

Editorial Notes

FASCIST SOUTH AFRICA

Until now the Verwoerd regime has tried to cover its naked oppression of the non-White majority of South Africans with the fig-leaf of parliamentary democracy and legality. But with the enactment of the General Laws Amendment Act—the so-called Sabotage Law—the pretence is dropped. Under this vicious law the Minister of Justice can confine any person—to his house or to a concentration camp—without accusing him of any offence or bringing him before any court. He merely has to say that he is “satisfied” that the person concerned “may” further “any of the aims of communism.” Considering that the Minister himself—Mr. Vorster—is a well-known Nazi sympathiser, who was interned during the last war as a leader of the fascist Ossewa Brandwag, there is little doubt that he will use his unlimited powers under his new law to take vengeance not only on Communists but on all who oppose apartheid and White supremacy. Already, acting in terms of the equally vicious Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, he has banned non-Communists like Chief Lutuli and outright anti-Communists like Patrick Duncan: both of them having annoyed the Nationalist government by demanding citizen rights for non-Whites.

Vorster openly said in the all-White Parliament that he would use the Act to suppress vigorously anti-Government papers like *New Age* and organisations like the Congress of Democrats, and when opponents of the Government, including the middle-class Women’s League for the Defence of the Constitution (the “Black Sash”), university students, churchmen and others demonstrated against the proposed law, a fascist rabble, consisting of the dregs

of the white population, organised and headed by policemen in plain clothes was assembled to fling eggs, rubbish and filthy language at them.

The International Commission of Jurists in Geneva, representing 40,000 lawyers and judges in over 60 countries, has condemned Vorster's Nazi law in the most outspoken terms. They said it: "reduces the liberty of the citizen to a degree not surpassed by the most extreme dictatorship;" that with this law, South Africa is taking "a major, if not final step, towards the elimination of all rights of the individual and the rule of law;" that "this measure is a culmination of a determined and ruthless attempt to enforce the doctrine of apartheid and is not worthy of a civilised jurisprudence."

The law defines "sabotage" as almost any "illegal" action taken to further political or economic changes—and since practically every sort of political activity is now "illegal" a trade unionist "trespassing" on factory premises or an African taking part in a strike (all strikes of Africans are illegal) can easily find himself accused of "sabotage", with the onus on the accused to prove himself innocent of the motive of wishing to bring about "political or economic change". If convicted the minimum penalty that can be imposed is five years imprisonment. The maximum is death.

The democratic organisations of the South African people have served notice on the Verwoerd government that they will not submit to this new instalment of fascist tyranny.

A statement issued by the Congress alliance—50,000 copies of which were seized by the special branch of the police before they could be distributed to the public—points out that if legal and peaceful means of struggle for democratic change are outlawed the people will turn to methods which are neither legal nor peaceful. *New Age*, the fighting people's newspaper which for many years has kept the flag of freedom and equality flying in Cape Town, now itself under imminent threat of banning, links the new fascist legislation with the decision of the Government to spend R120 million (£60 million) on "defence"—"under cover of a fake scare of invasion." "The government is preparing to rule on a war footing. . . . As has been proved by the history of despotisms in all countries, this sabotage Bill will not achieve its object. It will merely steel the opposition and encourage it to adopt new and better methods of achieving its targets."

Thousands of leaflets issued by the South African Communist Party after the passing of Vorster's new law are a vivid illustration

of what is proclaimed by the text itself—that such laws cannot destroy Communism, because it is true and in the interests of the people. Twelve years after the first of the Nationalists' laws designed to "suppress communism" the Communist Party is very much alive, and fighting in the forefront of the people's struggle for a free, non-racial, democratic South Africa.

The oppressed South African people have millions of friends and well-wishers in Africa and throughout the world. Their reply to the new attacks on the African masses by the Verwoerd-Vorster gang must be to step up the international campaign of solidarity against Fascist South Africa.

The representatives of White South Africa should ignominiously be expelled from the ILO, from international sporting and cultural bodies and from the United Nations itself. Economic and other sanctions should be imposed against the criminal Verwoerd regime.

Let the race-mad Fascists feel the weight of the contempt and disgust of the whole world towards their apartheid tyranny!

