

DURING the 1963 session of the all-White South African Parliament, the Minister of Justice, B. J. Vorster, an open admirer of Nazism and ex war-time internee, piloted through the House of General Amendment Bill which put an end to the rule of law, such as it was, in South Africa.

Among other provisions the Act enabled the Government to continue the detention in prison after the expiry of his sentence of any person convicted under the Suppression of Communism Act, the Public Safety Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953 (outlawing passive resistance), the Riotous Assemblies Act or the Sabotage Act, if the Minister was satisfied that

or "obtained any information from a source outside the Republic" which could be of use in furthering the achievements of any of the aims of communism.

This clause was made retrospective to July, 1950, the year in which the Suppression of Communism Act came into force, so that the death penalty could be imposed for acts which were not crimes at the time they were committed.

But undoubtedly the most sinister clause of all was that enabling any police officer without warrant to arrest any person whom he suspects of having committed or intending to commit any offence under the Suppression of Communism Act or the Unlawful Organi-



Fascist Verwoerd of South Africa.

NAZISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

By B. Bunting

the prisoner on release, was likely to advocate, advise, defend or encourage the achievement of any of the aims of Communism.

"THIS SIDE OF ETERNITY"

The Minister admitted that this clause was specially aimed in the first place at the continued detention of Robert Sobukwe, former leader of the Pan-Africanist Congress, who was due to be released from prison after the expiry of a three-year sentence for incitement arising from the P.A.C. anti-pass campaign of 1960. But of course any other political prisoner could be affected. Those so held, said the Minister, could expect release "this side of eternity".

A minimum of five years imprisonment and a maximum of death was provided for anybody advocating the use of force to bring about any political, industrial, social or economic change in South Africa with the co-operation of any foreign government or body, or who underwent training outside South Africa

sation Act (outlawing the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress) or the offence of sabotage and cause him to be detained for interrogation in any place for up to 90 days. No person save a magistrate shall have access to such person and no court shall have jurisdiction to order his release.

The Bill was rushed through Parliament with almost indecent haste, and such was the atmosphere of the time that the official opposition was stamped into supporting the Government on this issue and only one M.P., Mrs. Helen Suzman, of the Progressive Party, had the courage to vote against it.

The Act was passed ostensibly to give the Government powers to deal with the organisation Poqo, believed to be the underground wing of the PAC, which had been responsible for the Pearl riots in November 1962 and the Bashee River bridge murder in February 1963; and in fact the legislation had been framed on the receipt by the government of an interim report by

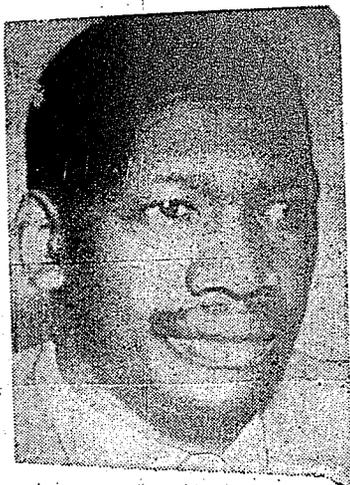
the judge inquiring into the Pearl riots who considered emergency legislation necessary to deal with Poqo, which he alleged aimed to overthrow the Government by force in 1963.

The 90-day no-trial Act was a confidence trick perpetrated on Parliament by a Minister who had another target in mind—the members and supporters of the Congress Movement in South Africa whom he regarded as a more serious threat to the future of White supremacy.

According to figures released by the Minister of Justice on November 8, 1963, a total of 544 had been detained under the 90-day no-trial clause since the Act was passed.

They have almost all been members of the African National Congress, the S.A. Congress of Trade Unions, the Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the Indian Congress.

All 90-day detainees have been subjected to intolerable mental tor-



*Mangaliso Sobukwe
South African nationalist leader*

ture in the form of solitary confinement with only half-hour each day for exercise, day after day, week after week, denied books or writing materials or any form of human contact.

Left alone in their cells with nothing to do or to occupy themselves with, they have been subjected to interrogation by the Special Branch at intervals. If they refuse to answer questions or do not answer to the satisfaction of the police, they are left alone again, sometimes for weeks on end. They may not consult a lawyer and warders have been instructed not to talk to them.

Conditions in the jails and police cells where the detainees are held are appalling. A report has been smuggled out of one of the main police cells where many people are being held that conditions are deteriorating fast. The food is shocking, prisoners get three meals a day of hard porridge and in this particular police station they may get meat once a week, but no fruit or vegetables at all.

At another police station where a number of youths were arrested for interrogation in connection with Poqo activities they were held for 87 days before being released. In all that time they were only twice

given water to wash themselves in. The only food they had was hard porridge three times a day. That was literally all. Other prisoners have been denied a change of clothing or any facilities for washing the clothes they had. Some prisoners are kept in cells where the walls are painted black, creating an impression of gloom and depression.

CUT OFF FROM THEIR FAMILIES

One of the most horrifying aspects of 90-day detention is that in many cases the relatives of the detainees have been unable to trace them. Many wives and mothers spent weeks looking for husbands and sons. There seems to be a definite plan to keep moving prisoners around.

