

and nondelegates would be invited. The high light of the conference was Nelson Mandela's dramatic appearance, his ultimatum to the government, and his equally sudden disappearance into the underground. The conference called for a stay-at-home strike for May 29-31, and Mandela's speech detailed the type of action to be taken if the government did not acquiesce to the conference's demands.

The element of secrecy is an important ingredient in political or military warfare. Mandela gave a detailed description of what would be done, where, and how, and he gave the government plenty of time to take precautions. It passed a law through Parliament enabling it to detain a person suspected of prescribed activities for twelve days without being brought up for trial. Partial mobilization was ordered. The army and police reserves were called up. "Dangerous" men were detained. Thousands of African youths in the locations were arrested. The African residential areas in the urban areas were patrolled twenty-four hours every day. Saracen tanks stood at the gates. Loudspeakers on vans blared out police propaganda against the leaders of the stay-at-home, who had suddenly deserted their followers and gone into hiding when the arrests started. The air force was called in. Military planes zoomed menacingly above the locations. By the time the day of the strike came, there was nobody to lead the African masses. Some of the volunteers who had been especially trained to lead strikers were the first to go to work when they saw no sign of their leaders. In the face of these developments, large numbers of Africans went to work.

To stop merely at seeing state power or heroic opposition as the causes of the failure of the stay-at-home is to ignore facts. Throughout all the events described here, Luthuli was deliberately kept in the background. First, in a really serious demonstration the masses of the African people expected him, not Mandela, to give guidance. Second, the crack in the continuation committee destroyed the United Front internally, for it showed that no single section of political opinion can afford to march on its own to freedom in the present circumstances. The rigidity that the

invisible hand had insisted upon in the continuation committee showed that it had overestimated its power. Those Africans who supported the bloc that resigned had serious doubts about the tactics employed at Maritzburg. Third, there had not been efficient, thorough, and painstaking organization, in spite of the large sums of money available. One got the impression that the organizers of the conference did not really take themselves seriously. If they had gotten a mob to shout endorsement of their line, and in that way given them or Nelson Mandela status, they would have been satisfied.

On the other hand, it would be equally wrong to ignore one very important achievement of the stay-at-home: By forcing the government to order mobilization, it had administered a shock to the economy of the country, which opened the way to economic paralysis. Millions of rand were poured down the drain by the government simply because a few thousand Africans had met in Maritzburg and threatened to do certain things.

16 • UNDERGROUND FORCES IN ACTION

THE general attitude of the government is that no genuine opposition to it has any right to exist. Since 1948, therefore, policy has systematically been moving in the direction of silencing and crushing opposition. The Suppression of Communism Act immobilized the Communist Party of South Africa a few years after the Afrikaner nationalists had achieved power. In 1960, both the ANC and the PAC were banned. Shortly thereafter, the Prime Minister warned the white community that the greatest threat to its dominance came from the Liberal Party. And the way some Liberal leaders on both sides of the color line have been jailed, while others, like Alan Paton, have been subjected to some form of persecution—Paton's passport was recently seized—indicates that the Liberals are next on the list of those whom the government wants to silence.

The technique of crushing opposition and banning or exiling critics has driven quite a number of political groups underground. Since that is where South Africa's future is being decided now, I shall, in the present chapter, give a general picture of the actual forces at work among Africans underground—with particular reference to their composition, structure, ideological orientation, tactics, records of performance, strains and stresses, and possible alignments.

The forces might be divided into five major groups—the heroic wing of African nationalism, the realists, the Communists, the

Trotskyites, and the uncommitted Africans. In this list, only the Communists are really one politically homogeneous group; the others tend to function as assortments of attitudes bound together by certain loyalties. The dominant section in each group, which gives substance to the doctrine, is always the best organized. It might be the largest; it might not be.

The heroic wing of African nationalism draws its support from the young, militant, educated, and nationalistic section of the African community. The largest single group is made up of former members of the Pan-Africanist Congress. Sections of the African church might be counted here, as well as some businessmen. The heroic slogan of "Africa for the Africans" appeals to sections in the business community because it promises to be a lever with which to prize African custom from white and Indian competitors. The heroic sections of the church argue that it frustrates the African's communion with God if he kneels side by side with the white advocate of race oppression. But this ceases to be surprising when it is borne in mind that South Africa has a very long tradition of separatism in the African Christian community. Although this wing is intensely pro-African, it often works in very close collaboration with people of European extraction and with Indians, and it admits the coloreds to membership.

Those who give shape to the doctrine are largely people who were once either members of or sympathizers with the now banned PAC. This organization was made up of the leadership, the rank and file membership, and the task force, and each sector held a special position in the movement and performed clearly defined duties. After Sharpeville, large sections of the leadership were jailed. Since then, the periodic mass arrests in the largest urban areas have virtually destroyed the task force, and there now remains only the body, which is oriented in the direction once taken by the PAC. These, in turn, have gravitated underground, where they have become the most powerful section in the ranks of heroic nationalism.

The heroicals represent a very wide variety of viewpoints.

Some stand foursquare for a nonracial social order on the basis of one vote per man. Others are distinctly socialist. And there are clusters of antiwhites, who reject collaboration with non-Africans, although there are some who accept collaboration. All of them believe passionately in what they call positive action, a slogan capable of a variety of interpretations—the murder of political enemies, the organizing of boycotts, or the setting on fire of factories and plantations. But the intention always is to strike blows that hurt visibly and deeply.

