

SOUTHERN AFRICA AFTER ZIMBABWE INDEPENDENCE

The creation of the independent state of Zimbabwe represents a tremendous victory for the parties of the Patriotic Front (ZANU and ZAPU) and for the people of Zimbabwe. It also represents a great victory for Africa and the international community, since the frontiers of freedom have been extended. This great achievement has been brought about by the courage and sacrifices of the people of Zimbabwe and of the front line states.

The new Zimbabwe will face immense difficulties as it seeks to transform the country's racist and colonial structures into a democratic and non-racial state. It will require international aid to enable it to begin the process of nation-building.

Through the achievement of genuine independence, the new Zimbabwe will contribute to the unity and independence of the African front line states. However, it must not be forgotten that apartheid South Africa remains, representing a constant threat to the peace, security and independence not only of Zimbabwe but also of all the front line states.

The 'unholy alliance' of South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia has finally been shattered. Zimbabwe joins Mozambique and Angola as an independent African state. Now South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and the ruthless imposition of the apartheid system on the people of South Africa must be in the forefront of the challenges to the international community.

The strategic situation in Southern Africa has been transformed and the apartheid regime faces a new crisis. More than ever it fears genuine United Nations supervised elections in Namibia, for these will result in an overwhelming victory for the Namibian liberation movement, SWAPO. It will thus engage in further manoeuvres to frustrate the will of the Namibian people and the efforts of the international community. At the same time, faced with a growing militancy by the people of South Africa, the Pretoria regime is seeking new means to sustain the apartheid system in these changed conditions. In this crisis it will present cynical and deceptive so-called 'reforms' with the aim of ending its international isolation and of attempting to undermine the freedom struggle within South Africa.

It is clear that we are entering a decisive period for the future of Southern Africa. Apologists for apartheid and those who profit from their massive investments in Southern Africa now argue that South Africa must be given a breathing space to enable it to accommodate the developments in Zimbabwe. We reject this argument. Now is precisely the time to win even greater support for the freedom struggle in Namibia and South Africa, and to intensify activity in order to ensure the total isolation of the apartheid regime, thus denying it, in particular, the military, nuclear and economic support so vital for its survival. The effective isolation of apartheid South Africa is the major contribution which British people can make towards bringing freedom to the people of South Africa and Namibia. It will weaken the apartheid regime and thus reduce the violence of the inevitable confrontation.

However, these developments take place in the context of a British government deeply committed to apartheid South Africa. Britain's Prime Minister has openly promised South Africa that there is now a chance 'to make progress towards an ending of the isolation of South Africa in world affairs'. It is thus imperative that the British people engage in campaigning on Southern Africa with a greater vigour.

We therefore make a special appeal to the British people, both individuals and organisations, to recognise that the situation in Southern Africa after Zimbabwe requires urgent action. The most important task is to create the conditions in which the British government has no alternative but to support the imposition of total mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa by the United Nations. This requires increased support for the work of the Anti-Apartheid Movement and, in particular, its campaigns to:

- enforce the United Nations arms embargo against South Africa
- stop the apartheid bomb
- impose economic sanctions against South Africa
- cancel the Namibian uranium contract
- stop the execution of James Mange
- free Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners and detainees now
- boycott the products of apartheid
- stop the Lions tour
- give material aid to the Southern African liberation movements
- act in solidarity with Zimbabwe and the front line states

The Anti-Apartheid Movement is organising a nationwide series of meetings on the theme *Southern Africa after Zimbabwe* including a national action conference on **SATURDAY 31 MAY 1980, 10.15 am – 4.45 pm, at the Logan Hall, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1**, followed by two weeks of nationwide campaigning from 16-30 June 1980. For details of specific campaigns (as above) the national action conference registration forms for the national action conference (fee £2 for organisation representatives; £1 for individual observers) how to join the AAM – both organisations and individuals write to:

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT 89 CHARLOTTE STREET LONDON W1P 2DQ Tel: 01-580 5311