



CHAPTER SIX

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UMKHONTO WE SIZWE AND THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE

Perhaps one of the most contentious aspects of the national liberation struggle in South Africa over the years, has been the relationship that has come to exist between the ANC and the SACP since the beginning of the 1940's but particularly between these two organisations and Umkhonto we Sizwe since 1961. Although a great deal has been written and said on the subject since the beginning of the armed struggle, the issue has remained largely unresolved, with those in opposition to the ANC accusing it of being under the control of the SACP and those sympathetic to the organisation's ideals denying these allegations. But why these diametrically opposed views on the subject and what have caused these differences? In the course of this chapter an attempt will be made to find an answer to these and other questions relating to the relationship between the SACP, the ANC and Umkhonto, since the start of the armed struggle in 1961.

In an article on the subject published in 1984, Andrew Prior⁽¹⁾ argued that in an attempt to answer some of the questions posed above, one must turn to the different views held by people and governments inside and outside South Africa on South African political movements in exile. Prior stated that while Western governments are largely apprehensive of any exile political movement in alliance with communism, Eastern Bloc countries are generally reassured when such movements ally themselves with communist parties.

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1. Prior, South African Exile Politics: A Case Study of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, p. 181).



Similarly, the South African government, he argues, has been using the presence of the Communist Party in South Africa, and that organisation's relationship with the ANC over the years as a device to generate internal support and international understanding for its policies and actions against Black political demands. As a result of these differences in approach academics and other observers have found themselves either in support of or in opposition to these points of view. The problem is further complicated by the fact that while some of the leaders of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto admit that they hold membership to all three organisations, others - especially those in the SACP - often deny their membership of either the ANC or Umkhonto. In view of this, it is therefore not entirely surprising that academics and politicians often make conflicting statements about the SACP's relationship to the ANC and Umkhonto.

The American scholar, Thomas Karis, for instance, argued that the ANC is "basically" an "African nationalist organisation" and definitely not a surrogate of the Soviet Union. He further pointed out that the ANC has functioned since the beginning as an omnibus national movement and has always embraced a wide range of ideological points of view. As a result it could - and did - form an alliance with the SACP without the danger of having to necessarily compromise on its integrity. In view of this, Karis stated that the communist and radical Whites who joined the ANC did so because the non-racialism of the ANC allowed them to do so. Moreover, the non-racial stress on Africans as workers also appealed to radical Whites. As a result, the issue of reconciling African nationalism and class struggle, which produced ideological tensions historically within the SACP had not seriously troubled the ANC, argued Karis. On the question of the interlocking membership between the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto, Karis argued that while there are indeed "a few" interlocking memberships between the ANC and the SACP, the question as to whether or not an ANC member is also a clandestine member of the Communist Party or Umkhonto, "appears to be of no great interest to nationalist leaders who are occupied with immediate tasks."⁽²⁾

2. Karis, *Revolution in the Making: Black Politics in South Africa*, (Foreign Affairs 62, 1983, pp. 379, 382, 395-6.



A more or less similar view is held by Robin Hallet. He acknowledged the fact that the ANC and the SACP enjoyed intimate links with the Soviet Union, but dismissed the view that either the SACP or the ANC were pawns of Moscow, on the grounds that "a slender knowledge of the history of Black nationalism in South Africa shows this is a non-sensical notion".⁽³⁾

This favourable view of the relationship between the ANC and the SACP was also shared by Sheridan Johns. In a research paper published in 1973 on the possibility of guerrilla warfare in South Africa, Johns argued that while the SACP has always played an important role in the ANC and its activities, even before the Party was banned in 1950 its role and position in the ANC and the South African liberation movement, however, was largely similar to that occupied by the Portuguese Communist Party in its relationship to the MPLA in Angola. He went on to say that there was little evidence to prove that Communist parties - either in Angola or South Africa - have perceived for themselves per se an autonomous and different role within the National Liberation Movement.⁽⁴⁾

The nature of the relationship between the SACP, the ANC and Umkhonto has also been minimised by Tom Lodge in his 1983 study of Black political development in South Africa since 1945.⁽⁵⁾ According to Lodge, despite the strong and loyal support that the ANC gave to the SACP and the Soviet Union in, for instance, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (and Afganistan in 1979), the ANC has not only avoided the dangers of local political entanglements but has been able to be selective and fairly principled in its choice of partners, alliances and donors. He argues:

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3. Quoted in Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, p. 1).
 4. Johns, Obstacles to Guerrilla Warfare. A South African Case Study, (The Journal of Modern African Studies 11 (2), 1973, p. 289).
 5. Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa, pp. 304-305.