This line has a strong emotional and dramatic appeal. By promising to hit the race oppressor where he is most vulnerable, and in that way distribute suffering equitably, it gives the faithful the feeling that the day of reckoning is in sight. Enthusiasm is kept up and self-confidence developed by applying the *Africanistic* formula in as many situations as possible. Social gatherings, for example, are Western-oriented, largely to the extent that brandy, gin, or both are served. Although their form of organization is distinctly Western, the spirit is aggressively African. The songs they sing, for example, are usually not those from the white man's culture; they are often the ancient chants which the Africans sang down through the ages when they were on the warpath, and the traditional war cries. Drunkenness is generally frowned upon; so, also, is sex. There is nothing puritanical; rather, there is a sense of destiny visible, which makes people feel that these excesses might harm them one way or the other.

To attend one such party gives one the feeling of having been inside an emotional steam bath. In this setting, tribalism is crushed ruthlessly out of existence, since each individual is encouraged to regard himself as an African. A Zulu will rise and perform the war dance, the Sutu will fill the air with the songs of the mountains, and the Xosa will tell of the exploits of his ancestors in the hundred years' war with the white man. All will listen as though they were being spoken to in their own language, for the heroicals set the greatest store by African solidarity.

The general strategy, on the political plane, is to avoid a

head-on collision with apartheid, which would produce disaster. As a result, attempts to stage stunts that are not likely to force the government to change its policy are invariably and bitterly attacked by the heroicals. This has mystified most people in South Africa, and the enemies of the heroicals have even accused them of collaborating with the government. The explanation is simple. The various heroic groups take the view that the task of dislodging a modern government is a highly specialized job. But since the training of skilled workers was not provided for initially, this weakness has to be corrected. And while this is being done, the heroicals argue, it is a waste of time to go massively on the offensive against apartheid. When the trainees are ready, the heroicals propose then to resort to positive action, which could quite conceivably force the United Nations or one or the other of the great powers to intervene. If the nations hesitate to act, a series of political veld fires might flare up until they merge into one holocaust engulfing the whole of southern Africa. The heroicals believe that after such suffering and pain a new Africa will arise, in which it will be possible for the black man to call his country his own and look the other groups in the face as an equal. But while waiting for this, they concentrate on building up their forces. They do not, as a rule, bother about surfacing to protest against various forms of injustice from the white side. This they regard as irrelevant, for their sole aim is to build up irresistible pressures to launch a decisive frontal attack on the citadels of white power.

Inside their own ranks, they face some awkward problems. The most complicated of these is the attitude toward the antiwhiteism. A substantial section regard racialism as barbarous, as something unworthy of the new African; another sees no virtue in what it terms the turning of the other cheek for the white man to hit. Nonracialism, these argue, will, like nonviolence, incite the whites to intensify the oppression and humiliation of the African while neutralizing the latter's anger against injustice.

The emergence of African states reinforces the racialists without narrowing the gulf between the two schools. The danger is

real that if Accra and other African capitals friendly to the African of the republic did not stress the importance of a non-racial approach, antiwhiteism might split even the heroicals, who regard Accra as their spiritual and political Mecca. Race complicates the relations not only between black and white but even between African and African on so many levels that expedient courses with no roots in morality often do as much harm as good.

Then, there have been the financial scandals among some of the groups that have received foreign relief aid and the consequent jealousies and conflicts among the rival leaders of the various underground factions. If these are traceable in part to the relative inactivity that has resulted from waiting for trained leaders, they also shake the morale of the heroic side rather badly.

It is on the plane of possible alignments that some unexpected developments seem likely to take place. For thirty-five years now, the heroic wing has maintained its unchanging hostility to Communism, and one reason adduced for this is the "foreign" loyalty on which Communism insists. The heroic nationalist regards Moscow as a white capital; loyalty to it makes him the stooge or protégé or colonial of white men in faraway Russia, and this hurts his self-respect. He takes a similar attitude toward Peking: The Asians in South Africa have often behaved toward the African in ways that hurt his pride, and he is in no mood to forget these injuries in a hurry. So strongly does he feel, and so sensitive is he, that he sees little virtue in turning to Moscow, Peking, or, for that matter, New Delhi when salvation for him waits in Accra, Lagos, Dar-es-salaam, or Addis Ababa.

The second reason given for the heroic nationalist's hostility to Communism is the latter's policy of zigzags. He regards the Communist as a traitor who has consistently sabotaged nationalistic movements toward real liberty, and he is in no mood to forgive this either.

Some of the strangest alignments may one day emerge from this hatred—especially since the Afrikaner nationalist is also bit-

terly hostile to the pro-Soviet side, though for different reasons. Communism pioneered the nonracial coordination of black, brown, and white initiatives after Union. After 1924, it admitted to membership people of all races and in that way projected itself to the fore as the archenemy of some of the things Afrikaner nationalism regarded as precious.

The African's and the Afrikaner's hatred of Communism on this plane is so intense that an alignment between the two is no longer as remote an eventuality as events might suggest. When the Congress Youth League was at the height of its power, the Ossewabrandwag, one of the more militant factions in the ranks of Afrikaner nationalism during the war, approached Anton Lembede, one of the greatest heroic leaders, with an offer of assistance against "foreign elements" like the Jews, the Indians, and the Communists. Lembede declined the offer on the score that the two nationalisms had little in common.