Time and again African women have taken clothes to their husbands only to be told they are not there and the women must go elsewhere to find them. When they arrive at the next jail they are again told the prisoner has been moved.

Prisoners are moved, not only from one jail to another in the same town, but from town to town and even from one province to another which the Non-White people live in South Africa often makes it difficult for relatives to visit the detainees or keep in touch with their movements.

Prisoners in detention have been subjected to every form of pressure and intimidation. The term "90-day detention" is indeed a misnomer, because detainees have been immediately rearrested on the expiry of their 90 days and the courts have upheld the right of the police to detain them indefinitely.

Inside the jail the detainees have been threatened with death. Husbands have been told that their families have disowned them and left the country, that their wives are carrying on with other men.

One detainee, a mother of three children was allowed to see them for a short visit. Later she was asked whether she would like to see her children again. When she said, "yes" they replied: "Well, talk first otherwise you will never see them again."

Police behaviour has mixed bru-

ality with the apparently kind. Detainees who have been fed only on porridge are, during interrogation, offered chocolates. Some have been taken for a motor ride so that they can get a glimpse of freedom in the outside world before they are again returned to the solitary confinement of their cells. Every refinement of mental torture has been systematically applied to break the morale and resistance of the prisoners.

TORTURE AND BEATINGS.

Nor have the police shrunk from the use of outright torture. The following are extracts from statements made by prisoners. Each tells the same story of torture and beatings, of unchecked police violence.

PRISONER "A" aged 55:

This prisoner was questioned about his relationship with some other men. He refused to answer saying that he would make his statement in court. He was then beaten but refused to answer police questions. This is what happened next:

"A canvas bag was put over my head and tied round my neck. I felt something put on both my small fingers and I then felt shock in my arms..."

This treatment was repeated until the prisoner said he was prepared to talk.

PRISONER "B":

"I was handcuffed and a canvas bag was put over my head and this made breathing difficult. I was ordered to sit down with my knees up in between my arms, and a stick was put through so that I could not move. Then I felt something like wire tied to my little fingers on both hands. Then I felt electric shocks which were applied occasionally. Then I would be lifted with the stick and while applying electricity I would be left to drop down on my back... I was whipped with a hose pipe and also applied judo chops on my kidneys and on the back of my neck."

The statement goes on: "I was handcuffed for the second time and told that they were going to kill me and that nobody would ever ask



South Africans demonstrate against the fascist Verwoerd rule

them anything. I was put to the same treatment of electric shocks... The pressure was so high that I messed myself up. Then I was released to go to the lavatory. On my return from the lavatory the same treatment was applied and I messed myself again...

"The wounds made by the handcuffs can still be observed on the right and left wrists of my arms and the scorches made by the electric-wires on the fingers."

THE DEATH OF LOOKSMART SOLWANDLE

So far it would appear that only Non-Whites have been subjected to this physical brutality, probably in the belief that if anything did leak out it would not arouse the same indignation as similar assaults on Whites. But already torture has led to the death of one detainee, Looksmart Solwandle, who is alleged by the police to have hanged himself after giving information to the police.

POLICE FORCE

Those who knew Solwandle say he was not the sort of man to take his own life unless driven to do so to escape further torture. It is known that he was mercilessly beaten just after his arrest in Cape Town, and other detainees have stated that he was further assaulted and given electric shock treatment after being transferred to a prison in Pretoria.

He died after being in the hands of the police for only 16 days—a



Nelson Mandela, South African nationalist leader.

man who was healthy, optimistic, spiritually and physically strong up to the time of his arrest, but who was broken and destroyed on the rack of South Africa... police terror. Afterwards other prisoners say they were told of Solwandle's death and warned that the same thing would happen to them if they did not talk.

Many of the detainees, after being kept in solitary confinement for many months and subjected to all forms of pressure and torture, have eventually been brought before the courts and charged. Thereafter they have been treated as prisoners awaiting trial and could be seen by their lawyers and relatives. It is as a result of these visits that the details of the torture have become known.

The wife of the prominent leader of the former A.N.C. who saw him after he had been charged reported that he was showing definite signs of physical and mental deterioration. He had a big scar across his forehead, his speech was incoherent and his mental reactions slow and uncertain.

He was later removed to the prison hospital. Another prisoner had a broken jaw. A third showed his wife burn marks on his body consistent with electric torture. Similar reports have been received from all over the country.

Slowly the facts of torture in the South African jails have filtered through to the South African public. In Government-supporting circles they have been received with indifference, but among a large

section of the people they have caused shock and dismay.

At the national congress of the Progressive Party in Cape Town on November 25, 1963, Mr. Hamilton Russel, a former United Party member of Parliament who resigned in protest against his party's support of the 90-day no-trial Bill, cited cases of detainees being subjected to the "water treatment" (prolonged to unconsciousness) and the "electric treatment" (during which a man is tied down sprayed with salt water and then electrically massaged in an agonising way).

