Native Reserves and the present-day bantustans were a key element in the theft of the land from the Azanian people. Through this process 87 percent of the land was declared "white territory." This left 13 percent of the land to serve as "homelands" for the masses of African people who make up at least 70 per-

cent of the population. According to some estimates, 50 percent of the African people are stuck on these desolate reservations today. The majority of them are women, the very sick, the very young, and the very old. In the areas designated "white only," the average population is thirty people per square mile while the population density in the bantustans as a whole averages out at 120 people per square mile.

For the men who run South Africa and their godfathers in the United States and Western Europe, the creation of the Native Reserves and the bantustans was bound up with creating and maintaining a brutal migrant labor system. As Raymond Lotta points out in his article "The Political Economy of Apartheid," the bantustan system allowed for maximum control over the movement of black people and a kind of bare bones economy in the reserves which allowed the capitalists to exploit the black workers to the max.

The pitiful economy of the bantustans has always been restricted and purposely held back so that there is always a steady pressure on the bantustan residents to look for work in the cities or on the white farms. At the same time, the existence of some production in the bantustans — mostly raising cattle and subsistence farming — allowed the imperialists and the South African rulers to push off some of the cost of maintaining the labor force to the bantustans themselves, thereby enabling them to pay the black workers obscenely low wages. The large extended families in the reserves care for the sick and the old and educate the children (for which Africans must pay). So the capitalist sector and the state do not pay the cost of



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# WAR STORIES

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these social functions. And the household work and subsistence labor of the women on the reserves is a big part of this subsidy to capital. Maoists call this situation "superexploitation" — where the whole slave-like setup allows the capitalists to pay the workers below the value of their labor power, not just for a time, but as a rule.

Today the bantustans are barren wastelands with a rapidly intensifying explosive potential. The contradictions of the apartheid system have been rubbed raw and even the subsistence production that was supposed to have existed in the bantustans has all but disappeared as the populations have doubled and tripled. An Azanian nurse who had worked in a couple of different bantustans told me that as bad as it is in Transkei, there are other bantustans that are far worse. The QwaQwa bantustan now has a population of 500,000 people and a population density of 2,200 Azanians per square mile. When it was first founded in 1970 it had a population of 23,000. The land that was originally set aside for QwaQwa was only capable of sustaining 1,000 people.

As we drove through the Transkei I saw little that even hinted that there was some kind of viable economic life in the area. There were a lot of rocks and dusty mountains. Villages consisting of traditional round huts were scattered along the highway. In the areas closer to South African cities there were large resettlement camps that resembled the squatter camps seen all over the country. People come to these camps in hopes of being able to secure a job in the industrial regions of South Africa or in the coal, gold, and diamond mines. I saw no farms and no crops. Transkei only produces one-third of the food it consumes.

Transkei is the most developed of all the Bantustans, yet 70 percent of the three million people living there (in an area of approximately 18,000 square miles) live below subsistence level. Many people have no income at all. Most families live on the money sent back to them by migrant workers. Sixty-six percent of all the employment earnings in the Transkei are actually these sendbacks from the migrants.

While the export of labor remains the main cash producer for all of the bantustans (except the showcase of "independent Bophuthatswana" which has the Sun City gambling complex and the world's largest platinum mine), I did hear that the government was encouraging industry to move into or on the border of the bantustans. All kinds of cash incentives are being handed out as a lure for industry. Wages paid to bantustan workers can be as low as fourteen Rand a week, about seven U.S. dollars. Unions have been outlawed in many of the bantustans. Huge government subsidies, generally enough to cover the cost of machinery or the wages of the workers, and easy loans are readily available to companies wanting to start up operations in a bantustan. So far, the main investors have been Israel, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

It is common for liberals in the West and reformists in Africa to argue that the racial restrictions and prohibitions of apartheid are out of sync with modern industrial growth. And some people even argue that demands of capitalist industry will gobble up apartheid. But as we left the Transkei, I was struck by the reality of the analysis made by Lotta: "It has been necessary to 'modernize' this system of superexploitation. . . . But such changes remain within the framework of apartheid. This is not a matter of irrationality or stubbornness but of things turning into their opposite: one of the safest investments in the world is now rated as one of the riskiest; a highly profitable system is now bursting at the seams."

## Downpressed and Hostel

As we drove into the Mzimhlophe hostel my companion, a revolutionary activist living in a backyard room in another part of Soweto, pointed to a few blocks of run-down barracks. "Over there you will find mainly families these days. The Boers have converted part of the Mzimhlophe hostel into housing for some of the squatters in the ghetto. This is what they call their housing development program. They didn't really do anything to change the hostels, just threw up a couple of walls and moved a bunch of people in from Kliptown."

There are many hostels in Soweto, some new and some very dilapidated. All together they house about 50,000 migrant workers. For the most part the hostels house only the men who have come from the bantustans on a migrant labor contract. In recent years, however, a hostel for women migrants has been erected. Most of the hostel residents take on the lowest paying and hardest jobs in the area — like working on the road crews or collecting garbage. Of all the hostels Mzimhlophe is one of the worst. It is completely isolated from the rest of Soweto. It sits off in a garbage-strewn dirt field and is surrounded by a high, barbed-wire fence.

We turned into a narrow dirt road. Long barracks that looked like they were on the verge of collapse turned the dirt road into a narrow alley that stretched as far as the eye could see. On both sides of the road groups of men