Since then groups in the ranks of Afrikaner nationalism have been quietly trying to find a formula of accord that would be acceptable to the African. The Afrikaans-speaking South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) has done more behind the scenes in this direction than is generally known. The attacks on it from the Prime Minister and the resignations by some of its leading members were designed, among other things, to stop the process of trying to find solutions acceptable to the African. As this chapter is written, one section of Afrikaner nationalists is trying to find ground for collaboration with one of the smaller factions in the ranks of the heroicals. The basis of what could become a form of *rapprochement* is the rejection of race discrimination, the acceptance of race equality in separate states (which would be sovereign and independent), a joint defense policy, and coordinated action against the Communists.

Like the heroic wing, the realistic is supported by groups committed to a number of different outlooks. There are the moderate traditionalists, the socialists, multiracialists, businessmen, church leaders, intellectuals, and workers. It is a more broadly based and better organized underground than its counterpart. Apart from

the general body of loose supporters and sympathizers, it is made up of a number of smaller, clearly recognizable groups sharing a common loyalty, and its following is more widely distributed in all the provinces of the republic.

The largest group on this side is made up of former members of the now banned ANC. The organizational structure is not as compact as that of the heroicals, for there is a greater degree of flexibility, verging almost on laxity. Nor does the spirit of the group make as hard and sharp an impact on one as the heroic side tends to. An atmosphere of urbanity prevails, which springs from an eclectic attitude toward politics and culture.

Let's take again the social gatherings to show the contrasts. As is the case among the heroicals, the best of these are attended very largely by the professionals—doctors, lawyers, journalists, nurses, social welfare workers, and, very occasionally, clergymen—the civil servants, businessmen, and people of some status in other fields of activity. They are organized along Western lines. The atmosphere, however, is completely different. For one thing, there is a greater degree of freedom. Singing, yes; but the songs are of a different order, most of them expressing the eclecticism of the new African. The harmony derives from the blended traditions in the cultural amalgam, neither Western nor traditionally African. A few may be freedom songs, the melodies of which are usually Western, and the dancing may be Western or of the amalgam type—the various Africanized versions of jive. In brief, there is neither the hardness nor the emotional intensity that the heroicals love, nor the strained consciousness of destiny.

The realistic wing tends to frown very heavily on loyalty to foreign lands or instructions from foreign capitals—whether Accra, New York, or Moscow. It insists on a *South Africa First* loyalty. For it, nationhood does not mean an Africanistic society; it signifies a social order some describe as multiracial and others as nonracial. The general tendency is to regard both adjectives as synonymous, both being understood to mean equal citizenship on the basis of one vote per man. The heroicals hate the word *multiracialism*.

The strategy of the realistic wing of African nationalism is less clearly defined at present. There are two main reasons for this. On the one hand, most of the leaders seem to have been exhausted by the long treason trial, which hit the realistic wing hardest. They have not been quick to recover from the blow, and they do not appear to have made up their minds where to launch the next offensive against apartheid. At the same time, the United Front, with which they have close links, seeks to exert pressure toward direct frontal attacks on race oppression. Hence, the conflict between the policies advocated by the United Front overseas and the realities of the internal situation tend, at the moment, to paralyze many of the realistic groups.

The second factor is the very sharp conflict that has developed between the pro-Communist and anti-Communist sections in the realistic camp. The latter reject multiracialism, claiming that the Congress Movement was a device concocted by the whites and the Indians for ganging up against the Africans. They insist on a nonracial organization in which no racial side will come in as a group. The pro-Communist wing has replied to this by boosting tribalism. After their experience in Pondoland, the Communists were suddenly rapturous in their praise of the "democracy of the tribe." To give it the correct ideological slant, they now describe it as multinationalism, as distinct from multiracialism. The new line recognizes the existence of distinct national groups within the African community itself—thereby blowing to pieces the foundations of unity laid down by the first Bloemfontein Conference. For the glorification of tribalism repudiates in the clearest manner possible the policy adopted by the Accra meeting of the All-African Peoples Conference, which met in 1958. Internally, its effects are to recreate tribal fissions and divide the Africans precisely in the way that Ethnic Grouping is intended by the government to do.

These clashes are too fundamental to make movement forward possible. The most prominent leaders of the realistic groups are trying to get out of the impasse by looking around for new groupings, and others are pressing forward with a militant pro-

gram of strikes to extend the area of malaise in the economy of the land. From this, it is possible to predict that the tactics of the realistic school may finally depend on the outcome of the conflicts just referred to. On the plane of performance, however, the realistic wing has been more active than the heroicals. Some of the groups in it have organized protests against injustice and focused more attention on living conditions in a number of situations. And to a certain extent, they have played no small part in working for raising the wages of certain classes of laborers in places like Durban, for example.

The emergence of the Liberal Party on the white side threw into bold relief the real issue in the race crisis—the clash between the approach that saw the human being from the perspective of the individual and the one that viewed him from that of the group. The demand for “deracializing” the realistic proponents is a logical rejection of the group approach by those who have been its victims. The final pattern could very well assume this form: At one extreme, there would be the African racialists; at the other, the white advocates of apartheid; and in between, a large bloc of nonracial opinion.

If events were moving this way, political multiracialism would be progressively rejected. A deracialized mass organization would emerge, which would be a balancing factor between the extremes on either side of it. If time were on the side of the realists, this is the only course that would remain open to them. But since they no longer have it as an ally, it seems more likely that they will come increasingly under pressure to align themselves with the heroicals for the purpose of launching a coordinated campaign against property.

