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## NEGOTIATION AND ARMED STRUGGLE IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA

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### INTRODUCTION

In December 1985 South African forces violated Lesotho's territory and murdered a number of ANC cadres and Lesotho civilians in Maseru. A few days later, a bomb exploded in Amanzimtoti, killing a number of passers-by and injuring others. Public reaction was diverse, but at least three streams emerged. Those who applauded the SADF action in Lesotho uncompromisingly condemned the 'Toti blast as 'terrorism'. Some who expressed concern at the Maseru raid pointed to the bomb in Natal as proof of their worst fears. Many others interpreted the Amanzimtoti incident as justified - if misdirected - retaliation for state-sponsored terrorism. Given the circumstances, a brave response reportedly came from the father of one of those killed in the bomb-blast: 'The Government must talk to the ANC and find a peaceful solution. ... I would be satisfied if [my son's] death and the death of the other four people would lead to a better South Africa' (quoted in Meer, 1987:4). The statement identified two major antagonists in contemporary SA, the state and the ANC and their respective supporters or sympathisers, and also pointed to negotiation in the context of armed struggle.

Most often the concepts of 'negotiation' and 'armed struggle' are treated as mutually exclusive terms. South Africans face the choice of *either* negotiation *or* armed struggle. Alternatively, in a slightly different formulation: no negotiation without, or even before, a cessation of armed struggle; conversely, no negotiation before the violence of apartheid is dismantled. This clearly raises the question in South African politics today of the definition of the nature of participation of all in the political culture of the country. At one level the issue is about the destruction of apartheid. At another it is about the mechanics of transition.

Various definitions of the policy of apartheid itself exist. State representatives often deny that apartheid involves domination, injustice, inequality or racial discrimination.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, a common oppositional view describes apartheid as something more than mere racial discrimination. It is a system of domination that includes racism, inequality, national oppression and economic exploitation *plus* the instruments of force and repression, ideological conformity and control that are used to maintain it in the face of massive popular resistance. In short, apartheid itself is a form of violence that needs to be eradicated, a process that involves more than mere formal or institutional change (ANC, 1987a:1).

The distance between these two positions may not appear at first sight to be wholly irreconcilable. Government definitions are located firmly within its belief in ethnic/minority group rights and identity. Definitions such as these

allow for the mutation of the present structures rather than their complete transformation, a process envisaged by a wide range of opponents represented by, among others, the UDF, Azapo, ANC etc. However, the ANC as the leading proponent of the necessity of armed struggle in its broad strategy of liberation is clearly at odds with a government that is determined not to have anything to do with it except fight it.

This article concentrates on the relationship between *negotiation* - as a means of escaping the historical impasse whereby present generations cannot guarantee future generations of Southern Africans stability, security and justice - and the strategy of *armed struggle* - as merely one factor in the vast array of different strategies - as considered by the ANC alliance and deployed in various ways. The context within which this relationship is examined is twofold:

- \* the historical rejection of the politics of negotiation by successive South African governments and their allies;
- \* the retention of the politics of negotiation as a desirable form of activity by democratic organisations that has been supplemented by other forms of struggle as time has passed.

The first element has been accomplished through the exclusion of the majority of South Africans from formal structures of power and is linked to a process that has led to the restriction and limitation of democracy. The process identified in the second point is most dramatically illustrated in the development of a theory of armed struggle in response to Pretoria's rejection of negotiation.

The story of the colonisation of southern Africa is now better known, thanks in large measure to the new historiography that emerged in the 1970s. It will suffice to outline the main themes that emerge from that story. The extension of white rule in the southern part of the continent was concluded through a variety of means, the most notable being the armed subjugation of resistant people when other measures failed. Once economic and political control was ensured, people of colour, particularly African people, came more and more to be subjected to discriminatory laws and practices within those areas. For the great majority of people thus subjugated, it is clear that their acquiescence did not necessarily imply acceptance of this system of control.

One of the major features of modern South African development has been the erosion of the political rights of this subjected people, a necessary condition in the creation of the modern apartheid state. This latter process was fiercely resisted by progressive organisations and individuals, but this resistance was met by savage reprisals on the part of a state determined to succeed in its plans of social engineering.