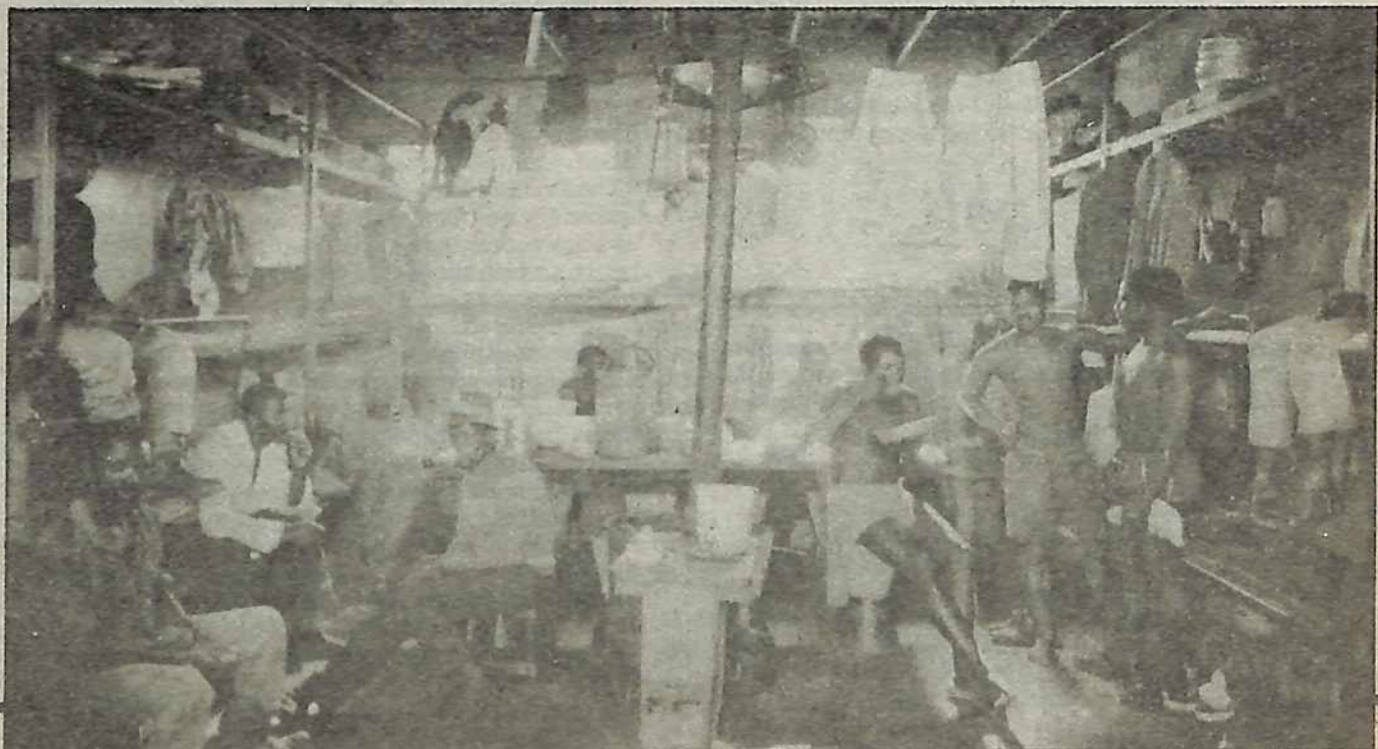
Transkei

sat around talking, arguing, and drinking. As we approached one of the barracks a group of angry men cut us off and demanded to know who we were and what we wanted. After my companion explained who we were and why we were visiting the hostel, one of the men offered to take us inside. The building was typical of all the older hostels. The front door opened up into a common room with a wood stove and a set of rough wooden table and benches. There was no plumbing, no heat, bare electric wiring, and cold concrete walls and floors. Off to either side were little rooms with four or more concrete slabs that served as beds. The roof was ragged asbestos. After a quick tour our host brought us back outside where he rejoined his friends. Most of the men in Mzimhlophe speak Zulu, so my companion tried to translate some of the questions I wanted to ask about the recent upsurge. In another hostel the men had been very responsive and one man had wishfully confided to me that the men in his barracks had not only supported the street-fighting youth during the upsurge but were actually "telling the youth how to fight." And one old migrant worker in the Western Cape had told me how many of the migrant workers from the Transkei supported the armed uprising in Pondoland. But for the most part the men here were gruff and unresponsive.

As we headed back to our car an old man in a wheelchair blocked our path. His legs had been amputated above the knees as the result of an injury he had received while working as a migrant laborer in a factory many years earlier. He had been listening to our attempts to talk with the other group of men and wanted to add something. As my companion translated from Zulu to English, I got a sense of how the whole setup of the bantustans and the migrant labor system pressed on the proletarians to act against their own historic interests. "You'll find it difficult to get anyone to talk to you about

the situation here or what is going on in the townships. It is too dangerous. We don't know you. You could be anyone — today we talk and tomorrow we are gone, packed off to die and never able to come back. Can you change that? Can you do anything for us? No! It is bad here but each of us knows that it is worse back where we came from. I stayed here even after I could no longer work because I knew that if I was to return to Zululand I would die. We came here to make a living, to be able to support our families. Each of these men has many, many people depending on them back home. We cannot get involved and we won't talk — it's too much of a risk."

As we drove back out of the hostel my companion began to talk about the history of the place. Some of these same men had been mobilized by the police and the reactionary Gatsha Buthelezi to attack rebelling students during the Soweto uprisings a decade earlier. As he spoke he pointed to graffiti slashed across the side walls of some of the barracks and the building housing the showers and toilets. They were Zulu slogans upholding and praising Buthelezi's reactionary Zulu-based Inkatha organization and the Inkatha-sponsored trade union. The Azanian activist commented on the graffiti. "You see, these men are afraid to act or participate in things against the system because they know they can easily be sent back to the bantustan and replaced by someone else. They have seen what happens to the striking miners. They get sent back, replaced, and are unofficially barred from ever working in the cities again. But there are other things that help to keep up the conservatism here. Inkatha and Buthelezi really run the hostel for the police and Pretoria. It is one thing to be on the bad side of the government, that is bad enough for these men. But if they also end up on the bad side of Inkatha and Buthelezi, then they and their families back in the bantustan might as well be dead."



A migrant worker's hostel.

## The Girl with the Bottle

A long line of women and young children collecting water in assorted huge containers signaled the approach of a squatter camp. The Azanian revolutionary with me made a pointed observation. "Apartheid forces people into these camps. They don't house people. They need these camps. They let our people fester here and then they can raid them when they want, use them to get the cheapest of cheap labor whenever they need it. But it turns back on them too. These camps are very explosive places and they become more so with each new crisis. This worries Pretoria. That's why they spend so much effort trying to move the camps as far away from the cities as they can. That's why they attack the camps so much. They know that they will never be able to get rid of them but they want to keep them under control as much as possible. The more pressure they bring on these places, it will make the explosion even more powerful."