In 1929, Communism ceased to want a mass movement of its own. Instead, the party was to remain the “brains” of the liberation movement as a whole. Today, however, this circumstance places Communism in a position of relative weakness, since its limited numbers make it impossible for it to take a clearly defined party stand or adopt an independent political program. But this it could not do even before the enactment of the Sup-

pression of Communism Act, and to be effective at all it had to use African political organizations as hosts. The first condition for this, however, was that it had to support nationalistic programs and content itself with manipulating events from behind the scenes. Therefore, it was forced to concern itself not with questions of conversion but with tactical considerations. One result of this is that now that it has gone underground it is placed in the position of its numbers being too small to enable it to take over the control of the country even in a highly favorable situation. The other is that the growing power of African nationalism threatens to swamp it. The bans on various people, and on it, have to a very large extent cut it off from direct contact with large masses of the African people.

The second circumstance that leaves the Communists relatively weaker is that the elaborate machinery they set up to maintain contact with the African masses is becoming redundant. This is how it was constructed: The inner, nonracial core of real Communists, with headquarters in Johannesburg, was in direct communication with the Central Committee of the Soviet Union, partly through agents in Lourenço Marques, London, and, more recently, Dar-es-salaam. The members of the core joined a number of “national” organizations of Africans, Indians, coloreds, and whites, which, in turn, belonged to a bigger alliance called the Congress Movement.

But neither the “national” organizations constituting the Congress Movement nor the Congress Movement itself was Communist. They functioned merely as an apparatus manipulated by the inner core. If Moscow wanted a particular course of action taken in South Africa, the ANC was not approached directly. Word went to the central core, and from there it was passed on to the Joint Consultative Committee of the Congress Movement, in which the Communists occupied a strong position. There they met as the “representatives” of the “national” organizations, and through the committee they forwarded the instructions to the “national” organizations as a directive. If there were differences too serious to be ironed out in the inner eche-

lons of the apparatus, an "all-in" conference was called. Here, opposition was swamped by the sheer volume of numbers, and emotional enthusiasm deliberately whipped up to discourage it; as a result, the conference then took the prescribed action and gave mass to it. This is the tortuous course through which the Freedom Charter was taken in order to become the policy of the Congress Movement, and the spectacular demonstrations which the Communists engineer from underground follow the same course. Multiracialism was, of course, the ideological bond by which the Congress Movement was kept together.

When the Communists went underground, this apparatus became too unwieldy. They discovered that nonviolence, which they had advocated, could not be organized successfully in secret. Their interest turned to smaller, more manageable groups—the tribes. They had a good number of desirable qualities: Group thinking and solidarity were strongest among them; they were committed neither to the traditions of struggle nor to the ideals of the townsmen and the people in the mission stations, which necessitated the creation of an elaborate apparatus. They accepted violence more readily as an argument against apartheid. In addition, they represented virtually virgin ground for political organization. When trouble developed in Pondoland, for example, there was an exodus of some of the top Communists from Johannesburg to Durban, and regular contact was maintained with Pondoland. The Communists, of course, were by no means the only group at work in Pondoland.

The weaknesses in Communist strategy are giving rise to two significant developments. In Natal, some of the more important personalities already say that they are studying Portuguese and Shangane because they are the languages of the future. They also say they expect major developments in Mozambique, where those two languages, coincidentally, are spoken. If trouble flares up in Mozambique, the Communists obviously want to be involved in ways that will strengthen their relatively weaker position in South Africa. This may necessitate the training of men in sabotage, guerrilla warfare, and arson in an effort to force the re-

public's state of malaise to deteriorate into a condition of acute economic paralysis. And the emphasis laid on a more aggressive attitude on the trade-union front suggests an attempt to ready the workers to administer the shocks the republic's economy might have to be given in a situation of increasing difficulty for apartheid.

If the Communists choose to fight in these two ways, they may not need the collaboration of the realistic wing; they may find themselves able to win support by their own efforts. The control of the working class would place in their hands a weapon they could one day use effectively to come to grips with African nationalism itself. With this in mind, the underground Communists now make serious endeavors not to hide their identity. In the past, they were most anxious to be regarded as part and parcel of the Congress Movement, but the prevailing policy now is to assert their independence, which allows them greater freedom in the deepening economic and racial crisis.

Flexibility and adaptability have always characterized Communist policy in the republic. A factor that gives significance to the new show of confidence—expressed in increasingly independent action—is the shedding of the moderates. There were no dramatic purges, just the systematic shunting to the sidelines. This has surrendered part of the initiative to the more extreme wing, which, in turn, has adopted a vigorous policy of training African leaders in relatively larger numbers.

But all these things are done in conditions of urgency, which indicates the need for hurried adaptations to pressing changes and quick corrections of weaknesses in order to meet a situation in which Communist forces might have to operate over a large area. The explosion expected in Mozambique would be just the sort of situation that would suit all the underground groups. Chaos on the northeastern border of the republic would facilitate the return of the large number of Communist leaders now abroad. The trainees in North Africa who are mastering the techniques of sabotage would come back to work with brighter prospects of being effective. Against this background, the changes in internal

Communist policy are clearly based on the need to play a more effective role in the turbulent conditions that are developing in Mozambique. The fall of the latter would give the underground access to ports from which arms and trained saboteurs could be transported to the republic. Then, an explosion of the ugliest type would develop.