## REFORM AND NEGOTIATION

In more recent times, the South African government has embarked on its self-styled reform programme. Besides the removal of certain elements of petty-apartheid, a major concentration of their campaign has been in the realm of con-

stitutional innovation. The 'reform' initiative has involved a series of measures that serve to tamper with some elements of the apartheid system, a process that involves removing some forms of discriminatory practice like 'mixed marriages' and certain sections of the immorality laws. These renovations have been performed without addressing the practical side of their implementation, such as where people who are affected by such laws can live without being hounded by state officials. Similarly, the utilisation of a host of laws that control movement, such as trespassing and squatter laws questions the nature of the abolition of influx control legislation.

More important, though, is the process whereby 'positive' steps are constantly and profoundly negated by the introduction of laws and practices that serve to make the system more rigid, autocratic and irresponsible. At issue here is the increasing criminalisation of political protest and action, either by way of formal amendments to laws or through executive fiat in the form of far-reaching states of emergency. The strength of the repressive features of society has been increased. This is true in absolute terms with the creation of 'dads' army', the use of kitskonstabels, extended periods of conscription in the armed forces, and the plans to increase the size of the police force. It is also true in relative terms as a result of the wide powers now exercised by all arms of the security services under the protective indemnity of the regulations of the states of emergency. The role of the State Security Council is hotly debated, but its very existence is evidence of an increased link between the formal execution of policy making and administration on the one hand, and the security apparatus on the other.

Most important of all, however, is the process whereby the political realm is being depoliticised, where the politics of participation is not democratised in the normal sense of the term, but rather is extended beyond extant structures in the form of administrative co-option. This process has been described by, among others, Frederick van Zyl Slabbert as one of 'co-option *into* the centre of power' rather than away from it in terms of the old bantustan thesis, as well as the creation 'of a *multiracial autocracy* brought about through a strategy of *co-optive domination* in order to maintain *stability* through transition' (Slabbert, 1987a:406, 408; 1987b).

Whilst doubts linger around the National Council, the state is implementing the Regional Services Council system that forms part of a massive re-organisation of local government structures controlled from the centre. It is against this background of purposive state action and policy-making that the government's particular notion of negotiation needs to be placed. In short, the tale of constitutional development and democracy in South Africa is not one that encourages a belief in the notion of transformation from above. Critics stress that state actions rather than promises reflect the real 'statements of intent' of a government that 'is not interested in negotiation about a transfer of power'.<sup>2</sup>

The second major thread in modern developments has been the eclectic utilisation of a number of different strategies by opponents of apartheid. Be-

sides the efforts of people who function with varying degrees of success - and, some would add, sincerity - within officially sanctioned institutions including the parliamentary realm itself, it is outside of those structures that major initiatives and battles have been tried and tested.

Individuals and organisations opposed to apartheid have marshalled their forces with an impressive array of strategies and tactics. Responses to the apartheid state have developed over time, and most, if not all, have been confirmed or rejected in the light of experience. Today, organisations within the country advocate a number of strategies that involve a combination of boycott action, stay-aways, 'siyalala' actions, strikes, protest meetings etc. All of these find their pedigree in the traditional forms of non-violent struggle. The steady criminalisation of such tactics place severe burdens on the organisations, and, thus of necessity, force them to re-assess their position from time to time. In some areas, people have been forced to establish 'area defence units', structures meant to secure the lives and security of communities. The leadership and members of organisations that have been ear-marked by vigilantes or have come under state scrutiny. It is quite clear that for many people in the townships, the option of traditional forms of peaceful protest and action are no longer adequate as expressions either of political protest or of protection from assault.

It is perhaps impossible to establish the rate at which militant political action becomes transformed into armed activity, but that it is on the increase in the country at large seems likely. Discussion, comments and disavowal of the place of armed struggle as a form of political struggle within SA must take into account the domestic constituency which is produced under severe socio-economic conditions, aggravated by, and resultant upon, extreme forms of state aggrandisement. The steady radicalisation and increasing militancy of this constituency cannot be wished away or ignored, given the particular relationship that exists between leadership and the grass-roots base.