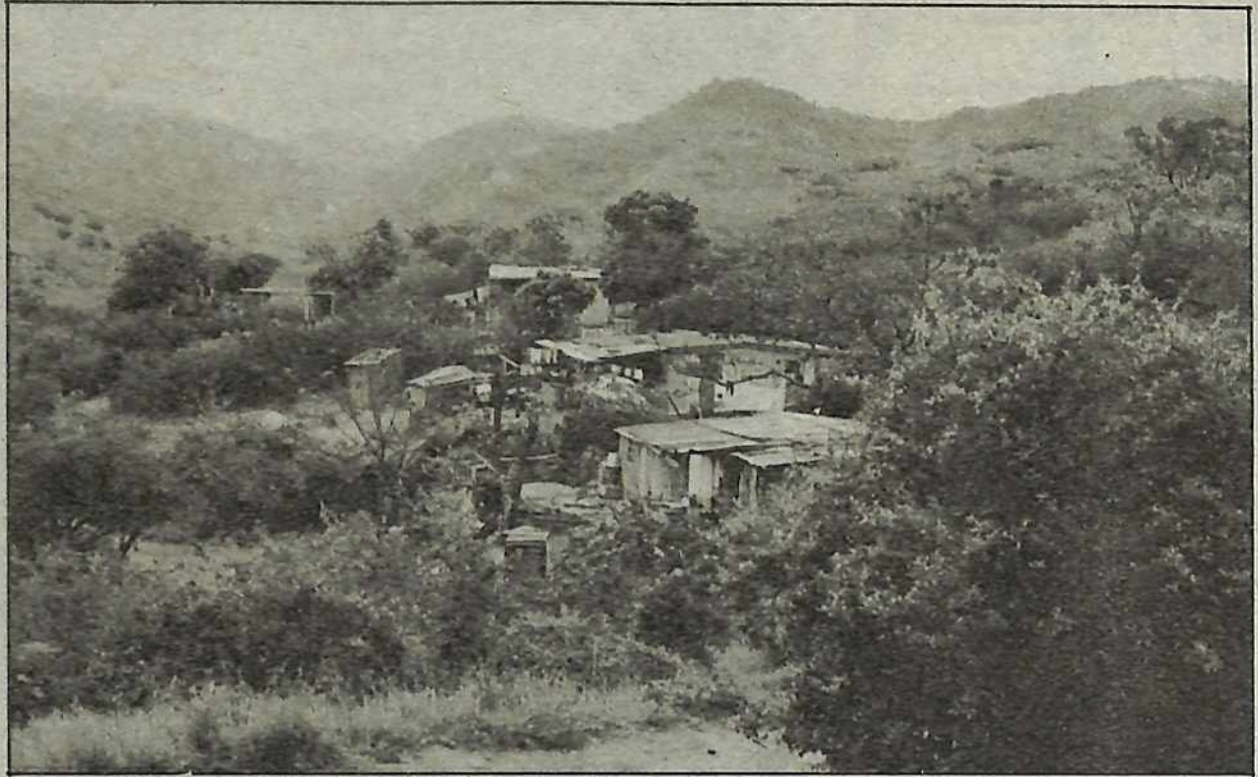
Durban is a city of squatters. Seventy-five percent of the urban work force lives in squatter camps. According to official estimates alone, there are more than a million squatters. In some parts of the city and the townships squatters can even be found living on the islands that separate the traffic lanes on freeways. Along a three-mile portion of the "border" that separates Durban from a section of the KwaZulu bantustan there are at least 300,000 squatters. That's just ten miles from the elegant hotels, restaurants, and night spots of the "Golden Mile."

Durban is the main city in Natal Province and Natal is the province where the majority of Azanians classified as Indians live, the vast majority of them being either urban workers or farm workers on the sugar cane and tea plantations throughout the province. In addition to the large African townships on the outskirts of the city there are also some very large Indian townships. While some of these townships are clearly well-to-do, others are ghettos similar to the African townships like Lamontville and Umlazi. Chatsworth is one of these townships, a working class ghetto where the neighborhoods of small, overcrowded houses and apartment buildings are known by numbered sections rather than by names.

We were sitting in a small shop in Chatsworth having a breakfast of "bunny chow," a loaf of bread with its center cut out and filled with mutton, chicken, or some other type of curry. The Azanian activist who had put me up for the night — suspicious South African riot police the night before had made it unwise to return to the African township I had been staying in just then — suggested that we spend the day checking out Chatsworth. As the day grew later and we drove deeper into Chatsworth, I began to notice a steady stream of men and women, both African and Indian, some loaded down with huge bundles of food or other supplies, heading in the same direction. About a hundred yards ahead the township seemed to end. It looked like the road just dropped off at that point, disappeared into one of the huge valleys of low trees and brush that cut between the rolling hills that characterize so much of the terrain in that part of Natal. And the people going along the side of the road just kept vanishing into the valley.

We drove towards the point where the tarred road ended and dropped out of sight. Beyond this point was a steep dirt road cutting down into the valley. Shacks that had been built out of cardboard, wood, and metal lined the sides of the road. About a hundred yards beyond the road similar shacks had been constructed on the side of the hills, some of them at an angle so acute it seemed that a stiff breeze would have knocked them over and sent them tumbling down into the valley. "This place is known as Welbedacht. Many of the people you saw walking down into the valley live here in these shacks. Some are returning from work, some from looking for work. Azanians classified both Indian and African live here. They have for many generations. Some of the women walking down the road use this as a shortcut to the African township further out. It's horrible when it rains. It is really difficult to get up and down the hill then. There's a river at the bottom of the valley and in a rainstorm people have to swim across it to get home. The local government, the 'Indian government,' is trying to evict all of the Africans from Welbedacht. They say that it is 'Indian Only' land and the Africans will have to relocate. The people are fighting this and I want to see if we can talk to some of the folks involved in the Residents Committee."

We pulled off of the dirt road as much as possible and parked. After walking through some low bush we came to a wood and tin shack with a cross on top. It was quite a bit larger than the other shacks I had seen. Two chickens were tied up in front of an open doorway. These were the



Welbedacht squatter camp.



RW photo



Women of Welbedacht.