The Trotskyites are unique in quite a number of ways. Their history has been characterized by schismatic crises. None of the various factions that adhere to one facet of the doctrine or the other has been banned, but all have built for themselves the quite misleading reputation of being great talkers who resort to little action against race oppression. On the whole, however, they are a largely nonracial group, some factions of which are more mixed than others. The groups that are most active in the nonwhite communities idolize the principle of organizational federalism, by which they hope to bring together, on the basis of federation, larger associations of people in a vast phalanctic march against apartheid. The critics of the Trotskyites all agree that the latter, whether they are talkers or activists, invariably function as a negative influence in the fight against race oppression. They have been driven underground—at least, those sections that operate there—not by state action but by their own policies.

The faction to which attention will be given here is the one that regards itself as the "socialists." It has two wings—the political and the paramilitary. The former is largely African, although it is nonracial, and it is the weaker of the two. Its policy aims at building up the African following for the purpose of forming a group that would be large enough to provide a government. The paramilitary wing, on the other hand, is almost exclusively white, and it has highly trained men who have served in the armed forces of the republic. Like the Communists, it has at its disposal large funds. (The two wings of African nationalism have no money.)

The "socialists" are anti-Communist; they stand for a program of extreme and rapid socialization. Both their goals and plans are designed to frustrate Communist intentions to capture the

government of the country after apartheid's collapse. Their general strategy is to stay underground and obtain as much African support as possible. To achieve this purpose, they have not ruled out flexibility in the program of socialization. Meanwhile, in the paramilitary wing, there is a feverish build-up going on, and some members boast that they already have arms available within the country. Their intention is to coordinate African political pressure with European military skill in the fight against apartheid.

Trotskyite strategy in the past has created the impression that theorization was its primary contribution to the struggle against race oppression—certainly among sections working in the African community; but this has always been a very effective smoke screen to cover some of the most daring and well-planned acts of sabotage. Actually, the Trotskyite technique has for a long time concentrated its efforts on training a solid core of activists to infiltrate African schools. Here, their one and unchanging line was to launch vicious attacks on the missionaries by branding them as the agents of the oppressors who would have to be liquidated before the onslaught on the main citadels of race oppression. In their attacks upon Christianity and, of course, oppression, student activists were planted in some of the largest and most famous missionary schools in the country. Since the aim was always to damage and destroy missionary influences, the instigation sometimes issued in alarmingly literal forms—fierce fires and riots. This is how Adams College perished, in flames, and Ohlange College was the scene of some of the ugliest riots. Behind many of the arson incidents in the boarding schools, the hand of a Trotskyite activist surely could be traced. Although the group that now controls the paramilitary wing was not in existence when Adams College was burned down, the general Trotskyite movement has nevertheless accumulated more experience in underground work and sabotage than any other political group in the country. In the sensitive conditions that prevail in the republic, it would not be surprising if the Trotskyites ignited the explosion black and white momentarily expect.

They have, however, serious problems of alignment, for their

outlook on life is too rigid and negative to enable them to make a visible impression on African nationalism. Those Africans whom the "socialists" are trying to woo express grave fears: They argue that merely to form the political wing of the "socialist" movement would be to allow themselves to be caught in a dangerous trap. If the predominantly white paramilitary wing kept underground, it would surface after victory, shoot the African government, or dictate terms to it. For coordination to be effective, these Africans argue, they must be given military training underground, within the country, and on the largest scale possible under the conditions now prevailing.

The uncommitted African does not belong to or constitute an organization with a recognizable structure. He expresses a mood, a reaction to a particular historical experience, and a community of feeling with those who have shared his experience of life. Understandably, then, this underground group is unorthodox in its composition and almost unpredictable in its behavior. Perhaps because it is the oldest in South African history, it has always lived somewhere in the political "subconscious" mind. Its members may already belong to known political groups, but they formally join the uncommitted to give mass to it for the purpose of achieving his moment of fulfillment. This desire for fulfillment is one of the distinguishing marks of the uncommitted African, and he, in turn, has become the one influence almost everybody dreads. Living as he does in the political subconscious, nobody can say with certainty which spark will rouse him to action. His group chooses its own moment to move in directions of its own preference, and when it does it shows practically no signs of political motivation.

Nobody really organized the Alexandra bus boycotts. People simply started talking quietly among themselves about the intolerable conditions to which they were exposed in the transportation system. They said among themselves that the moment of reckoning would come one day, but nobody took their murmurs seriously. One morning, however, a few people refused to pay the higher fares sanctioned by the government,

and within a few days the boycott had snowballed into a movement of incredible dimensions. In Natal—to take another example—the Indians emulated the white man by treating the African with contempt: One afternoon in 1949, an Indian hit an African boy, George Madondo, in Durban, and it immediately ignited a bloody explosion that rocked the country from end to end.

When the uncommitted African moved into action in these instances, he was at a disadvantage because the balance in power reserves favored the white community. But since then there has been a very significant change: Parity has been reached. When Sobukwe launched the PAC campaign last year, and when Mandela delivered his ultimatum to the government, they were indicating that there had been an important shift in the balance of power reserves in the African's favor. The result of this change is that the millions of uncommitted Africans who wait on the sidelines of the ideological battleground are no longer an amorphous mass likely to be blown in any direction by any wind. They are poised for action, waiting to give their support to any side that gives proof of its military (or other) effectiveness against apartheid. Next to the government's intransigency, this is the most dangerous single factor in the South African crisis. It incites rivalry and extremism in the underground, which might cause an explosion at any time. The signal for trouble could be an attempt by any one of the underground groups to make a spectacular bid to impress uncommitted African opinion. And an underground eruption would rapidly assume the proportions of a major explosion above ground. And above ground, only a relatively minor incident—say, a collision between the police and a few Africans—could be the signal for the unleashing of the fury locked in the African bosom.