Soviet support does not appear to have had a marked influence on the ANC's strategy which has on the whole been pragmatic and flexible.⁽⁶⁾

Similarly, according to Oliver Tambo, the ANC President-General since 1969, the SACP actively supports and fights for the realisation of the demands contained in the Freedom Charter and accepts the leadership of the ANC. As such the SACP cannot be but an ally of the ANC as would be any other organisation that adopts the same position.⁽⁷⁾

The SACP itself naturally supports such a favourable interpretation of its relationship to the ANC. In a speech to the Central Committee of the Party on 30 July 1986, Joe Slovo, the newly elected General-Secretary of the Party, reiterated much of what Tambo had said when he stated that:

Today the SACP is a vital part of the liberation forces headed by the African National Congress. The alliance aims to unite all sections and classes amongst the oppressed and other truly democratic forces for a revolution to destroy White domination. ... In this struggle the key force has always been and will always be the Black working class in alliance with the masses of the landless rural people. It is this class which finds its most staunch champion in our South African Communist Party.⁽⁸⁾

He went on to say that since its banning some 26 years before in 1960, the ANC had emerged not only as the undisputed vanguard of the liberation movement but as the only force which could bring stability to South Africa and provide the focus for a genuine people's government.

More significantly, in reaction to the South African government's claim that the ANC was dominated by the SACP, and that the majority

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6. Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa, p. 305.
 7. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, pp. 181-182).
 8. J. Slovo, Editorial Notes: 65th Anniversary of the SACP, (The African Communist 106, Third Quarter 1986, pp. 5-6).



of the members of the ANC's National Executive Committee were registered members and senior leaders of the SACP, Slovo denied that this was the case and retaliated that the South African government was resorting to the "old imperialistic tactic" of divide and rule and that President P.W. Botha was trying to tempt "genuine" nationalists to break their links with the "Communists".⁽⁹⁾

A somewhat different view of the ANC-SACP relationship is however held by Prior.⁽¹⁰⁾ In an article published in 1984, Prior argued that the ANC, as the Senior Partner in the SACP-ANC alliance, had decided on a course of "pragmatic toleration"; that the SACP was far more dependent on the ANC than the latter was on the SACP and that the former would eventually either outmanoeuvre or dominate the SACP. He went on to argue that the importance of the SACP in the Alliance was likely to decline if the ANC was to be successful in obtaining increased diplomatic, financial and military support from the West, thus lessening its dependence on Eastern Bloc countries. But even so the benefits of a coalition with the SACP were many, argued Prior. Both organisations were committed to the "national democratic revolution" while for the SACP co-operation with the ANC meant access to the largest Black political constituency in the country, namely the African. For the ANC on the other hand, it meant the establishment of its bona fides among Eastern Block countries, especially the revolutionary skills of an experienced group of South Africans. Prior further pointed out that in view of the interlocking membership that existed between the ANC and the SACP, and the degree to which this was in favour of the SACP, any anti-communist move within the national liberation movement in the immediate future would necessarily be a traumatic event.⁽¹¹⁾

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9. Slovo, Editorial Notes: 65th Anniversary of the SACP, (The African Communist 106, Third Quarter 1986, p. 8).
 10. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, pp. 181-196). See also C. Maritz, Pretoria's Reaction to the Role of Moscow and Peking in Southern Africa, (The Journal of Modern African Studies 25 (2), 1987, p. 330).
 11. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, pp. 194-195).



A completely opposite view on the relationship between the ANC and the SACP, and the role of the latter in the former during the time-span covered in this thesis, was however held by the South African government and those who were generally not in agreement with the aims and objectives of the ANC or the SACP. As far as the government and these people were concerned, the ANC was little more than a front or a fief of the SACP. Chris Maritz wrote in 1987:

The official South African [government] view is that the ANC is not an independent party but rather a liberation movement that has been embraced in a common front by the "vanguard" SACP ... South Africa believes that Communists (by virtue of their numerical strength in the ANC's NEC) controls not only the Executive of the ANC, but the organisation itself.⁽¹²⁾

In an address to the conference of "Concerned Christians" in Pretoria in April 1979, the South African Minister of Justice, Jimmy Kruger, in quoting from a 1977 ANC trial that took place in the Pretoria Supreme Court, stated that the ANC was little more than a front or a "tool" for the SACP to achieve its objectives. These objectives, he pointed out, were the subjugation of the Black masses in a nationalist revolution to the principles of Marxist-Leninism, in which the net effect of a successful revolution would be the replacement of the existing White dominated State in South Africa by a white dominated communist system of government.⁽¹³⁾

These interpretations of the relationship between the SACP and the ANC were shared by others sympathetic to the status quo in South Africa. In a report published in 1976 entitled "Soviet Strategy towards South Africa", the well-known political commentator and academic, Dr Jan du Plessis, remarked that with regard to the relationship between the ANC and the SACP, and the role of the Soviet Union in it, the latter had developed