### **ARMED STRUGGLE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

From all accounts, the decision to include armed struggle as an element in the broader policy of the opposition movement was not lightly taken.<sup>3</sup> Armed struggle was seen then, as at present, as complementary to other forms of struggle, and not necessarily a substitute for them. In the early 1960's, military struggles were fought in other parts of the continent with some apparent success. The SACP pointed to the example of Angola and Algeria to hint at the possible course of events in South Africa itself when it suggested in July 1961 that 'people do not get freedom served up on a plate. They have to fight for it. Sometimes they even have to fight for it with arms in their hands'.<sup>4</sup> Within South Africa itself, opponents of apartheid, including disillusioned members of the Liberal Party, peasants in Pondoland and Sekhukhuniland, and angry residents of numerous townships were moving steadily closer to accepting retaliatory armed confrontation against state outrages and as a means to secure their liberty. As Mandela in-

dictated in his address to the Rivonia court in 1964,

it is a fact that for a long time the people had been talking of violence - of the day when they would fight the white man and win back their country - and we, the leaders of the ANC, had nevertheless always prevailed upon them to avoid violence and to pursue peaceful methods. When some of us discussed this in May and June of 1961, it could not be denied that our policy to achieve a non-racial state by non-violence had achieved nothing, and that our followers were beginning to lose confidence in this policy and were developing disturbing ideas of terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

Armed struggle, as first employed by Umkhonto we Sizwe (hereafter MK), in 1961 referred to the limited, controlled sabotage of government installations or related objects. The movement made a clear distinction between its policy and what it described as 'undisciplined acts of individual terror'. In its view, 'spontaneous outbursts' were acts of 'desperation', not acts of 'responsible and thoughtful revolutionaries'. Uncontrolled violence of the 'Poqo variety' - a reference to the more extreme tactics of some - was in itself undesirable, but it was also an incorrect strategy as it would expose the movement to even greater repression and devastation. Furthermore, commentators pointed out that the movement should not allow itself to fall into Luddite traps by attacking objects and individuals of immediate irritation. Rather, they had to address the source of oppression, ie, the state apparatus.

At the same time it was foreseen that for as long as it were still viable, peaceful methods of protest like strikes and demonstrations, would remain 'the main form [but] not ... the only form' of ANC strategy (Lerumo, 1962b:49). For its part, the SACP stated that it would 'continue to advocate and work for the use of all forms of struggle by the people'. Furthermore, it did not 'dismiss all prospects of non-violent transition to the democratic revolution'. It suggested that such a development would be enhanced by the 'development of revolutionary and militant people's forces'. It argued that as 'the crisis' developed in the country and the 'contradictions in the ranks of the ruling class' were exposed, then the 'possibility would be opened of a peaceful and negotiated transfer of power to the representatives of the oppressed majority of the people'.<sup>6</sup> That some activists perhaps underestimated the determination of the state at the time to preserve its position of minority domination in both economic and political terms at all costs, is well known. However, it is important to note the relationship between the armed struggle as it developed from there, and other forms of opposition and protest that formed part of the traditional armoury of the movement.

The atmosphere of the late fifties when numerous groups and individuals made some headway in creating common ground around the issue of negotiation and national conventions, rapidly dissipated after 1960. The state's military

budget increased remarkably and longer periods of detention without trial were introduced. The harassment of individuals and organisations increased and liberals and their supporters were brow-beaten. Verwoerd and his cohorts, especially his successor, BJ Vorster, expressed their 'granite' determination to remain in control of the destinies of all South Africans. Talk of the possibility of a peaceful transition to a non-racial dispensation in the country likewise vanished from the declarations of those proscribed organisations that had been forced underground and into exile.

It is clear, though, that the environment of enforced exile, the disrupted organisation and an inadequately constructed infrastructure, proved difficult in the extreme for the ANC/SACP. Distortions in policy set in, and the military elements seem to have taken up more energy and time of the available resources than was wise or even desirable (Slovo, 1976:192-93).