RW photo

ugliest and meanest chickens I have ever seen. They looked like "street chickens," their feathers were ruffled, uneven, and dirty. They had long necks and not a feather on them. My companion called out before going on and an older Indian woman came out of the shack and covered the chickens with boxes. The Azanian comrade laughed. "These are guard chickens. They are very rough and wouldn't hesitate to attack you. They don't have any feathers on their neck because they fight so much. Some of them even go after the snakes. This is one of the churches in Welbedacht. There are a couple of others scattered on the sides of the hills but this one has been active in the fight against the evictions. Since it is a little bigger than other places, it is used as a meeting place by the Residents Committee. I'm just going to ask the woman here if she can tell us how to find some of the members of the committee."

A few minutes later we were on our way to the bottom of the valley having been told that a few committee members lived across the river down there. As we drove down the road we passed a very young girl trudging up towards Chatsworth. She held a dirty bottle close to her chest like some precious treasure. A young guy from a nearby "Advice Office" who spoke Zulu and knew some of the folks in Welbedacht had come with us. He nodded in the direction of the girl with the bottle. "For some of these folks, collecting and turning in empty bottles is the only source of income they have. That's how they feed their families, and everyone in the family has a responsibility to find and turn in empty bottles." By this time

we had reached the bottom of the hill. We crossed a wide but shallow river on a dirt-covered, wooden-plank bridge that had been built to accommodate large trucks that sometimes came into the valley to get construction materials or dump off loads of dirt. Below us groups of women stood knee deep in the river washing their clothes. Upstream from them another group of women collected water for cooking and drinking in large plastic containers. The young guy from the "Advice Office" continued on: "This really is the third world here. Sometimes it's hard for even me to believe that this exists so close to Durban. This river is the only source of water for all of the people living in Welbedacht. We've tried to explain that it isn't really clean, that it might contain cholera or other infectious diseases or other types of pollutions, including chemicals. but people tell you that they have to take the chance, there is nothing else they can do."

We pulled off into a small dirt clearing alongside the river. We walked up a path on a small incline and then entered a sort of compound. There were five or six shacks here. A young woman invited us in. She was a relative newcomer to Welbedacht. She and her husband had come in from the rural parts of KwaZulu in hopes of finding work. He had gotten a job as a migrant worker in Johannesburg and had to leave his family behind. She had stayed in Welbedacht with her three children because she felt they had a better chance of surviving and maybe even reuniting with her husband than she would have back in rural KwaZulu. There were four other women in the compound that day, and our young Zulu-speaking friend from the advice office asked them about the struggle against the evictions. The oldest of the women, about thirty-five, began talking. "I've lived here my entire life. My father came here when he was a very young man. So my family has lived on this spot for maybe fifty years. Now they come and tell me that I don't belong here, that this is for Indians only. Who are Indians? Who are Africans? We have lived here together for a long, long time. We are like family, I don't look at my neighbors as Indians and they don't look at me as Zulu. We are brothers and sisters. Let them say we can't live together but let them try to move us. Then they will see that we live together and act together as brother and sister. No, I do not think that I will be moving!"

Shortly after I left Azania, Natal Province was hit with very heavy rains. Severe flooding left hundreds of thousands of people homeless. According to reports I heard from inside the country, the gentle river that ran through the bottom of Welbedacht became a raging killer. Many of the shacks in Welbedacht were washed away and many of the people living there were killed. □

# Ethiopia

Continued from page 3

to the West. And after the big military setbacks in the spring, Mengistu (the head man of the Dergue) shuffled his army command, executing and demoting top generals who were blamed for the recent defeats.

In April the Dergue suddenly dropped its previous preconditions and signed an agreement with neighboring Somalia to settle their long-standing border conflict. This allowed the Ethiopian government to free up soldiers and materials for the Eritrean and northern Ethiopian fronts.

In the past Mengistu refused to even admit publicly that there were any armed rebellions in Eritrea and among the oppressed nationalities in Ethiopia. He called the insurgents "bandits." But in May he was forced to announce that his government was in a "life-and-death struggle" with the rebels and to call for a national mobilization. Thousands of raw recruits were sent to the north for a counteroffensive, and a state of emergency was declared in Eritrea and in Tigray province.

Since then the Dergue has retaken some of the towns in Eritrea and Tigray, but it has hardly regained the initiative. Many towns were evacuated as the Ethiopian troops approached. But then in a series of dramatic surprise attacks by rebel forces as the Dergue's forces were drawn into outlying areas, an estimated 19,000 additional government troops reportedly were killed or captured.

As these developments show, the Dergue is being hit with serious problems, and its Soviet backers face the possibility of a major setback in the Horn of Africa. The Dergue has tried to mask its reactionary nature and growing instability with "revolutionary" rhetoric. Mengistu and his band of military officials have declared themselves to be the heads of a new "Marxist-Leninist party," the "Workers Party of Ethiopia." This past year they proclaimed the formation of the "People's Republic of Ethiopia" with extravagant celebrations in Addis Ababa. At the same time, massive famine, after some slight improvement last year, again threatens the lives of millions of people in the countryside.

## Using Food as a Weapon

The suffering of the masses from starvation conditions is fanning widespread discontent against the government, and the U.S. and other Western-bloc countries have been using their control over food relief to put pressure on the Dergue to break with the Soviets. But the Dergue itself has used food as a weapon against the people and the rebel armies. Now the increasingly desperate and shaky Ethiopian government is threatening a new, even more devastating round of using food as a weapon, endangering the lives of millions in northern Ethiopia and Eritrea. In April, as a major new drought threatened the Horn, the Dergue ordered all relief agencies to leave areas controlled by the government forces.

According to a report on the famine situation in the *Christian Science Monitor*: "Of three million at risk, more than two million are now in rebel-held areas. There is special concern for these people because all along the Ethiopian government has allowed relief food to be distributed only in government-held areas. Those areas have shrunk dramatically as a result of military advances by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Tigray People's Liberation Front. . . . [I]t is clear that war has taken priority as the government fights to recapture territory lost to the rebels this year. A mass mobilization is underway to get troops to the northern fronts where war has been raging for 27 years. A top Ethiopian aid official said full relief operations would not resume until these areas 'are cleansed of bandit activity.'"