The underground initiative need not be only on the military plane. The heroicals, for example, do not have the guns, but they could train their followers in arson. Every African could then be transformed into a front-line fighter by putting a box of matches in his pocket. Neither a reorganized army nor a heavily armed police force would be the answer here because the

disproportion in racial numbers would deprive the government of the manpower to guard every factory, every plantation, or every vital installation.

One basic weakness in the race crisis is that the balance between the opposing forces is such that once the conflagration started there would be no internal power to extinguish it. External intervention would be effective only if used as a prophylactic measure—before the actual collision. If it came later, it would take a long time to bring the inflammable tensions under control. This is why it is so vitally important and urgent that the nations should make drastic changes in their attitude to apartheid.

Some of the free peoples of Africa who wish to give practical assistance in extending the area of liberty ask why the Africans of the republic do not unite. A realistic glance at the South African race crisis will reveal that unity can no longer be the issue because there are such irreconcilable differences on the nature of the society to be established after the collapse of apartheid. These differences are not racial. The psychological war against apartheid has been won, and the civilized world's hostility to it is proof. What remains to be settled is the pattern of society to replace it. The heroical favors one kind, the Communist another, and the Trotskyite yet another. This circumstance combines with the peculiar nature of the power reserves and the internal political alignments to make African unity irrelevant for the purpose of breaking apartheid's back. The Africans cannot unite on any basis other than antiwhiteism in the present circumstances. Add to this the fact that the Cold War plays no insignificant role in the interaction of anti-apartheid forces above ground and under. All the Africans can do is to coordinate their power reserves and initiatives with those of the non-African opponents of apartheid. In the last analysis, this is the realistic answer to race oppression. But then, unless something is done very swiftly, the house might be on fire, as the Africans would say, by the time the nonracial front is set up.

17 • COMMUNISTS VERSUS LIBERALS

ONE of the major advantages the government had had up to the time of the resistance movement in 1951 was that it was not opposed effectively on the white side. The various groups against it supported the color bar in one form or the other, and any party that had stood for a clear-cut program of race equality would have had no chance of gaining enough support to reach Parliament.

The resistance movement was intended to show the potentialities of coordinating group initiatives, and Africans, Indians, whites, and coloreds joined together to defy certain laws and court imprisonment. The size of the African response to Dr. Moroka's call for 10,000 volunteers exceeded the expectations of the resistance organizers. Over 8,000 men and women went to jail, and quite a number allowed themselves to be arrested more than once to register their protest against race oppression.

One important result of this demonstration was that it convinced a group of people, largely on the white side, to make systematic attempts to establish machinery for the effective coordination of nonracial initiatives in the fight against apartheid. If this could be done, race oppression would be effectively opposed for the first time in the history of the Union by democrats on both sides of the color line.

On the nonwhite side, the readiness of all races to go to jail together created a political vacuum—or, rather, it focused atten-

tion on a political vacuum that had long waited to be filled. There had not been a democratic nonracial organization functioning among the nonwhites since Union. The Communists were the only exception, but then they did not work as a South African political party, since they took their instructions from Moscow and were interested largely in international threats to Moscow's line. And Paul Mosaka's African Democratic Party had come into being prematurely and had not lived long enough to make an impression on opinion.

The Liberal Party, however, came into being to fill the vacuum. The intention of its founders was to coordinate group initiatives and build up a powerful instrument to oppose apartheid and clarify the real issues at stake in the race crisis. They wanted to give constructive purpose to the national debate on the race question and to show that race collaboration was practicable. They took practical steps to defy the social color bar as a matter of policy: Black and white went into each other's homes, and friendships across the color line were established. This was the first systematic attempt to attack apartheid from the political and social angles, but it was immediately opposed by a number of political groups and persons. Among the first to do so was Dr. Yussuf Dadoo, who had been a leading member of the Communist Party before it was disbanded. He pooh-poohed the idea of a mixed party based on liberal principles and doubted its effectiveness in the conditions that prevailed in South Africa.

The underground Communist movement saw dangerous rivals in the Liberals. After 1924, when the Communist Party abandoned the color bar, the Communists had been the only white people who had identified themselves with the Africans in their fight against race oppression. It placed them in positions of advantage from which they could often influence events in particular directions when it suited them. But a new group coming up to compete with them in a field they regarded as theirs was a threat. Second, they realized, rightly, that temperamentally the Liberal Party was not a revolutionary movement. Its leadership was predominantly white and was drawn largely from the professional

and business classes, and this circumstance would make it a moderate group. If it gained support in the African community, it would work for the neutralization of movement toward the revolution the Communists wanted. The Liberal Party had already committed itself to using only constitutional methods in the fight against apartheid, to opposing Communism, to winning a qualified franchise, and to employing nonviolent weapons.