A popular idea of guerilla movements in the 1960's was the foco theory attributed to people like Che Guevara. In terms of this theory, all a revolutionary movement needed was the infiltration of well-trained guerillas into discontented areas to spark off a successful insurrection. The shortcomings of this idea were soon revealed, partly through the immediate circumstance of Guevara's murder in Bolivia and partly through harsh local experience (Lavretsky, 1976: Debray, 1968; Guevara, 1985).

Following the defeat and capture of many MK soldiers in Rhodesia during the Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns of 1967-8, the ANC held a major consultative conference at Morogoro, Tanzania, in 1969. The conference deliberated on numerous issues, including the question of the relationship between military and political struggle. It confirmed the view that political considerations should dominate strategy, but accepted that the military factor remained a crucial element in the pursuit of broader goals. But here too, the debates took place against the background of an intransigent regime that had given no indication of any fundamental change in its mental outlook vis-a-vis consultation or even negotiation of a future political dispensation free from racism. It was clear that the state thought it had no reason to contemplate such options, given the successes it had notched up as a result of the Rivonia arrests, Fischer's trial, and its involvement in Rhodesia to squash the guerilla units.

The first five years after the Morogoro conference have been classified by the ANC as the period of 'Regrouping and Recovery'. The major task it set itself, at the time that black consciousness was beginning to emerge as the major internal voice of black protest, was to reconstitute itself within the country in order to recoup the losses and strains of the previous decade. It was also during this period that other major political developments occurred. Plans were afoot that would culminate in the 'independence' of the Transkei. The Coloured Representative Council, established as a sop for the removal of the coloureds from the common voters role in 1968, was not functioning as smoothly as government wanted. Furthermore, Gatsha Buthelezi began to present himself as

a new force in South African politics, operating ostensibly as a critic and opponent of government from within the structures provided by the bantustan system. In 1971 he issued a call for a 'national convention of all races in South Africa'. In this he was supported by the United Party, the Progressives, the conservative Trade Union Council of South Africa, and groups within the coloured and Indian communities. The government for its part rejected the idea out of hand.

This was the first time the idea of a convention had been resurrected since 1961. The ANC was swift in its response, providing one of the clearest statements on a national convention. It noted that there were sound historical reasons for calling a convention. In its definition, South Africa was a country 'where a white minority group illegally monopolizes power to defend and advance its interests of oppression and exploitation'. In order to alter this situation one had either, in the words of Mandela used at an earlier date, 'to talk it out, or shoot it out'.<sup>7</sup> Congress further urged that Vorster's government should be compelled to agree to a convention, but laid down some all-important conditions that would make the exercise worthwhile, and not merely another clever attempt to perpetuate minority domination in another guise.

For such a convention to be a genuine attempt at reconstruction, it would first of all have to 'be vested with sovereign and unlimited authority to change South African society in all its aspects'; and, secondly, it should 'be attended by representatives of all national groups in proportions that reflect the composition of the South African population'. This proposal was not markedly different from earlier calls as a whole, but the reference to proportionality was. Other stipulations necessary for the fulfillment of the major conditions included: the constitution's suspension; the unbanning of all popular organisations including the ANC; the release of political prisoners and the lifting of all restrictions on individuals; the full participation of all leaders in all aspects of the convention's work; the return of exiles; total agreement with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the repeal of specific laws that make up the apartheid system such as the Land Acts, Urban Areas, Terrorism (sic) Acts etc; and finally, the dismantling of the armed forces.<sup>8</sup>

In its statement the ANC acknowledged that certain sections of the white community were shifting their ground as it became clearer that government policies provided little comfort either in the present and certainly not for the future. At the same time, the ANC saw the necessity to outline clearly what it regarded as the necessary content of any call for a national convention. Anything else or other ideas would not do as they would not serve the broader task of eradicating apartheid.