Already more than 200,000 tons of food have piled up on the docks undelivered as people are starving to death in large areas of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

By expelling the relief agencies, the Dergue is also trying to eliminate any "outside observers" to new massacres committed by its troops. After the relief agencies were kicked out, the Dergue used napalm cluster bombs on dozens of towns and villages in Eritrea, killing and maiming thousands. According to the EPLF, an estimated 400 civilians were killed in the government's bombing of



Eritrean guerrillas traveling at night to avoid air attack.

the Eritrean town of Sheib on May 12. In central Tigray on June 22, MIG fighters carried out a six-hour air attack on Haujien at the height of a market day, massacring over 600 people and wounding over 360.

## U.S. — Accomplices in Mass Murder

The U.S. and its allies definitely are not innocent bystanders in these crimes. For years the U.S. overall has backed up the Ethiopian government in its policy of "starving the rebellion" by having most of the Western food aid go through Addis Ababa. This guaranteed that none of the food reached the people in rebel-held areas. The West also supported the Dergue's "resettlement" efforts aimed at forcing peasants to move from the northern areas into government-controlled regions.

In the recent period, some food relief under U.S. control has gone to some relief agencies operating in rebel-controlled areas. But the U.S. is not doing this to help the starving people of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Rather, it is part of the West's "carrot and stick" pressure on the Dergue.

As part of its efforts to pressure the Dergue, the U.S. has also made some attempts to develop a pro-West, Contra-type fighting force in Ethiopia by giving covert funding to a loosely knit group of

officials from the previous Haile Selassie regime and feudal elements who came into some conflict with Mengistu's state-capitalist agrarian policies, joined by some bourgeois nationalist forces involved in the struggle to overthrow Selassie. But in the main, U.S. policy has been aimed at wooing and pressuring the Dergue itself, or elements within the regime, back into the Western camp. The U.S. imperialists have no *fundamental* problems with Mengistu. The indications are that at this point they see his regime as their best bet to keep the reactionary order in Ethiopia from completely collapsing. But the U.S. wants these hitmen to be working for the West, not the Soviets.

The Dergue's agreement with Somalia in April was one sign of how the U.S. seems to favor keeping the Ethiopian junta afloat. Given Somalia's dependent ties to the U.S., the Somali government probably would not have signed the agreement without a nod of approval from Washington. (The Somali regime apparently hoped the pact would free its military to turn their attention to anti-government rebels operating in northern Somalia. Since then the fighting in Somalia has heated up, and, according to Western press reports, more than 300,000 Somalis have been forced to flee across the border into the barren, waterless

region of southeastern Ethiopia.)

The coming together of these various contradictions in the Horn of Africa makes this a very complex and explosive situation. A major "switching of blocs" or other dramatic political realignments could take place, given the growing instability of the Dergue regime and the importance of the area to both imperialist blocs. One or both of the competing blocs could decide to intervene directly. The lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the Horn are being threatened by the reactionary regimes and schemes of the big powers. And it is possible that important new openings for revolutionary forces could develop very quickly.

The recent victories by the liberation fighters in the north are an inspiring indication of the possibilities that exist for developing a powerful people's war against the whole neocolonial setup in the Horn of Africa which would unite the oppressed of all nationalities in their common struggle against national oppression and imperialist domination. This in turn underscores the basic principle that for proletarian revolution to succeed, even in its first, new-democratic stage, the existence and leadership of a vanguard party guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is required. To carry out this principle is the urgent challenge facing revolutionaries in the Horn today. □



Education in a liberated zone in Eritrea.

# Rock Against Racism Concert Crosses Three Continents

Dear *Revolutionary Worker/Obrero Revolucionario*:

This is a quick note to let readers, particularly revolutionary-minded proletarians, know about a set of inspiring and politically significant concerts held on June 18 in Paris, Dakar (Senegal), and New York. Organized by S.O.S. Racisme, three simultaneous International Rock Against Racism events, with live bilingual telecasts crisscrossing the globe, sent the message "Touche Pas à Mon Pote!/Hands Off My Buddy!" out around the world. The slogan, popular among French youth in defiance of intense racism and the ongoing attacks on immigrants and minority nationalities, was spiritedly taken up and proclaimed by progressive musicians and activists in Europe and Africa, and here in the U.S. too.

In New York — where violent attacks on Black people are now the standard fare, where the bourgeois media tirelessly and viciously lynches the victims again and again, where every possible barrier is erected between the masses of different nationalities — action by all

who are outraged and angered by this reality is urgently needed. So news of this Hands Off My Buddy! concert at the Apollo Theater in Harlem was most timely and welcome! A friend and I took *RWs* and headed uptown.

Despite only limited publicity in the week before the show, hundreds of people of various nationalities — Black and white, European, African, Caribbean, and American — came out to make a statement together with the musicians. Five New York bands performed — The Deed, Terry Jenoure, Eye and I, Jean Paul Bourelly, and the Black Rock Coalition Super Band. Several of the performers, members of the Black Rock Coalition, were also active in organizing the concert and spoke from the stage about why they were there. Jean Paul Bourelly wrote a song for the occasion, called "Freedom," "about all the crazy racist happenings out here — and how by the time you're old enough to figure out what the deal is, you die." Pamela Tyson, speaking for the BRC Super Band, said, "In case you haven't noticed, there's an epidemic in this coun-

try and many parts of the world: an epidemic of racism."

Some of the most stirring moments came via the live telecasts from Dakar and Paris, where many thousands participated in open-air concerts marked by a real joy of resistance. In New York we saw (and sometimes heard!) footage of Ziggy Marley playing in Paris and Harlem Desir in Dakar. There was a dynamite performance by Johnny Clegg and the group Savuka (which means "We Have Arisen" and includes many top black musicians from South Africa). I'd heard of "the white Zulu," but this was the first time I heard the music, which is terrific — a very hot sound with strains of English folk traditions and African rhythms, with lyrics in English and African languages. Born in England, Clegg grew up in Zimbabwe and later moved to South Africa. In defiance of apartheid, he became close friends with Africans and developed an affinity for the Zulu culture, choosing to go through the initiation rites for Zulu men. Bands he's been part of have been very popular with their barrier-breaking music.

