Table of Contents

What's going on in South Africa?

Apartheid's rulers giving up at last?

Defiance Grows

Looking Abroad

Continued on next page
Keep the Pressure On!

continued from front page

Pressure point has been negotiations with the international banks over extending South Africa's $13 billion foreign debt. Although the banks have now given in, agreeing in late October to re-schedule the debt without attaching conditions for political change, the specter of tougher sanctions still looms.

In Europe and the British Commonwealth, governments are telling DeKlerk that new sanctions will be imposed if change is not forthcoming. Even the U.S. government has changed its tune, acknowledging that previous sanctions have had positive effect in forcing Pretoria into a new stance. State department officials suggest that further sanctions will be inevitable if tangible progress is not made during this parliament.

International pressure is compounded by the sagging state of the South African economy, which is rapidly losing capital to disinvestment, unemployment and inflation. Multi-national companies continue to pull-out in the face of sanctions and an uncertain future.

So DeKlerk is being told by friend and foe alike that he must move on a reform agenda. But how fast and how far are still very much the heart of the issue.

**Conditions For Negotiation**

The liberation movement of South Africa is clear that no reform will be meaningful unless the government enters negotiations with democratic forces. The movement is equally clear that democratic participation will not be meaningful unless the government ends repression.

MDM organizations have thus outlined broad pre-conditions which must be met before credible negotiations can begin. As COSATU’s resolution put it, the apartheid government must:

- Unconditionally unban all banned organizations;
- Unconditionally release all political prisoners and detainees;
- Unconditionally allow the return of all political exiles;
- Confine security forces to barracks;
- Lift the state of emergency and repeal all security legislation;
- End all political trials and executions.

These conditions would produce, among other things, the release of Nelson Mandela and the inclusion of the ANC in any government talks.

Conditions for negotiations are just the beginning, however. To dismantle apartheid requires more than ending state coercion or removing petty apartheid laws. Apartheid rests on the denial of citizenship, on the segregation of land and housing, and on a forced migrant labor system. There will be no end to apartheid until there is "one person, one vote," the segregated homelands and townships are dissolved, and workers have full human rights. Apartheid cannot truly be reformed, it must be transformed.

For the liberation movement, the sole purpose of negotiations is to arrange the peaceful transfer from apartheid to a unified, non-racial, democratic state. DeKlerk and his allies would prefer a compromised result which will keep the white minority in a position both economically and politically dominant for a long time to come.

**A Message from Brother Mayekiso**

Anti-apartheid organizations in South Africa are calling on their international supporters to escalate the pressure on Pretoria during this moment of crisis and transition. They stress the need for tighter sanctions and continued disinvestment campaigns.

This message was openly delivered in October by Moses Mayekiso, general secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) and co-chair of the MDM. Mayekiso, who was acquitted last spring on treason charges after an international campaign, stated:

"Apartheid is far from dead in South Africa. DeKlerk’s government is far from accepting democratic elections in South Africa. They will only listen to power, not words...."

"The state still has immense power. Although the economy has weaknesses, it is still a very powerful economy. The imperialists have shown DeKlerk that he must negotiate now, while he still has power...."

"Our millions of allies in other countries must not let up on the pressure of sanctions now, or DeKlerk and imperialism will try to negotiate a settlement which excludes the masses from the negotiating process, which does not give any power to the masses, which does not end exploitation and which safeguards only the interests of imperialism...."

"Now is the time to intensify sanctions to cut short the social and economic agony of apartheid..."

In New York City, we can keep the pressure on through passage of a stronger Intro. 1137, the pending bill to tighten City sanction laws. See the back page for details.
S.A. UNIONS WIN AS MOBIL, GOODYEAR LEAVE

South African unions want multinational companies to disinvest from the apartheid system, but they also want the right to negotiate over the terms of disinvestment. Two victories this summer have made that right a reality for the first time.

**Precedent At Mobil**

Mobil announced it was withdrawing from South Africa in May, without any advance notice to the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU). The union responded with a militant two-week strike at Mobil installations demanding negotiations. An international protest campaign was also launched, including a demonstration at Mobil headquarters in New York City.

By July, the CWIU wrested major concessions from the oil giant. Mobil will provide its 1,500 employees severance pay equal to one month's wages (2,000 rand or $700). CWIU won important guarantees that the new owner will honor union recognition and contract rights. CWIU also won the right to negotiate directly with the U.S. parent corporation over setting up a worker-controlled trust fund from Mobil's South African profits.