Buthelezi's call came at a time when some whites were indeed contemplating a different future to the apartheid vision of the state. The SPROCAS commission, for example, was in its final stages of producing its political report that focussed a good deal of critical attention on Westminster-style systems. Kaiser



Matanzima of the Transkei and Buthelezi themselves were also promoting the idea of federation for the bantustans. Congress, for its part, was more concerned to indicate to non-government organisations what they should be looking at, rather than proposing any suggestions directly to a government that was busy with its own inadequate conservative schemes and plans.

Tom Lodge (1984) has shown quite clearly the nuts and bolts development of the ANC and MK during the 1970's and 1980's. What is important here, however, is to emphasise the stirrings of the concept of 'peoples war' within the revolutionary alliance's ranks and how this affected the movement's overall strategy. Although hinted at in the documents that appeared out of the Morogoro conference, an early reference to the concept appeared in 1970. Still espousing the primacy of the political struggle over purely military expeditions, 'peoples war' was described as a process whereby individuals and communities were encouraged to support actively the armed struggle itself through various means - to provide provisions and shelter for soldiers, to gather intelligence and to mislead state agents. More particularly, people would identify their struggles as components of one broad strategy.

In 1970/1 the policy described in these terms was still very much a long-term one. From 1972, MK cadres began entering the Republic with the main purpose of establishing contacts and setting up underground bases which the ANC planned to rely on for the implementation of its policies outlined at Morogoro. The intensity of the 1976 rebellion caught practically everyone by surprise, including the ANC. It had not yet managed to build up its underground political and military machinery to any great strength, although it responded shortly after June 16 with a number of pamphlets calling for action.<sup>9</sup> These shortcomings were acknowledged by the ANC in these terms: 'Organisationally, in political and military terms, we were too weak to take advantage of the situation created by the Uprising. We had very few active ANC units inside the country. We had no military presence to speak of'.<sup>10</sup>

The rebellion that swept the country over the next fourteen months or so had a tremendous impact on all political organisations, including the ANC. First and foremost it highlighted the absolute necessity for the ANC to relate to its domestic constituency, to be constantly in touch with the mood, militancy and levels of organisation and mobilisation in the country. If the ANC was to remain, or even fulfil its own image as, the major contender in the stakes for power, as the leader of the broad movement associated with the Congress tradition, it had constantly to take due notice of political movements and tendencies that arose within the country as a direct result of apartheid policies. It is from this time onwards that the armed struggle was re-defined with the realisation of the earlier formulations of 'people's war' in view.

The development from 'armed propaganda', the stage where armed actions were meant to popularise the need to adopt armed struggle as part of a general strategy, to one of 'people's war' was initially seen as probably of fairly

protracted duration. In 1977, the Central Committee of the SACP cautioned against undue optimism born of the 'passion and excitement of the moment'. A protracted conflict seemed more realistic, especially given the state's own vast resources and the support it received from countries like the USA. The SACP spoke in terms of the possibility only of 'an effective beginning to the armed struggle'.<sup>11</sup> The events of the years since mid-1977 by and large have shown that this statement was a more realistic assessment than the optimistic 1967 projection that 'the war is beginning for the liberation of our country'.<sup>12</sup> The ANC now spoke in terms of a 'new phase of struggle in South Africa', a typology that was echoed by the Organisation of African Unity in 1982.

The purpose of the new phase, and the commitment to its escalation in the face of an overwhelming absence of evidence in their eyes of Pretoria's willingness to alter course in any fundamental way, was summarised in the following terms. Armed actions, like the attacks on police stations, the Sasol complex, Koeberg and running battles between MK guerrillas and state forces, were meant to have a mobilising and psychological effect. Popular self-confidence could transform covert hostility into overt mass confrontation. Such challenges were meant to instil insecurity in the state's forces. The cumulative effect of these two processes was intended to popularise armed struggle as a necessary component of the general struggle. By revealing the state's vulnerability, the ranks of both the 'political army' and MK would swell (Nzo, 1980). Some actions were seen as supportive of other struggles, as ways in which the armed struggle could be identified with those struggles. One example was an attack on a police station in Soekmekaar in the Northern Transvaal when the Batlokwa were resisting forced removals (Editorial, 1983). Besides calls during this period for increased political activity, calls that were as much a reflection of home-grown initiatives and responses as ANC-derived proposals, democratic opponents of apartheid were constantly encouraged to align themselves with the congress alliance.