It was also great to see Bruce Springsteen at the Paris concert. He said, "Racism is the poison at the heart of America, and I'm proud to be here!" Then he launched into "Promised Land" and a set that included "My Hometown" and covers of Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" and Creedence Clearwater's "Bad Moon Rising" — choices that, to me, indicate he's taking seriously the need to stand up to the racism and national oppression that's a fundamental feature in the landscape.

One of the New York musicians who's part of the Black Rock Coalition told me later that the Super Band's segment of the show was aimed at trying to bring out the necessity for individuals to take action and take responsibility. He said that you can't just talk about institutional racism, Ford Motor Co., or the universities without being willing to make a change yourself.

Especially because these events were not covered by the U.S. press, I wanted to make sure *RW* readers were aware of the happenings.

Reader/writer in New York

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# East vs. West in Angola and Namibia



Ovambo women in Namibia.

Continued from page 6  
 ed in Angola, literally controls the industry. In fact, through a series of management contracts negotiated with the MPLA over the years, Gulf has total control of its Angolan operations from top to bottom. Even in the industries supposedly nationalized by the MPLA the situation remains the same. The Angolan state nominally owns 77 percent of DIAMANG, the main diamond mining company, yet every aspect of its day-to-day operations and management is firmly in the hands of a management firm which is a subsidiary of the South African-owned De Beers Corporation."

This situation gives an idea of what the Soviets' overall goals in Angola are. To kick the West completely out of Angola would require a revolutionary movement among the people — something the Soviets and the MPLA definitely do not want. Or it would risk an economic collapse in Angola, forcing the Soviets to enter the scene in an even bigger way to prop up the regime. Also, the Western-controlled holdings in Angola have been an important source of Western hard currency which Moscow needs for trading with the West in order to acquire high-technology goods. However, squeezed by deepening crisis, the MPLA is no longer able to pay the Soviets for the weapons sent to Angola.

But the main importance of Angola to the Soviets has not been economic profits but strategic calculations. For the Soviets, Angola is a possible springboard into the rest of central and southern Africa — an area sometimes known as the "Persian Gulf of minerals" because it contains one of the richest concentrations of strategic minerals in the world. Control of Angola has given the Soviets much-needed deep-water ports on the western coast of Africa, and airfields in Angola have become bases for Soviet air surveillance and antisubmarine flights

for the West in Zaire and helped carry out the assassination of nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba). The Cuban troops have been deployed almost exclusively for protecting the most important areas of Angola such as the Cabinda oil fields. They rarely engage in direct combat with the South African military or the U.S.-backed UNITA army in eastern and southern parts of the country. Most of the actual fighting in the Angolan conflict has been done by the Angolan army, which has been trained by the Soviets, Cubans, and other members of the Eastern bloc and supplied with billions of dollars worth of heavy weapons and military equipment.

### U.S. Squeeze on Angola

After the MPLA took power, the U.S. began to use a two-sided strategy to pressure the Angolan regime with the goal of forcing concessions such as the withdrawal of Cuban troops and, in the long run, prying Angola away from Soviet control. On the one hand, the U.S. has used its position within the Angolan economy and promises of economic "aid" as a lure for the MPLA or sections of it that might be open to working with the West. Recently, faced with growing economic problems, the Angolan government has tried to join the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in order to get loans from the Western imperialists. So far Angola has been blocked from joining by the U.S. government.

The main form of U.S. pressure, however, has been open military threats and blows. After the MPLA victory, the American government continued to supply UNITA with arms, money, and political support to wage civil war against the MPLA. This was carried out in secret until 1986, when the U.S. Congress repealed the law forbidding open aid to UNITA. Since then the Congress has approved at least \$15 million a year in official aid to UNITA.

But an even bigger military threat against Angola has been South Africa. Over the past thirteen years South African troops have conducted frequent raids into Angolan territory. In addition to coming to the aid of UNITA, South Africa has moved in and occupied a good portion of southern Angola on at least three occasions. By late 1987 there were at least 9,000 South African troops working with UNITA forces deep inside Angolan territory, and together they controlled the southern one-third of the country.

### Namibia — a Big Bantustan for South Africa

Namibia, also known by the colonial name of South West Africa, is a former German colony that has been under direct South African rule since the end of World War I. South Africa was given a mandate to rule in Namibia by the League of Nations as a part of the dismantling of Germany's colonial possessions after its defeat in the war.

A sparsely populated country with a little more than a million people, Namibia has a black majority and white ruling minority. For most of the past seventy years it has been governed by an

apartheid system similar to the one in South Africa. While its land is mostly desert, Namibia is also one of the most mineral-rich countries in Africa. The Rossing Pits are the largest uranium mines in the world. But Namibia is completely dominated by South Africa and the Western powers. It has served as a kind of big bantustan for the apartheid rulers.

