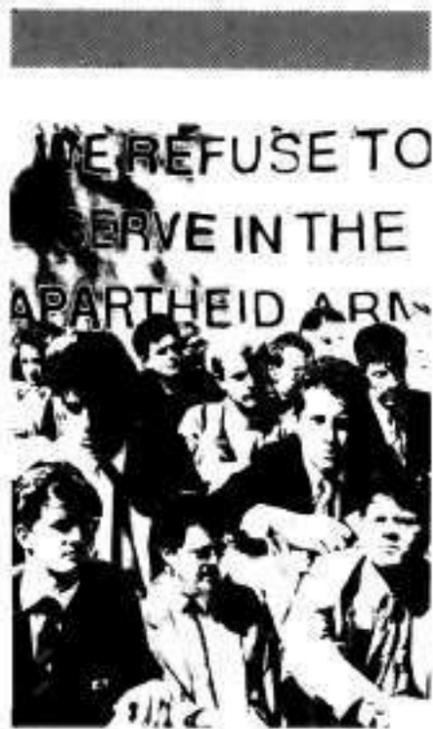


# WE MUST NOT LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH

The behaviour of the enemy's armed forces is a critical variable in our struggle for power. It is an issue which needs more than lip service. We must address the vast potential that lies in undermining the loyalty of all troops, and winning over sections of them to the side of the struggle. Events of the past two years have shown that there is a developing crisis within the enemy's armed forces.



The mutiny within the Bophuthatswana Defence Force; the progressive actions of the Transkeian military leadership; rumblings of discontent within sections of the Venda armed forces; complaints over conditions of service amongst black policemen; the heroic protest action of Lieutenant Rockman supported by fellow 'Coloured' police officers; the public refusals of first 143, then 771 conscripts to serve in the SA Defence Force; and, on a less public note, an increasing lack of dedication

shown by part-time Citizen Force soldiers during their tours of duty in the townships — all of these are indications of the crisis of loyalty facing the enemy's generals.

Members of the armed forces are not isolated from the society they live in. These actions reflect the social and political pressures under which troops have been placed by their communities in a period of intense mass struggle. Clearly these pressures will continue to mount and the cracks in the enemy's ranks will continue to widen.

But we cannot sit back and passively watch history take its course. It is our responsibility to ensure that this fertile ground is exploited so that as the revolutionary situation intensifies we are prepared. We must be able to predict how the various sections of the enemy's forces are likely to behave and to know, with confidence, that significant numbers will side, in one way or another, with the masses. To achieve this requires an energetic two-pronged approach.

**Firstly**, there is a need for a co-ordinated political campaign waged by the MDM as well as our underground both to win over and neutralise the armed forces. This campaign needs to be purposefully

directed at the various distinct constituencies within the enemy's ranks. It needs to deal realistically with the material grievances of the troops, to understand the specific circumstances they find themselves in, and to include minimum demands as well as the general appeal for them to side with the masses in the struggle.

**Secondly**, and most importantly, we need to organise. We need to produce propaganda specific to its target audience. All this activity requires co-ordinated planning under the political leadership of the underground.

The primary targets in this struggle are clearly the black troops in both the military and police. **There are over 50 000 black South Africans under arms in service of the state and the revolutionary potential of these forces cannot be over-estimated.** It is time that, with the exception of particularly notorious collaborators, we cease to view them simply as enemies, but as potential allies. All efforts must be made to win them over, or at least to neutralise them.

Some sections of the white forces are also becoming receptive to our approaches. The increasingly successful anti-conscription campaign which is taking place outside of the SADF needs to be supplemented with organisational efforts within its ranks, particularly amongst the civilian soldiers of the Citizen Force.

For power to be effectively transferred to the masses, the apartheid armed forces will have to be dismantled. We cannot escape this reality. Objective factors will contribute to this process, but if we do not act in this field as a central site of struggle we will be leaving it to historical chance, beyond our control.



*Lieutenant Gregory Rockman, right, leads a protest march of prison guards and policemen in Mitchell's Plain. All were later suspended.*