### CONTEMPORARY STRATEGIES

Recent years have witnessed an increase in political activity within South Africa. Extra-parliamentary organisations, like the UDF and those grouped together under the aegis of the National Forum Committee especially, emerged in 1983 with highly successful campaigns against the new constitution and other proposed laws. They have become the main channels through which campaigns of protest have been co-ordinated. Despite tremendous odds against them as a result of a sustained and unprecedented state campaign of harassment and repression, they remain formidable opponents of the government, utilising strategies and tactics that are drawn largely from the non-violent traditions of the past.

Furthermore, the ANC has opened up as an organisation. Not only has it increased its credibility internationally on an unprecedented scale, it has also developed a sophisticated strategy of maintaining and extending links to a number of disparate groups within the country (Barrell, 1985; SA Pressclips, 1987).

All the while however, it has maintained that discussions and talks with South African interest groups and individuals must not deviate the movement away from its general course. The 1985 national consultative conference in Kabwe, Zambia, concluded that no reasons existed to force it away from its four-pronged strategy that it has developed over the years (Lodge, 1985; Phillips, 1985). This entails 1) continued support for mass organisation and mobilisation around political issues in the country; 2) the establishment of a stronger internal underground presence; 3) increased MK activities; and 4) the coordination of a sophisticated diplomatic and international offensive aimed at isolating the regime itself. At all stages, however, military activities were to be subordinate to political aims and considerations. They were to be organically linked to 'the people'. The ultimate aim of such a strategy, of combining the political and military aspects of struggle, was to weaken the whole systemic basis of apartheid (Mzala, 1987).

Against this background of combined political and military strategy, what are the ANC's ideas concerning the politics of negotiation? On 18 August 1985 *City Press* reported that Nelson Mandela had declared that 'the time is past for a national convention - all there is to talk about now is the mechanics of handing over power to the people of South Africa'. Mandela's statement caused a flurry of activity in political groups. Some people suggested that it was a departure from previous ANC policy. It is significant that the statement was made at a time when the idea of a national convention was yet again circulating. The ranks of political opponents, from the PFP through to the mass organisations, were in a state of flux. The state also appeared to be in crisis, both politically and economically. Once again, as in the late 1950s and the early 1970s, political organisations were talking about the mechanics of 'change' in South Africa, albeit from different perspectives and with different degrees of sincerity concerning the necessity for fundamental change. In this context, Tambo remarked that the issues were clear cut. Apartheid, quite simply, should be abolished. It was not something that could be negotiated, or indeed, reformed. Fancy franchises and constitutions were wholly inadequate if they were not based on the idea of a non-racial, democratic South Africa that operated universal adult suffrage (quoted Kumbula, 1986:3). Another ANC commentator suggested that a 'people's democratic republic in South Africa' could be established through the convocation of a constituent assembly elected - not on the 1971 group basis - on the basis of equal, universal franchise. The assembly itself would have to be sovereign in order to have the necessary power to formulate a new constitution. Moreover, the assembly was merely one step along the path towards the creation of a new country, not an end in itself.<sup>13</sup>

Tom Lodge (1987) recently identified a difference between 'realists' and 'romantics' in the ANC. The realists he identified as those who would support the line that '[w]e are not talking of overthrowing the government but of turning so many people against it that it would be forced to do what Ian Smith had to do'.<sup>14</sup> These are the diplomats. On the other side are the romantics, those who

argue for a 'seizure of power' through insurrection. Since Lodge wrote, more statements have appeared that perhaps serve to clarify some issues. A clear definition of the current perspective on the relationship between armed struggle and negotiation was issued in January 1987 and elaborated as the year progressed.<sup>15</sup> First, all ANC comments are premised on the understanding that apartheid itself must go because it is inherently unjust. A constant refrain invokes the commitment to continue militant action if Pretoria does not bow to domestic and international pressure: '[o]ur struggle will not end until South Africa has been transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial country. This is the only solution that would enable all our people, both black and white, to live as equals in conditions of peace and prosperity'. On the specific point of negotiations, the October 9 statement stressed that the 'ANC has never been opposed to a negotiated settlement of the South African question'. It continued:

On various occasions in the past we have, in vain, called on the *apartheid* regime to talk to the genuine leaders of our people. Once more, we would like to reaffirm that ANC and the masses of our people as a whole are ready and willing to enter genuine negotiations provided they are aimed at the transformation of our country into a united and non-racial democracy. This and only this, should be the objective of any negotiating process. Accordingly no meaningful negotiations can take place until all those concerned and specifically the Pretoria regime, accept this perspective, which we share with the whole of humanity (United Nations, 1987:2-3).

An important element in ANC thinking is the belief that Pretoria's refusal to enter meaningful negotiations is based not on its opposition to armed struggle, or 'violence' in its parlance, but because it is 'unwilling to give up white domination' (Tambo, 1987b:3). Thus any framework that does not address directly the issue of white minority domination can only be transitory and certainly will not lead to a cessation of hostilities between the warring factions in South Africa's civil conflict.

Negotiation and armed struggle are inter-related aspects of the broad strategy of the ANC. They are not and cannot be separated or treated as mutually exclusive policies. Hence, whilst the state continues to batten down the hatches, that section of the democratic movement that espouses armed struggle as part of its overall strategy and tactics will not relinquish its position. For its part, the ANC sees no concrete steps by government that indicate a willingness or commitment to move definitely away from apartheid. Instead, the events that loom large during the period of the states of emergency point in the opposite direction. In its terms, there is as yet

no prospect for genuine negotiations because the Botha regime continues to believe that it can maintain the *apartheid* system through force and terror. We therefore have no choice but to intensify the mass political and armed struggle for the overthrow of the illegal *apartheid* regime and the transfer of power to the people (United Nations, 1987:4).

Some may say that the state is far too powerful for armed struggle to succeed. The argument misses the essential point: the armed struggle is not meant to take on the armed might of the state. It is a component part of a generalised policy. The ANC has received unprecedented recognition both at home and abroad in recent years. That the forces of repression within the country have secured a roll-back is undeniable. This factor may lead to reassessment or shifts in political strategy on the ground. What is clear is that the main contenders in the conflict are at loggerheads - the South African government and its allies on the one hand, and the democratic movement on the other. How that conflict will ultimately be resolved remains to be seen. If some sort of transitional order is introduced and attains some stability but leaves the major contradictions of society unaddressed, there will be no peace in South Africa.

## NOTES

1. Cf, for eg, PW Botha, 30 September 1985, quoted in EPG (1986:169)
2. RF Botha - M Fraser and O Obasanjo, 29 May 1986, quoted in EPG (1986:121-22)
3. For one of the better discussions of this topic, cf Bunting (1975)
4. 'The Story of the Communist Party', underground leaflet distributed in South Africa in July 1961, reproduced in Bunting (1981:271)
5. Mandela, N - 'The Rivonia Trial', in Karis and Carter (1977:776); Mandela (1983:168)
6. 'The Road to South African Freedom', in Bunting (1981:314- 15)
7. Mandela, N - Graaff, Sir de Villiers, 23 May 1961, calling for United Party support on the National Convention, in Karis et al (1977:635-37) and Mandela (1986:104-05)
8. ANC - 'On the convocation of a national convention, in De Braganca and Wallerstein (1982:108-09)
9. Four such pamphlets are reproduced in ANC (1982:125; 128; 132)
10. ANC National Executive Committee Political Report delivered to the 1985 National Consultative Conference, in ANC (1985a:19). For similar comments, cf Mzala (1986; 1987)
11. The way forward from Soweto', in Bunting (1981:422)
12. Bunting (1981:364)
13. Mzala, 'The Freedom Charter and its Relevance Today', in ANC (1985b:91)

14. Mbeki in *Observer* (London, 02.03.86), quoted in Lodge, T (1987)
15. ANC (1987b) passim; Tambo (1987a; 1987b) passim; Editorial (1987); United Nations (1987) passim

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