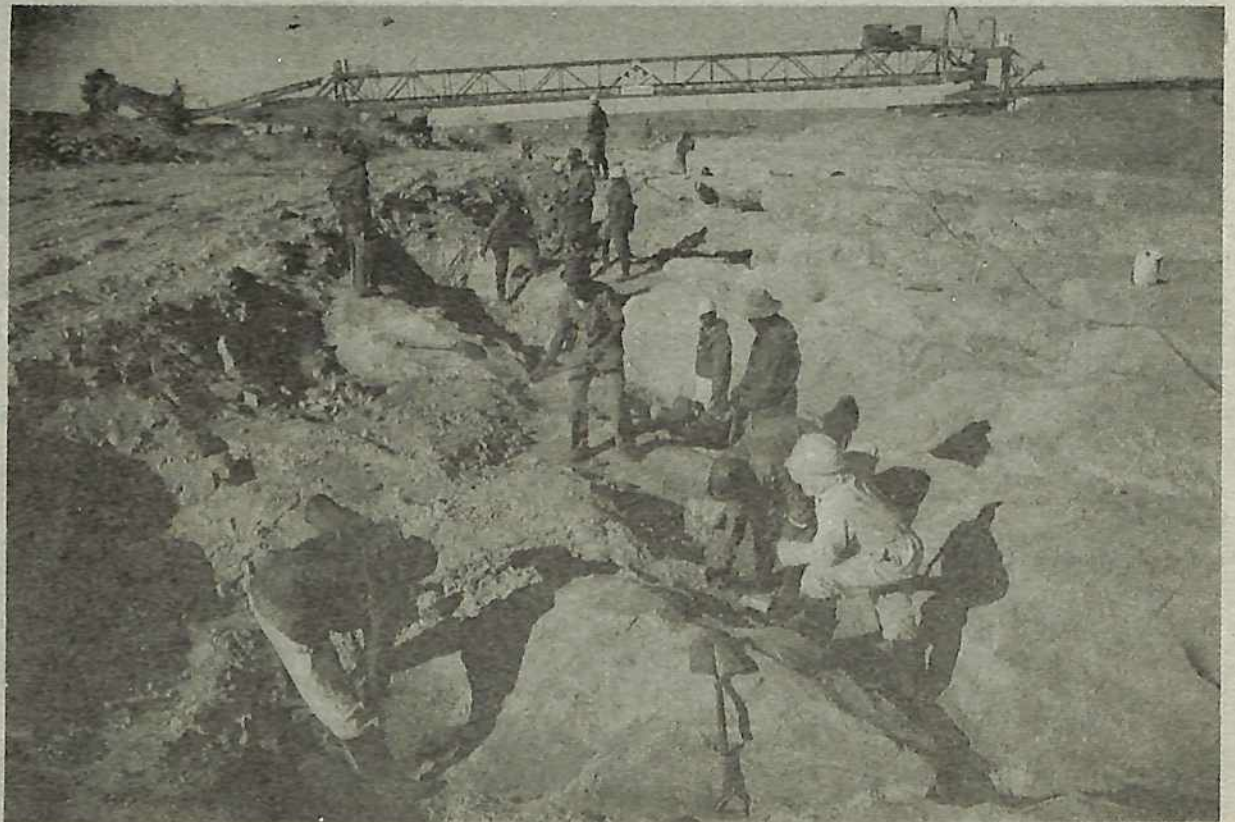
The only railroad connections to Namibia run through South Africa, and its internal rail system is completely controlled by South African Railways. Ninety percent of all the manufactured foodstuffs in Namibia comes from South Africa. The currency used in Namibia is the South African Rand. Almost all of the managerial and skilled labor positions in Namibia are occupied by whites; eighty percent of the Namibian civil servants are white South Africans. South Africa serves as the main export market for Namibian goods, and 90 percent of imports into Namibia come from South Africa. The Namibian mining industry, which accounts for at least 50 percent of Namibia's exports, is controlled by the South African company De Beers. Over the last year huge deposits of natural gas have been discovered in Namibia, and South Africa has wasted no time in trying to take advantage of them. According to some reports, when these natural gas deposits are developed they will be able to supply South Africa with a huge percentage of its fuel needs.

### Western Stamp of Approval for South African Occupation

Since the mid-1960s the United Nations has passed many resolutions denouncing South Africa's occupation of Namibia as illegal and calling for its independence. South Africa ignored every single one and instead tightened its grip on Namibia. Several times South Africa tried out its own "independence" schemes by setting up "interim" governments in Namibia. But these sham governments were under the direct control of the South African administrator general for Namibia and were disbanded when they no longer served Pretoria's interests. Over the last year, the administrator general has been given increased power in Namibia, and the South African government began to talk about extending the state of emergency in South Africa to Namibia.

Militarily, South Africa has kept a tight rein on Namibia by forming the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF). Made up mainly of black Namibians, SWATF is armed, trained, and commanded by the South African military. South Africa also created a ruthless secret police unit in Namibia known as Koevoet, which means Crowbar. Koevoet is commanded directly by the South African police. In addition to creating military forces for internal suppression in Namibia, South Africa has made the territory into a heavily fortified launch pad for forays into other parts of the region. It has built a number of military bases throughout the country, including the largest military airfield in all of Africa. Walvis Bay, the only deep-

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De Beers diamond mine in Namibia.



Chester Crocker and Roelof Botha.

## Crocker's Secret Agenda

In early 1981 U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker held a secret meeting in Pretoria with the South African foreign and defense ministers. A U.S. government "memorandum of conversation" on the meeting was leaked to an anti-apartheid organization a short time later.

According to this document, Crocker told the South African officials: "Top U.S. priority is to stop Soviet encroachment in Africa. U.S. wants to work with SAG [South African government], but ability to deal with Soviet presence severely impeded by Namibia." Crocker also told them that the U.S. "recognized the need to build South African confidence and security" as part of working out any political deals in the region.

Finally, the document summed up the meeting: "Crocker addressed Botha's fears and concerns by first accepting the premise that Soviet domination is the danger. But U.S. believes best way to avoid that danger is to get Namibia issue behind us. As long as issue subsists, we cannot reach a situation where U.S. can engage with South Africa in security, and include South Africa within our general security framework. If Namibia continues, it will open south/central Africa

to the Soviets. Simmering conflict in Namibia is not acceptable. The ideas U.S. has in mind don't include Soviets in Windhoek [capital of Namibia]. We believe we can get the Soviets out of Angola, and provide a guarantee of security whether Nujoma [the leader of SWAPO] wins or not."

Several points are made clear by this document. First, the U.S. officials place their political and diplomatic maneuvers in Angola and Namibia firmly in the context of contention with the rival Soviet bloc. Second, the U.S. makes it clear that South Africa's "security" is not a negotiable item in any deals it makes. In other words, the U.S. guarantees to defend the white minority rulers' position within South Africa as well as their domination over other countries in the region. Third, one of the goals of the American government has been to bring South Africa forward more openly as a part of the Western "security framework" — that is, the Western war bloc. Lastly, the U.S. believes that a less blatant setup in Namibia will still keep out the Soviets while bringing strategic benefits to South Africa and the West as a whole. □

## East vs. West in Angola and Namibia

Continued from page 14

water port in Namibia, has been integrated into the NATO-connected spy and communications network based at the Simonstown naval base in South Africa. In 1977 the Pretoria government directly annexed Walvis Bay by declaring that the port was part of South Africa's Cape Province.

At the same time, the South African rulers have built up all kinds of political parties in Namibia over the years, from the Namibian branch of its own National Party and other ultra-right political groupings to various social-democratic groupings and tribally based pro-government parties. Welding these groups together to function as a bloc is one of the ways that South Africa plans on limiting the influence of SWAPO if some kind of political agreement involving elections is worked out in Namibia.