**Advance At Goodyear**

CWIU’s victory set a precedent that was quickly taken up by 1,200 members of the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) employed at the Goodyear plant in Uitenhage. Like Mobil, Goodyear had unilaterally announced that it was disinvesting and selling its assets to a South African company. Goodyear also refused to negotiate seriously over the terms of withdrawal.

Workers walked out in protest in early July and all were promptly fired by the company, which advertised for scabs. The workers refused to back down and after a 10-week strike and lock-out, Goodyear was forced to make even greater concessions than the Mobil settlement.

Each worker will receive severance pay (1,000 rand) and the right to withdraw pension money, up to twice the amount of their own contribution (5-10,000 rand per individual worker). Goodyear will pay the principal on housing loans to be offered its workers over the next five years. NUMSA will gain at least 50% control over the pension fund, which will be reconstituted as a “provident” fund to benefit workers and their communities.

Like the Mobil settlement, NUMSA's victory at Goodyear established the union’s right to negotiate directly with the parent company and to have union contracts applied to the new owners. There will be no lay-offs or unfavorable changes in working conditions for at least twelve months, giving the unions time to solidify their strength under new management.

**Impact On Sanctions**

The right of South African workers to advance notice and negotiations as companies disinvest has been asserted and won on picket lines in South Africa. It's equally important that these labor rights be asserted in the sanctions laws here that are forcing companies to disinvest.

In New York, we have the opportunity to add these rights to a new and tougher sanctions law, Intro. 1137 (see story, page 8). Across the country, labor rights to notice and negotiation must become a basic condition for defining responsible disinvestment.

**MHT: BREAKING THE TRUST**

Several hundred demonstrators rallied on October 4 outside the New York offices of Manufacturers Hanover Trust. The rally protested MHT's decision to rollover its loans to South Africa for another ten years, taking the heat off the DeKlerk government. Parallel demonstrations were held against apartheid's major creditors in London, Zurich, Paris, Frankfurt and Copenhagen that day.

The New York rally also protested MHT's dirty business here at home. MHT recently extended credit to the Pittston Company to help it bust the United Mineworkers of America. Over 1,800 UMWA miners have been on strike against Pittston since last April over the company's slashing of medical and pension benefits.

And while the bank invests in apartheid and union-busting, it refuses to invest in its own communities. MHT has collected $2 billion from Brooklyn depositors, but only granted $3 million in loans to Brooklyn residents.

Capital knows no country...but solidarity crosses borders too. Join the local campaign against Manufacturers Hanover by contacting: Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, Room 566, 475 Riverside Dr., NY 10115, 212-870-2293.
SCARP THE LABOR RELATIONS ACT!

These days it's hard to tell if apartheid is cracking up or cracking down. The answer is: both at the same time. South African unions are taking bold action and meeting with stiff reaction from employers and the government.

In July, police arrested COSATU general secretary Jay Naidoo, who was later released. In August, police raided COSATU headquarters, ten field offices, and four affiliate offices, seizing files and arresting indignant staff. Security forces occupied the meeting area of the Workers' Summit in August, videotaping the proceedings. Three COSATU leaders were detained around the election protests, along with four UDF leaders.

Two members of the Alexandra Five, co-defendants of NUMSA leader Moses Mayekiso, were redetained on election day; police have been searching for two others. In addition, hundreds of workers have been arrested for participating in the Defiance Campaign and in protests against the 1988 Labor Relations Amendments Act (LRA).

The LRA remains the central focus of labor agitation. The Act stripped away legal rights won by unions in this decade, outlawing most strikes, solidarity actions, secondary boycotts, wildcat strikes, and public picketing. It makes unions financially liable for employer losses during job actions, negates seniority rights, removes protections against unfair dismissals, and denies sole recognition rights to the majority union. In other words, the LRA attacks every basic principle of free trade unionism.

Both COSATU and the smaller federation NACTU have mounted fierce opposition to the LRA over the past year. They call on employers to negotiate contracts overriding the new restrictions. Worker protests have convinced some employers to negotiate, but most have welcomed the Act as an opportunity for union-busting.

South African labor researchers reported this summer: "Workers are clearly ignoring contentious clauses in the LRA. Bosses are responding harshly by using court injunctions, lock-outs and eviction orders. The last three months have seen increased police intervention in strike activity, death threats to union activists and the killing of unionists during strikes."