Sharp attacks came also from another totalitarian group—the Afrikaner nationalists. The whites who had joined the Africans to form the Liberal Party had committed the most heinous sin in the nationalist litany—that of working for race integration. No decent white man could do a thing like that: White women would be endangered, white supremacy would be undermined, and the day of Afrikanerdom's end would be in sight. They also had a second reason for alarm. The fact that white people had crossed the color line to join hands with the Africans in opposition to white supremacy indicated that a serious crack had been made in the wall of white solidarity. The Liberals would widen fissions among the whites while providing a new rallying point for the enemies of Afrikanerdom. A mixed anti-apartheid front in which white brains and African numbers were harnessed together could create very dangerous situations for Afrikaner nationalism.

The African nationalists—the realists were still in the ascendancy during the early 1950's—took an equivocal attitude. They welcomed the formation of the Liberal Party as a step in the right direction; at the same time, not one of the front-rank leaders was prepared to commit himself to the right step. Even men of liberal persuasion like Luthuli and Matthews merely gave their blessings and politely wished the party good luck. Luthuli was always glad to speak from Liberal platforms whenever he could, but the support stopped there.

The reasons for this varied. Cape Liberalism had a bad name in the African community. In the years when he had allowed himself to be associated with it, the elder Jabavu had been placed in the position in which, so his people feared, he was being used as a stooge by the Cape Liberals. Although there had

never been a real political machine in which black and white sat as equals to work out policies, the Cape Liberals, the successors to Dr. Philip, had been Jabavu's friends and not his colleagues. But the political zigzags through which this relationship led Jabavu damaged his standing in the African community, and word went around that behind the scenes the Cape Liberals advocated a go-slow policy against race oppression. African memories are very long: When the Liberal Party of South Africa came into being—it was supported largely from the Cape—they remembered how Jabavu had ended up a discredited man at the hands of the Cape Liberals, about half a century earlier.

The second reason was that the gulf between the races had been so wide, for such a long time, that it was difficult to achieve mutual trust between black and white in a political organization. Some African nationalists took the line that the moment to distrust the white man most was when he stretched out his hand in friendship. They agreed that they could collaborate with him on specific issues, but they would not identify themselves with him. They feared that he would either betray them to his government or would be unwilling to bear the suffering that had always been part and parcel of the African's fight against white supremacy. At the critical moment, they said, he would run away from the struggle. He had been brought up differently, and there was no point in expecting him to do what, to him, would be a physical impossibility. And, finally, matters were not improved by the party's insistence on adhering to the qualified franchise. Its African critics pointed out that this merely revealed the cloven hoof.

Consequently, there was no spectacular rush to join the party from both sides of the color line. Members spent the first few years sizing each other up at close range. Black and white had never really sat down together before to find a common solution to their problems, and there were temperamental, cultural, and other angularities on both sides to be reconciled. For example, African and white attitudes toward the law were quite different. The African, regarding it as devoid of moral content, felt no

moral need to obey the law; if he could get the chance to ridicule it or break it, he had few qualms of conscience in so doing. But since the white liberal had been taught to respect the law, all sorts of difficulties arose that plunged the party into one internal crisis after another. But as had happened during the period of the wars, the principles that brought black and white together eventually prevailed, and the party grew in numbers and influence.

It received its first real test of effectiveness when the removals were on in Sophiatown. Large numbers of Africans were being arrested for the contravention of pass laws. The party rushed headlong into this fight to organize legal defense. This made such a deep impression in the African community that before long the Sophiatown branch had a very large African membership, and the evictions in Natal produced a similar result.

The influx of large numbers of Africans into the party, however, started a series of tensions that were to lead it through a number of crises and in the end leave it a changed body. The first serious crisis centered around the party's stipulation that it would use constitutional methods against race oppression. For the European, who could use the ballot box, organize trade unions, strike, stage public demonstrations, and call for boycotts, there were many constitutional methods at his disposal. But what of the African, for whom any attempt to modify apartheid was criminal? After lengthy and painful debates, the party decided that it would nevertheless use constitutional and extraparliamentary pressures to extend the area of liberty.

Trouble flared up next on the franchise question. The conservative wing of the party was still haunted by the fear of being swamped; still others did not want to adopt too radical a policy lest they frighten off potential white supporters; and the African members were humiliated by a franchise policy that, in effect, indicated that they had accepted an inferior status. The party was in a dilemma: It could not win many whites to its side unless it showed that its policies were acceptable to the Africans, and what the African was willing to accept was too extreme even

for some people within the Liberal Party itself. But after some of the bitterest exchanges that the party had up to then had, agreement was reached on the need to adopt, as party policy, universal adult suffrage on a common roll of voters.

The third crisis arose from the boycotts. Once the party had committed itself to extraparliamentary pressures, the way had been cleared for supporting nonwhite campaigns, not all of which were strictly constitutional. The explosions within the party were as violent as any it had known in its short history; a fair number of white members resigned, but larger numbers of Africans were registered.