■ OAS SABOTAGE DEFEATED

Far in the north, the counterparts of Verwoerd and Vorster, the last-ditch defenders of White supremacy and privilege in the fascist OAS, have let loose a ghastly campaign of murder against defenceless civilians, women and children. The aim of these unbridled atrocities was to sabotage the Evian agreement reached between the National Liberation Front and the French Government for the independence of Algeria—an agreement forced upon French imperialism by more than seven long years of heroic struggle by the Algerian Army of National Liberation, supported in France itself by the solidarity of the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The same forces which won the long war against all the might of the French military machine, supplied and backed up by the United States and NATO, have defeated the attempts to sabotage the people's victory. Peace is returning to the cities of Algeria, while the fascist elements are hastily packing and scurrying in their thousands to make their getaway to France.

A heroic part in these historic struggles has been played by the Algerian Communist Party, to which we extend our warm comradely greetings on the victory of their people—a victory not only for Algeria, but for all of Africa. Light on the part played by the Algerian Communists is cast by an article in *Al Houriyya*, the

Party organ, and the first Algerian paper to be published in the country since the cease-fire. This article, written by Sadek Hadjeres, points out that the Algerian Communist Party will continue, as during the war, to seek the best means of strengthening unity of action of *all* patriotic and progressive forces of the nation on the basis of a common programme for genuine independence, social progress and democracy.

"During the war," says the article, "the Party, while upholding unity around the FLN, was correct at the same time to maintain its own political organisation. Thus it could better take part in the war effort and support the action and the anti-imperialist positions of the FLN." The writer shows how the ACP did not only support the war effort militarily, they also did it politically.

"By its clear political analyses, the Party strengthened the courage of the whole liberation movement, brought home the lessons of its experiences and raised its level. On many important questions the policies which, at the beginning of the war, had been advanced only by the Communist Party, were later adopted by the FLN as a whole.

"For example, as early as the beginning of the war the Party pointed out the need to mobilise the masses politically to support the armed struggle; to popularise the social aims of the revolution; to strengthen the alliance with the socialist camp and the world peace camp, with the French workers and people; to adopt correct methods of explanation and struggle towards the European minority; to fight the imperialist influence of the ICFTU on the Algerian trade union movement, and other matters."

Without the vanguard role of the Party, advocating and proving the necessity of these policies within the broad alliance, the people's cause would have suffered.

The article rejects anti-Communist attitudes within the FLN which call on the Communist Party to dissolve itself. Party members have been loyal members of the FLN, which is seen as "a broad patriotic alliance which should be open to every Algerian whatever his political trend or membership in another national organisation approving and supporting the anti-imperialist policy of the Front.

"Being organised in their own Party, the Communists do not try to manoeuvre. On the contrary, while they accept the common discipline, they openly defend their point of view, not in order to divide but to strengthen the movement. Patriots should not fear a constructive interplay of ideas—this helps the movement to advance. The ACP always tries to learn from the masses and from

other patriots. The latter can only benefit from Marxist-Leninist theory and experience which has proved itself all over the world, particularly in former colonies like Vietnam and Cuba. This is exactly the way in which the Algerian Communist Party educates its militants. The more we train good Communists, the better patriots they will be, within the Front and for an Algeria advancing towards independence and peace, towards the building of a socialist society.”

■ FREEDOM FOR CENTRAL AFRICA

The so-called Central African Federation is on the verge of breaking up. This abortion—an attempt by the British imperialists to fasten the domination of a handful of white supremacists of Southern “Rhodesia” over millions of Africans in the North—has been vigorously resisted from the start, especially by the people of Nyasaland. Dr. Banda’s Malawi Party’s determined and uncompromising struggle has now made certain that, so far as Malawi is concerned, the unwanted “Federation” is about to end. What now of the African majority in the territories which the colonialists have called “Rhodesia,” after the arch-imperialist whose unscrupulous manoeuvres, involving the slaughter of thousands of Africans, resulted in the annexation of this vast and wealthy area to the British Empire? (Nothing can be more certain than that, the day after emancipation, the name Rhodesia and all other wounding remnants of the name of Cecil Rhodes will be removed from the map of Africa.)

The United Nations is currently debating the explosive situation in S. Rhodesia itself, the nearest approach to apartheid outside the Republic. The Zimbabwe African People’s Union, under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo, is vigorously demanding the end of the dictatorship of a privileged minority and the implementation of the democratic principle: *one man, one vote*.

Not only is this the only democratic principle, but it is the only principle consistent with the dignity and self-respect of the African people. For to ask Africans to accept less is asking us to accept that we are somehow inferior to Whites, somehow less of human beings, not entitled to the equal rights which the United Nations Charter itself has proclaimed the birthright of all, irrespective of race or colour.