At the Workers' Summit, union delegates agreed to escalate the battle this Fall by launching two new campaigns against the LRA, a consumer boycott and a national ban on overtime. The boycott ran from mid-September to mid-October, targeting white urban businesses, with particular success in the Eastern Cape region. The overtime ban is ongoing.

In addition, the demand to repeal repressive LRA measures has become part of the national Defiance Campaign, joining the challenge to all-white parliamentary elections and segregation laws. The issues came vividly together on October 14 when 150,000 marched in demonstrations throughout the country to cap off the LRA boycott and to celebrate the release of eight top political prisoners.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP LRA REPRESsION!

Let South African business know the whole world is watching.

To Bobby Godsell, Chairman of South African Consultative Committee on Labor Affairs (SACCOLA):

We protest the action of South African employers in denying basic labor rights to our union brothers and sisters through the 1988 Labour Relations Amendments Act. We protest employer and state violence against unionists seeking to nullify LRA suppression. We will continue to press for comprehensive international sanctions against South African business until labor and human rights are observed and apartheid is renounced.

Name
City
Organization

Send to: Bobby Godsell, SACCOLA, c/o Anglo-American Corporation
44 Main Street, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2001
(or send to LCAA and we will forward your message)
VIVA OSCAR!

OSCAR MPETHA, the father of South African trade unionism, was released from prison on October 15 with seven other leaders of the democratic opposition. Born in the Transkei in 1909, he has been an activist in the labor movement since 1925 and a member of the ANC since 1951. In 1980, while serving as a national organizer for the Food and Canning Workers Union, he was imprisoned on charges of terrorism for teaching freedom songs to workers. He was held nine years, despite his age and severe health problems. While in prison, Oscar Mpetha was named honorary president of the United Democratic Front. An international campaign to honor Mpetha's 80th birthday in prison is now an international celebration of his courage and freedom. Viva Oscar!

"The struggle in South Africa is not merely a contest between two contending political powers. It's about tea cups and tin mugs..."

A LETTER FROM CAPE TOWN

This September, the LCAA received the following letter from a union organizer in Cape Town.

Dear Friends,

The Defiance Campaign has been remarkably successful. Although the Emergency is still in place and is still being applied with great force—thousands still in detention or under restrictions, peaceful protests still suppressed with brute force—its awesome power has been broken by the defiance.

One can almost see the uncertainty on the faces of the policemen, who are quite clearly no longer operating under clear and single-minded direction. If the new President has contributed anything in his short term in office, it is a palpable lack of direction.

I'm pleased to say that the unions have been very much at the center of the defiance. You will have read about the stayaway around the time of the white elections. In addition to this, workers are organizing regular pickets at their factories and, at the moment, we are in the middle of a national overtime ban.

Our major target has been the Labour Relations Act and here too we are succeeding in rolling back its boundaries. We have forced many employers to sign private contracts nullifying the Act and the government has just announced that it will investigate some of its more obnoxious provisions.

We have also been on a systematic campaign of defiance against racial discrimination in the workplace. Where, for example, toilets or canteens are segregated, workers have simply been using 'white' facilities.

It's not been without cost. In one of the platinum mines, it seems that white workers drink their tea out of tea cups whilst black miners are provided with tin mugs. As part of the defiance campaign, a black miner used one of the tea cups and his foreman shot him dead!

One of the really important features of the Defiance Campaign is to remind the world that the struggle in South Africa is not merely a contest between two contending political powers. It's about tea cups and tin mugs...

Overall, it's been an exciting and uncertain time. I think that the government's unpredictability means that there is a dawning recognition that the old way of ruling is under terminal threat. They're groping around for a new formula.

You may have read about the negotiations between the Soweto People's Delegation (SPD) and government representatives over the future of Soweto. Quite clearly the rent boycott in Soweto has forced the government to recognize that the SPD is the true representative of the people of Soweto—people like Desmond Tutu (Anglican bishop), Frank Chikane (Council of Churches), Albertina Sisulu (UDF), and Cyril Ramaphosa (NUM). We're going to have to be prepared for this type of development.

The struggles waged in the factories and the streets and in the international community are slowly forcing the state to the negotiating table.

We have to maintain the pressure and, at the same time, maintain this initiative at the bargaining table. The unions have long understood the complex relationship between organized power and negotiation. The current Soweto negotiations are showing the way in the broader community.

