

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS MEET

NOTES OF A SIXTH CONGRESS DELEGATE:

Towards the end of 1984 I was a delegate to the Sixth Congress of the South African Communist Party. The years between the Fifth and Sixth Congresses had been full of hardships and trials for our Party. Many of our leading comrades had been jailed or exiled. Some had been executed or killed in action against the enemy. Leading comrades like J B Marks, Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo and others had died of natural causes.

We are a part of the liberation movement of South Africa headed by the African National Congress. The racist regime knows that our Party, founded in 1921, is one of its most dedicated and committed opponents. Our Party was the first to be banned by the regime — in 1950. But the enemy did not kill us off, as it hoped. The Sixth Congress of the reconstituted South African Communist Party demonstrated that the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism enjoy more widespread support among our people than ever before.

I have attended previous Congresses of our Party, but never have I been so confident of the future of our Party and the eventual triumph of socialism in South Africa. The delegates to the Sixth Congress, chosen by a combination of election and selection to ensure a proper balance, were a blend of youth and experience. The proceedings were dominated by the fire and enthusiasm especially of the young. And these young militants were not mere armchair radicals or adventurers. Most of them were, despite their youth, battle-hardened and tested in action. Their ideas were the fruit not just of book-learning but of political and military struggles with the enemy. Our cadres are tried and tested, committed and dedicated, disciplined and determined.

The composition of the delegates shows that our Party has become firmly rooted in the people. The bulk of the delegates, 64%, were African, 18% Indian, 6% Coloured and 12% White. The discussion was dominated by the realistic optimism of young people of working class origin. They have seen action and know what danger means, and are ready to sacrifice everything for the advancement of our cause.



The Congress took place over a period of several days. The following are some of its decisions:

★ Congress was of the opinion that the mood among the oppressed people in South Africa is one of revolt. A state of incipient civil war exists in the country. The urgent task of the liberation movement is to raise the all-round political and military offensive against the apartheid regime. The country must be made ungovernable, paving the way for the victory of the national democratic revolution.

★ Congress called for the strengthening of the revolutionary alliance of the ANC, SACP and SACTU to achieve this goal.

★ Congress called for the strengthening of the Party internally so as to enable it to lead the working class more effectively to carry out its historic mission.

★ Congress condemned the militaristic adventurism of the imperialists, headed by the US administration. Congress also called for the convening of a conference of the international communist movement to strengthen the world forces working for peace and social progress.

★ Congress called for the unconditional release of all political prisoners.

★ Congress adopted a constitution to regulate the work and functioning of the SACP. This is the first constitution adopted by the Party since its reconstitution in 1953.

★ Congress unanimously re-elected comrade Moses Mabhida as general secretary, and also unanimously elected a national chairman of the Party in secession to the late comrade Yusuf Dadoo. In a future issue the name of the new National Chairman will be announced. The Congress elected a new central committee and laid down guidelines for its work during the coming period.

DEDICATION, DISCIPLINE AND DRIVE!