

## B O O K   R E V I E W

HOW LONG WILL SOUTH AFRICA SURVIVE - R.W. JOHNSON.

Published by: Macmillan.

This book has a very attractive title, particularly for us South Africans actively involved in a protracted struggle to overthrow the Pretoria regime. More than that, this title gives one an impression that the author is either a prophet or a profound political analyst. We are dealing here with a confused and above all a highly contemptuous bourgeois economist.

The book attempts to examine, among other things, the causes of the SOWETO uprising in 1976. According to Johnson, the SOWETO revolt was caused by the United States of America manipulating the gold price, causing balance of payment problems, unemployment of blacks and therefore a fall in living standards. Had there been no fall in the price of gold, Johnson argues, the 'problems' in SOWETO could not have arisen.

Johnson is so obsessed about his belief that the United States is busy altering the price of gold in the international market so as to bring pressure on South Africa to change its "social, political and economic structure" that he sees, ultimately, as the key to the future survival or collapse of the racists, this economic factor. He argues that the collapse of Portuguese colonialism in Africa was not brought about by an intensified and protracted armed struggle by the Angolan and Mozambican people, but, according to him, when Portugal was faced with the choice of continuing in Africa or joining the European Economic Community, since Britain which was providing her with markets was also joining, "it became natural and logical for Portugal to decolonise" in preference for the European Economic Community.

The last rubbish from this book is Johnson's seeing SOWETO as an expression of another blunder in the struggle by the black workers. In his view, it is futile for the oppressed people of South Africa to fight against the racial capitalist system

because "the ruthless State police will deal with them effectively". How effective were the ruthless State police at Rustenburg and Moroka? How effective were the Portuguese in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau?

The author is extremely wrong to assume that the United States, with huge economic investments in South Africa, would like to pressurise South Africa to alter the social structure. It is common knowledge that the United States derives embarrassingly super profits from the Apartheid structure. Again he searches for the causes of the SOWETO uprising from a completely wrong and irrelevant source, namely, the US manipulation of the gold price. While it would be unfair to look at SOWETO as an isolated event or to deny that SOWETO had its roots primarily in the crisis which had been building up at every level of International Imperialism as well as in the Apartheid structure itself, but Johnson has to appreciate SOWETO as a qualitative expression of our people's struggle for liberation. Only then can he understand why, after all, it is wrong to speak of SOWETO in the past tense as though it is something over and done with, like all commercial transactions between the United States and South Africa in the International Stock Exchange, it is very important for whoever analyses SOWETO to see the dialectical link between the execution of Solomon Mahlangu on April, 1979, and the mass killings on the streets on June 16, 1976.

SOWETO continues! Johnson or no Johnson! The real power for change in South Africa does not lie either in the United States or in the International Markets but it lies with the people as led by the African National Congress and its mighty hand: Umkhonto we Sizwe!

- Khumalo Migwe