How we resolve these issues is clearly going to have a powerful influence on our struggle, and hopefully our victory, in the 'nineties.
UNIONISTS ORGANIZE FOR FAIR ELECTIONS, AGAINST PRIVATIZATION

In November, Namibians elected their first independent government in 100 years of colonial rule. SWAPO is a clear winner, but with 57% of the vote, it falls short of a 2/3 majority needed to form its own government.

The election process has been supervised by the United Nations, but dominated by South Africa. South Africa has retained control of the interim government, the police and security forces. South Africa is setting the rules and conducting the elections. There has been sharp violence against the liberation movement and its leaders in the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), including several assassinations.

SWAPO leaders in exile were only allowed to return over the summer. At the same time, authorities have bused in whites now living in South Africa to register to vote. There are also widespread reports that South African employers in Namibia are intimidating blacks from taking part in the elections or backing SWAPO.

Central Union Role

Namibian unions have played a crucial role in organizing against this intimidation: registering workers and rural farmers, defending election activity at the workplace, and getting out SWAPO's message.

The National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) was established as the national labor federation at a trade union convention this June. NUNW has set up eight regional offices to work on the elections along with labor issues. It has received direct assistance from COSATU in South Africa, which has sent leaders to advise NUNW on dealing with employer threats and vigilante violence.

COSATU has directly pressured South African companies operating in Namibia to cease intimidation of black voters and to recognize the NUNW. COSATU pledges to take action against companies transporting white voters into Namibia for the elections.

Meanwhile, South Africa is selling off public services to private companies in order to extract as much money as possible before independence and to deprive the new government of control over Namibia's infrastructure.

Three public sector unions in Namibia are fighting the government's intention to privatize public employee pension plans. The scheme would allow white Namibian government workers, who comprise 80% of the plan, to withdraw both their own and government contributions from pension funds and re-invest the money in South Africa.

Essentially, the plan would remove 1.2 billion rand from the public control, deeply undermining the solvency of an independent Namibian state.

It is clear that the fight for genuine independence in Namibia will go on far beyond the election date.

Moses Mayekiso (COSATU) and Ben Ulenga (NUMW) address a May Day rally in Namibia.
COSATU Congress

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) held its third national congress in July to set new directions for the workers’ struggle. The meeting was attended by 1,800 delegates, who resolved to:

- adopt strong pre-conditions for any negotiations with the apartheid government, demanding the end to all state repression.
- build the union alliance with the Mass Democratic Movement, organizing with the Defiance Campaign and sponsoring a broad anti-apartheid conference in the coming months.
- mount a national, direct action campaign to repeal the repressive provisions of the 1988 Labour Relations Amendment Act.
- affirm conditions for responsible disinvestment and sanctions, stressing union rights to advance notice and negotiations.
- formulate a Workers’ Charter, or workers’ bill of rights, as part of a post-apartheid constitution.

Workers’ Summit

COSATU sponsored a second Workers’ Summit in late August, galvanizing the campaign against the Labour Relations Amendment Act (LRA). The summit drew 750 shopfloor delegates from all sectors, including the second largest federation, NACTU, and independent trade unions. To maximize consensus and rank-and-file control, union officials were excluded from the debates.

The police attempted to disrupt the gathering and occupied part of the hall to videotape the proceedings. However, workers spread out into nine discussion groups, with messengers between them, to foil police efforts. This enhanced the strong sense of unity which pervaded the Summit, a feeling workers pledged to bring back to the regional and local levels.

Union Pay Gains

South African workers in unionized industries won average pay increases of 22.5% in the first half of 1989, staying ahead of the inflation rate of 15%. Increases brought the average wage to 142 rand a week (about $50). Wage gains corresponded to a near doubling of strike activity in this period.

Major contract settlements were reached this summer in the mines and metal industry. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) reported wage increases ranging from 13.5-21.3%. The National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) agreed to wage increases of between 15.2-18.5% and also won May Day and Soweto Day as paid holidays.

Phelps Dodge, Again

The Phelps Dodge Corp., notorious for union-busting in the U.S., is at it again in South Africa. The company owns nearly half of the Black Mountain Mineral Development Co., which recently forced 1,000 striking workers back to work under threat of mass firings. The union was demanding entry level pay of $160 a month; the company offer was $107 a month, about half the average wage for industrial workers in South Africa.
BATTLE IS ON FOR NEW YORK CITY SANCTIONS

Intro. 1137, the bill to close the loopholes in New York City's sanctions law, is still pending before the City Council. The idea is simple: the City should not purchase from or contract with corporations doing business in South Africa.