THE TORTURES CONTINUE

On June 13, 1963, the Minister of Justice announced that 5,000 prisoners had been arrested for so-called "security crimes" and the Commissioner of Prisons boasted at about the same time that 67,636 people were in jail—an "all-time record." Many of these prisoners have also been subjected to torture and in case after case allegations of police violence have been voiced by the prisoners from the dock.

The November 1963 issue of the journal FORWARD reported that so far last year there had been 78 political trials in South Africa involving 997 persons. Forty of these have been sentenced to death, six to life imprisonment, 650 to various jail terms totalling 4,020 years in jail. Only 301 have been acquitted or had the charges against them withdrawn. So far four of those sentenced to death for sabotage have already been executed.

These are the methods which are being used by the white supremacy government of Verwoerd to maintain themselves in power, to suppress the opposition of the peoples and prevent social change from being brought peacefully.

Is it any wonder that hatred is burning ever more fiercely in the oppressed peoples? More and more the violence of the State is provoking the response of violence from the people. Yet the Government refuses to make a single concession to the demands of the people, repeating over and over again that to retreat one step is to imperil

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Africa and Non-Alignment

NON-ALIGNMENT is very popular in Africa these days, but unfortunately, not every African State is in the position to apply it, and in most cases it is not, their fault.

France, for instance, continues to dominate its former colonies by a network of agreements and treaties which cover foreign relations, as well as military and financial affairs.

Some African States, although formally independent cannot make any diplomatic move without previous reference to French authorities, whom they are bound to consult. As a result of the so-called 'common defence' agreements, African States must endure the presence of French troops.

Finally, African States are subjected to various hardships when their finances are in French hands. In brief, through its association with some of its former colonial possessions France is able to dominate them.

"Such an association is", in the words of President Sekou Toure, "like that of the horseman and his horse". Having formerly hitched some African States to her chariot France is driving them into the sphere of NATO . . .

Some African leaders do not see or do not want to see a way out of this situation. Experience has proved that the only solution in this case is to abandon the disastrous unilateral dependence on the former "mother country".

The examples of Guinea, Ghana and Mali show that today even a young state can raise its independent voice in the international arena and decide its own destiny. If they have extensive international relations, young African States can pursue a neutralist policy and preserve their independence . . .

Thus, the Congolese (Brazzaville) National Assembly, soon after the resignation of Fulbert Youlou's pro-French regime, made some important decisions—to revise its

treaty with France, to break away from the Afro-Malagasy Union and to establish friendly relations with all peace-loving countries.

These important decisions prove that the young African States want to free themselves from the colonisers' tutelage and to consolidate their national independence.

Report from Angola

THE Portuguese Fascists cling to Angola and oppose any idea of independence because they are reaping the highest profits from the colony they enslave.

Angola territory is sold by the square mile to the highest bidder. Foreign investment is encouraged on an unprecedented scale and new concessions are granted daily with a threefold purpose: (i) to appease international opinion; (ii) to bolster up the Portuguese economy, undermined by the war effort; (iii) to achieve maximum exploitation of the colony before the Portuguese monopolies are forced to grant independence to the country.

The recently-formed "Angola Exploration Company PTY Ltd." has already started in a vast area its work of prospection for precious stones.

Angola had an output of 800,000 tons of petrol in 1963. Plans are afoot for the formation of an industrial combine for the exploration and processing of iron ore.

This industrial concern has the backing of great European trusts (which is kept secret by the Portuguese Press); it is also supported by the Companhia Portuguesa de Fornos Electricos, the Angases Company and the Mogas from Mozambique. It is estimated that the annual output of alloys iron products by this new concern will be worth between £1½m. and £2m. The building project of the industry is estimated to cost initially £1,850,000.

Companhia de Celuloses do Ultramar (The Overseas Company of Cellulose) has been granted a loan of £875,000 by the State to con-

tinue and expand its activities in Angola.

In 1963 Angola exported 143,806 tons of coffee worth £24,538,375. This total falls below that of 1962.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, U. Thant, submitted a report to the Security Council on March 17th in which he stated that at least 400 former members of the Gendarmerie in Katanga were assembling in Angola. This force included also a number of European mercenaries. Apparently, the intention is to use this force to attack the Central Congolese Government, when the United Nations force withdraw.

The Secretary-General described the reports as "fully reliable". The Portuguese Government denied them.

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white domination. With every passing week the South African crisis deepens and the possibility of a peaceful solution becomes more remote.

PEACE AND FREEDOM ARE INDIVISIBLE

The South African people are locked in mortal struggle with their oppressors. They have called with ever-increasing urgency for the peoples of the world to come to their aid. Surely the time has come now for action to be taken to end the hideous nightmare of apartheid once and for all, and open the way for the creation of a true South African democracy in which all people will enjoy equal rights and opportunities irrespective of race, creed or colour.

Failure to take action now may not only be a catastrophe for South Africa. It may lead to the extension of the conflict beyond South Africa's borders and even lead to the outbreak of a third world war, with all its attendant horrors of nuclear destruction. Peace and freedom are indivisible. The struggle of the South African people is the responsibility of all people everywhere, a responsibility which can no longer be buried but must be faced and honourably discharged before it is too late.