South Africa does have its own interests in Namibia, and at times there has seemed to be sharp disagreements between the Pretoria government and its Western backers over the question of

Namibian "independence." Up to the early 1980s the U.S. along with France, Britain, Canada, and West Germany formed a "Contact Group" supposedly to persuade South Africa to end its occupation of Namibia. But the actual deeds of the Western powers showed how all the UN resolutions and diplomatic efforts were just a cover for support for South Africa.

For example, almost the entire Western bloc ignored a 1974 UN resolution forbidding any country from developing and exporting Namibia's natural resources. As of early 1983 there were 75 American, 68 British, 25 West German, 12 French, and 10 Canadian corporations doing business in Namibia. There were also at least 25 corporations from other Western countries in Namibia, including from Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Israel, Australia, Norway, and Portugal. In late 1982 the Contact Group disbanded, and the U.S. took up the main responsibility for Namibia within its bloc. At that point, the Reagan administration introduced the

concept of "linkage" in relation to Namibia. What this meant was that the U.S. made the removal of Cuban troops from Angola a condition for some form of "independence" for Namibia.

### Soviet Schemes for Power Sharing

The Soviet maneuvering in Namibia has been low-key. Because of the strength of South African and Western control over Namibia, the Soviets have not aimed for even the phony "liberation" that took place in Angola and other places where they were able to set themselves up as the main neocolonial bosses. Instead, they have been trying to get the pro-Soviet SWAPO into a power-sharing arrangement with the pro-Western forces in Namibia.

Flowing out of this strategy, SWAPO, which launched a form of armed struggle in 1967, never really attempted to do anything more than maintain a low-level, hit-and-run style sabotage campaign. Along with this came a Soviet-sponsored international campaign to have SWAPO

recognized as "the sole and authentic representatives of the Namibian people." (In reality, there are others, such as SWANU, or South West Africa National Union, which also oppose South African control over Namibia.)

The Soviet Union also declared that UN Resolution 435, which calls for "supervised elections," was the "plan for independence" in Namibia. More accurately, the Soviets see this as a plan for power sharing. They figure that although the elections would not by themselves bring Namibia into the Soviet sphere, SWAPO could make a significant showing in an election and become a force within a government. This would give the Soviets an opening for bolder moves in the future.

For the social-imperialists, genuine revolutionary struggle and independence for the Namibian people — or any other oppressed people around the world — are not part of the plan. □

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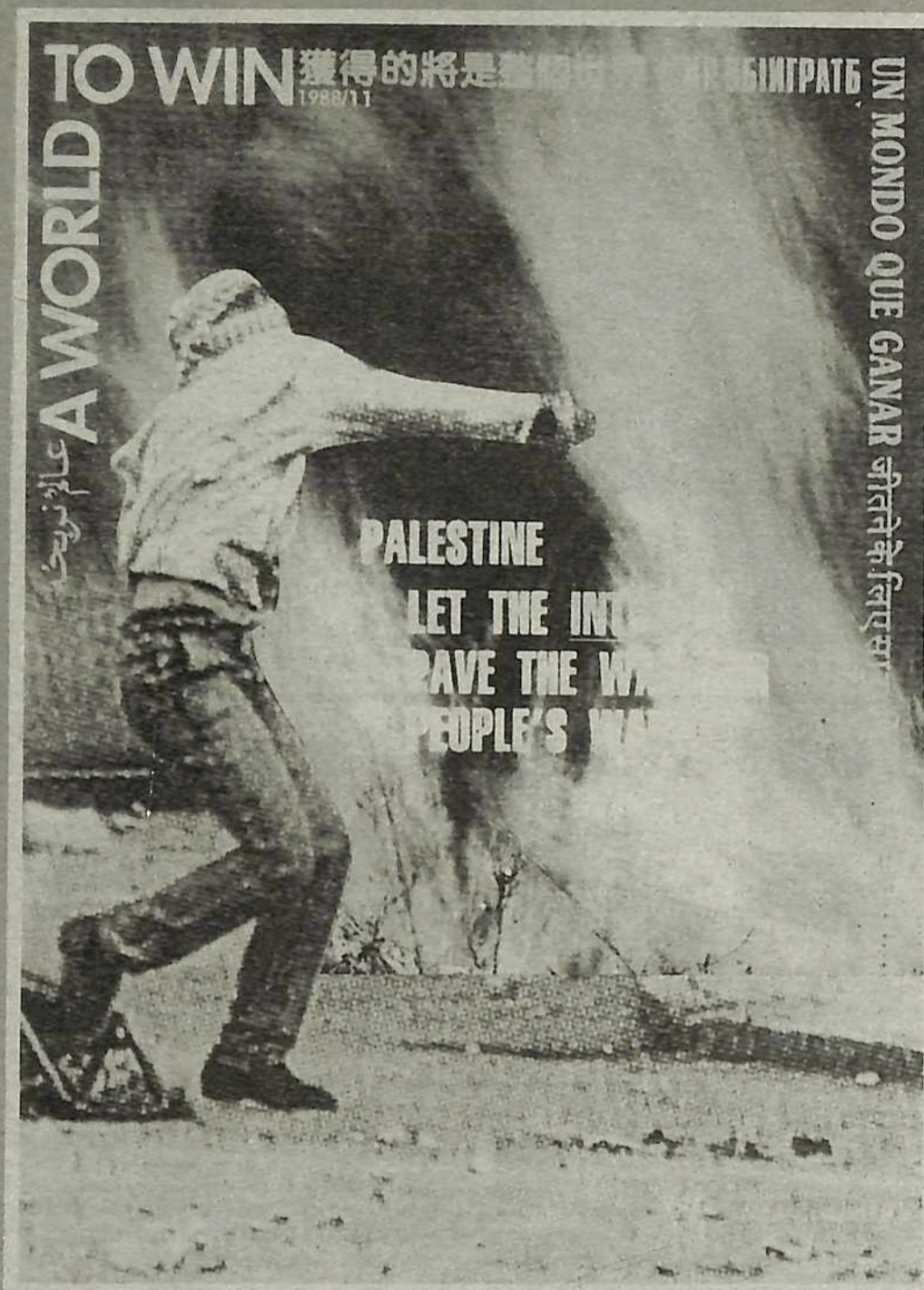
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