However, a number of banks and businesses find it hard to let go of apartheid. They want to weaken Intro. 1137 with delays and exemptions. Some hard fighting over the next few weeks will decide the issues.

Weak Bill

Pressure to weaken Intro. 1137 has come mainly from the big banks and Chamber of Commerce. The banks want no penalties on their current to loans to South Africa. They especially want to be able to renegotiate these loans for longer periods of time. In fact, major international banks have just re-extended their loans to South Africa for ten years. Business also wants a five-year grace period to phase out non-equity ties (licensing and franchise agreements). Business claims that it's hard to pull out of existing investments and agreements.

Mayor-elect David Dinkins directly refuted this claim: "Hard business choices between and among markets are made every day by the firms in question. The choice here is between serving the City market and that of South Africa." Dinkins has proposed that under Intro. 1137 banks not be allowed to rollover their loans and be given two years to sell off their South African assets.

Others have taken a tough stance, too. In September, the Westchester County Board of Legislators voted to withdraw its deposits from Citibank, after the bank's decision to reschedule $660 million in loans to South Africa.

Strong Bill

Anti-apartheid groups want to make sure that Intro. 1137 doesn't let the banks off the hook. A strong bill would cover all the loopholes businesses have used to maintain profits in South Africa: prior loans and credits, licensing and franchise agreements, the use of third party vendors, and special exemptions.

Anti-apartheid groups also want new provisions recognizing the rights of South African workers to advance notice and negotiation over the terms of disinvestment as companies withdraw from South Africa. This amendment has been vigorously championed by the City's labor movement and by South African trade unions.

A major concern is to include labor rights in the monitoring and enforcement mechanisms of the bill, which need strengthening overall. The City has yet to clearly designate one agency responsible for enforcing the law. The new bill should also affirm that non-mayoral agencies, like schools and hospitals, are governed by sanctions in their purchasing and contracting activity.

Supporters of a strong Intro. 1137 are urged to contact their City Council members with a message: labor rights, yes! Exceptions for banks and corporations, no! Keep the pressure on apartheid!

LCAA Sponsors

Chair: Stanley Hill, Exec. Dir., D.C. 37, AFSCME

Lau Alban, Pres., Local 378, D.C. 37, AFSCME; George Boncompaglia, Pres., CSEA Region B, AFSCME; Beverly Gans, Dir., Region 9A, UAW; Jim Bell, Pres., NY Coalition of Black Trade Unions; Jim Butler, Pres., Local 420, D.C. 37, AFSCME; Arthur Cheliezos, Pres., Local 1180, CWA; Charles Cimney, Pres., Local 371, D.C. 37, AFSCME; Barry Feinberg, Pres., Local 237, IBT; John Gladd, Pres., Local 802, AFM; Bill Hemphill, Vice-Pres., Local 1180, CWA; Dan Kane, Pres., Local 111, IBT; Josephine LeBeau, Vice Pres., NY CLWU; Barry Liebowitz, Pres., Doctors Council; Josie McMillian, Pres., Metro Area, AFPU; Sam Mayson, Pres., Local 250, UAW; Henry Nicholas, Pres., NUHHC; William Nashed, Sec-Treas., Local 371, CWA; Marian Porro, Pres., Local 840, IBT; Jan Pierce, Pres., Local 1, CWA; Marian Porro, Pres., Local 371, CWA; Dennis Rivera, Pres., Local 1939, D.C. 37, AFSCME; Dennis Rivera, Pres., Local 1199, RWDSU; Bettye Roberts, Pres., D.C. 1700, AFSCME; Cleveland Robinson, Sec.-Treas., Dist. 65, UAW; Ray Rogers, Dir., Corporate Campaign, Inc.; Edgar Romney, Mgr., Local 23-25, V.P., ILEWU; Robert Schwartz, Pres., Comm. of Interns & Residents; Willie Terry, Pres., Local 460, CSEA; Cecil Topin, Mgr., Service Industries Jt. Bd., ACTWU; Milda Toppin, Vice Pres., Local 3, RWDSU.

Coordinators: Kate Pfeiffer and Vicky Williams

(212) 226-6565 or (718) 768-1756