British imperialism is using all sorts of cunning tricks in an attempt to persuade African leaders to abandon this cardinal principle. Using the image of the arch-racialist Roy Welensky as a

bogey, they are trying to make a case that Africans should accept some sort of compromise which would leave essential control in the hands of the white settlers—because this would at least be “better than Welensky’s policy.”

One is not surprised to see the British Labour Party being recruited to play its part in this dirty game of British imperialism. Posing as the “friends of the Africans” the Labour leaders have tried to get African leaders to accept the undemocratic “Maudling Constitution”—on the grounds that Welensky opposes it (because it makes some gestures towards African representation.)

However, the British Labour leaders have for so long played the role of agents and junior partners in maintaining colonialism that African politicians have lost all confidence in them.

It is a different matter when one finds the representative of a newly-independent African state adding his voice to the chorus and attempting to persuade African leaders to accept the same sort of dishonourable and insulting compromise.

That is exactly what was done by Mr. Jaja Wachuku, Foreign Minister of Nigeria, speaking at the United Nations General Assembly on the situation in Southern Rhodesia. According to a SAPA-Reuter-A.P. report from New York, he proposed:

“An equal division of seats in the Southern Rhodesian Parliament—32 each for Africans and White settlers—with a British member holding the balance of power.”

—*Rand Daily Mail*, June 21, 1962.

He said he thought this would “help to build confidence between the two races and give the African leaders experience of government.”

We are astonished that an African leader could sink to making this type of proposal. Mr. Wachuku knows perfectly well that what is keeping Africans from independence and self-government is not their “lack of experience” but the desire of the colonialists in Rhodesia and Britain to continue exploiting and oppressing them.

We regard Mr. Wachuku’s proposal as a stab in the back for the African people.

■ “EUROMART”—A MENACE TO AFRICA

Mr. Mustafa, Finance Minister of Sierra Leone, put the attitude of independent African countries towards the plan to subordinate them to the European Common Market in a nutshell when he said:

“We have just gained independence and we are not going to renounce it.”

What is the economic relationship of a colony towards the metropolitan country?

To serve as a source of raw materials and cheap labour, and as a dumping ground for surplus manufactured goods.

It is precisely this relationship which has ruined the former colonies and resulted in their economies remaining backward and undeveloped industrially, in low living standards, starvation and disease.

What is the relationship of African countries proposed under the “Euromart” scheme?

It is exactly the same: the African countries will supply raw material and buy “Western” manufactures. They will remain a sort of slum raw-material providing annexure to the industrially-developed capitalist countries.

Instead of developing their own industries, our African countries will remain dependent on European manufactures. And they will get cheated badly in the process. Over the past fifty years the prices of the chief African products on world capitalist markets have risen very little compared to manufactures and machinery, as can be seen by these figures:—

Percentage rise in Prices over 50 years (approximate)

Foodstuffs	..	..	..	..	..	130
Farm Products	..	..	..	..	..	105
Mineral Raw Materials	..	..	..	..	..	90
Manufactured Goods	..	..	..	..	..	300
Machinery	..	..	..	..	..	500
						to
						600

And this tendency is continuing.

The European Common Market is not only an economic but also a political concept, related to anti-Communism and the the Cold War. African countries associating themselves with it will lose their independence and their much-vaunted neutrality, and become appendages to NATO. They will find it difficult to develop further their trading relations with non-European countries, including the countries of the socialist camp, which have been proving highly advantageous to Africa.

President Nkrumah was right in describing “Euromart” as “the

greatest danger" to Africa. "The advocates of the Common Market seek to enslave us economically," he said.

It would be regrettable indeed if some African leaders were found who were prepared to sell their people to this dangerous tactic of neo-colonialism.

■ 50 YEARS OF TRUTH

Recently *Pravda*, organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, celebrated its fiftieth birthday. The name of the paper means "Truth"—and for half a century this paper has indeed, day after day, brought home to the Russian people, both in capitalist conditions and under socialism, the truth about the world we live in, the basic laws of human development, the evils of capitalist imperialism, and the bright future of Communism that awaits all mankind.

The *African Communist* was happy to accept the invitation of the editor of *Pravda* to send its representative to attend the celebration of this notable anniversary, and we take this opportunity of wishing our illustrious contemporary many more years of redoubtable struggle for communism and the cause of the working class.