The last crisis was sparked off by the revolt of the PAC. A section of the party regarded Sobukwe and his colleagues with unconcealed fear. They believed them to be race-haters, that this was the reason they had broken with Luthuli; and some of them, like large sections of the white press, accepted the Communist line that the revolt was a racist betrayal of the struggle. The other section nonetheless insisted that the revolt was a genuine rejection of Communist domination. The race factor had come in, they claimed, because of multiracialism, which facilitated the remote control of the ANC by the racial minorities in the Congress Movement. And it was a particularly unfortunate coincidence that the Communists who exercised control happened also to be largely non-Africans. More positively, they argued that the two moods of African nationalism were visible within the PAC: Sobukwe had clearly committed himself to a nonracial society, whereas Madzunya, his most powerful rival, saw problems from the angle of African dominance. Finally, they said, the attitudes of the PAC were going through the formative stage, and the ultimate crystallizations would depend on the type of pressures exerted on the PAC. This section of Liberal Party opinion believed that liberalism's duty in the circumstances was to keep an open mind toward the PAC and to exert persuasive pressures that would help keep it a democratic, not a racialistic, force. In the end, the party decided to keep an open mind, to give help to the PAC if asked, and to collaborate wherever possible, as was the case with the ANC.

The remarkable thing about all these crises was that opinion divided very sharply on the basis not of race but of principles. Some of the most vehement denunciations of the PAC came from African members—and not from old men, either, who had a hearty dislike for “extremism,” but from young, well-educated men who belonged to the generation that had produced the PAC. In turn, some of the most telling blows against the qualified franchise came from the white side.

The first real test of the party's sincerity of purpose in agreeing to help the PAC came when the latter launched its antipass campaign in 1960. The Cape Town branch of the Liberal Party was most enthusiastic in its support of the PAC, and close collaboration between the PAC and the Liberals followed. One outcome of this was that the most spectacular demonstration of PAC power came from Cape Town: Thousands of people marched from the locations into the city in the most orderly fashion that had ever been seen.

After the Sharpeville shootings, the Liberals moved in with all sorts of help, by the side of other groups. When the great trials started, the people of Sharpeville got some of the best Liberal legal brains to defend them. Then, during the state of emergency which came after the start of the campaign, thousands of people were detained. Among these were a number of senior leaders and members of the Liberal Party from both sides of the color line. The national chairman of the party, Peter Brown, was detained in Pietermaritzburg. Although some of his friends made representations to get him released, he refused stubbornly to take advantage of the government's readiness to free him. He would leave jail only if his colleagues on both sides of the color line were also released. This showed the Africans that the white liberal was determined to destroy white supremacy, and of course he remained in jail until he was freed with the other detainees. Finally, more Liberals were arrested shortly before the stay-at-home planned for May 29–31, 1961.

Some of the transformations that took place in opinion on both sides of the color line in the party are worth noting. The influx of a large number of Africans pushed the party more and

more to the left, and its economic policies increasingly approached those of a welfare state. A large number of whites gained practical experience in African politics by working in close collaboration with the black people. The adoption of "extreme" non-racial policies affected white opinion in two ways: It threw into very bold relief the real issue beneath the race crisis—the conflict between irreconcilable values of life—and this, in turn, created a political vacuum in the white community. The gap between the Liberal Party, on one side, and the United Party and the Nationalist Party, on the other, was too wide to be left unfilled for a long time.

From its end, the Liberal Party exerted a very powerful gravitational pull on moral grounds, where its principles were unassailable. It was showing that nonracial collaboration works, and it had debunked the nationalist doctrine that the black man is not yet ready for participation in the government of his country. The result was that the liberal wing of the United Party was encouraged to branch off to form the Progressive Party. This group constitutes the halfway house between liberalism and white reaction. It wants the qualified voter to meet the aspirations of the nonwhite middle classes and at the same time not swamp the whites; it emerged, in short, to fill the gap between the Liberal Party and the white conservative groups.

In other words, the gravitational pull has brought about a polarization of attitudes on the white side, which gives the voter a real choice of alternatives. In a normal democratic society, the two outlooks in the white community would correspond with the two moods of African nationalism. The realistic wings from either side of the color line would look forward to the day when they would merge, while the heroic sides remained conservative. In shaping and directing thought and events in this way, the Liberals have made one of the most important contributions toward the creation of a real democratic and nonracial society. To this must be added another contribution—the avoidance of a collision between African nationalism and liberalism. If the clash had been allowed, the heroic approach would have been in the

ascendancy on the African side. Race would have been pushed to the fore as the main factor in the present crisis; black and white would have had no choice but to fight on their respective racial sides. In the end, Afrikaner nationalism would have succeeded in manipulating black and white into that position that would have served best its own ends.

As things stand, there already exists a solid core of nonracial opinion on both sides of the color line, which confronts Afrikaner nationalism and its African opposite with moral challenges that clamor for an answer. This core has the potential to become one of the most powerful influences in crushing apartheid without disastrously impairing the economy of the country.

Significantly enough, the most determined opposition comes not simply from the government but also from the Communists. The reasons are obvious. A deracialized movement of protest, with the potential to give the country its next government, would swamp the Communists so completely that they would not be able to exercise even remote control of African politics. Such a body would be able to create a crisis it could control—a crisis which would not get out of hand and transform South Africa into a second Congo. Its insistence on the value of the individual would destroy the group approach and accustom the masses of the African people to seeing themselves as individuals. The understanding with African nationalism would insure that if the latter took control of the country it would have the backing of substantial portions of people from all racial groups. This would give it greater stability and would make the Communist strategy of undermining it more difficult.

All this should not be read to mean that the Liberal Party is without its weaknesses. The most outstanding is that temperamentally it is not a revolutionary organization; in a revolutionary situation, it could very well find itself impotent. Second, its nature makes it belong more appropriately to the postrevolutionary era when people will be groping for a nonracial stabilizer. When Professor Leo Kuper told the annual conference of the party in 1961 that it should work for the extension of the area of