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12. Maritz, Pretoria's Reaction to the Role of Moscow (The Journal of Modern African Studies 25 (2), 1987, p. 330).
 13. J. Kruger as quoted in ANC Front for SA Communist Party, (Encounter 4 (6), May 1979).



a double barrel strategy of attack towards South Africa in which the SACP will act as an outside controller of the situation, under the guidance of Moscow, but will rely upon its liberation front, the African National Congress, for the situation within South Africa.⁽¹⁴⁾

A more or less similar view of the relationship between the ANC and the SACP was held by the Commission of Inquiry (Rabie Commission) which was appointed by the South African government in the 1970's to examine the position of security legislation in South Africa. According to the report of the commission which was released in 1981, there was sufficient evidence in the statements and materials of the ANC, the SACP and the dissident movements that were expelled from the ANC-SACP alliance in 1975 and 1979/1980, to suggest that the SACP had a strong influence on the ANC and all its activities and that the ties between the two organisations were generally so close and interwoven that as far as their activities within South Africa were concerned, no clear distinction could be made between the two organisations.⁽¹⁵⁾

The views of the Rabie Commission were echoed by the South African Defence Force in the March 1982 edition of its official journal Paratus. In this it claimed that:

the ANC is the main instrument used by Moscow to bring about a Marxist revolution in South Africa [and] ... with the backing of political and psychological warfare experts in the Kremlin and aided by many misguided friends elsewhere, the ANC has been painstakingly building an image of itself as the 'sole representative of the oppressed masses' of South Africa.⁽¹⁶⁾

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14. J.A. du Plessis, Soviet Strategy Towards Southern Africa, (FAA Study Report, 1 April 1976). See also Du Plessis, Soviet Blueprint for Southern Africa, (Southern African Forum, Position Paper 6 (4), 1983).
 15. The Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Security Legislation, R/P, 90/1981, pp. 54, 57-58.
 16. Paratus 33 (3), March 1982, p. 16.



These views on the relationship between the ANC and the SACP were also shared by a number of non-government researchers and observers outside South Africa. Foremost among them were Michael Radu, a specialist in African and Latin American revolutionary movements and governments; and Ms. J. Becker, an acclaimed British expert on international terrorism, to name but two. Radu in an article published in 1987, argued that:

In the post war period, several sharp setbacks drove the CPSA to seek closer involvement in the ANC.... With the formation of the Congress Alliance and the tactics used for the drafting, adoption and ratification of the Freedom Charter, the ANC permanently lost its political innocence. It in effect adopted the idea and tactics of its members from the former CPSA. This process, which was consummated in the period 1953 - 1956 and clearly - at least in retrospect - was part of a carefully planned strategy on the part of the CPSA remnants, alienated many of the young Black nationalists in the ANC ranks,...

The banning of the ANC itself in 1960 only helped to consolidate the transformation of the organisation. While retaining its venerable name, the ANC had for all practical purposes become, and remains to this day, a Leninist organisation in its internal structure, a Marxist one in its political goals, and an ally of the USSR in its geopolitical aims.⁽¹⁷⁾

Ms. Becker too, in a paper delivered at a conference on revolution and revolutionaries in Pretoria in 1986, made it abundantly clear that as far as she was concerned the SACP was not being "used" by the National Liberation Movement and the ANC, as was claimed by Tambo during an interview with him in London, but that the ANC and the Liberation Movement was in fact being used by the SACP.⁽¹⁸⁾ The aid and support which the socialist countries gave so generously to the ANC and Umkhonto in South Africa and to other liberation movements elsewhere, she pointed out, could only be reciprocated by

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17. M. Radu, The African National Congress: Cadres and Credo, (Problems of Communism July - August 1987, pp. 62, 64).
 18. J. Becker, International Terrorism: A Global Offensive, (Institute for Strategic Studies of the University of Pretoria (ISSUP), Strategic Review, July 1986, p. 8).



unswerving identification with the socialist community in the common struggle against capitalism and imperialism. Becker also disagreed with Prior's argument that it was the SACP which needed the ANC and not vice versa. She said:

What is misunderstood or misrepresented in this statement, is the nature of the SACP. Its relationship to the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) is not that of an autonomous ally co-operating with another distinct organisation but that of a finger to a body, organically attached and used by the same head. (19)

In a survey of Black and White opinion conducted in 1983 it was found that while only 6 percent of Whites consulted felt that the South African government exaggerated the communist threat to South Africa, 70,3 percent of all Blacks consulted supported this view. (20)

In an attempt to find a more amicable and objective explanation for the relationship between the ANC and the SACP, it has been suggested that the co-operation between the ANC and the SACP is not necessarily one of choice, but one of necessity. In other words, it has been suggested that in view of their illegal status, as well as other factors, the ANC needs the support of the SACP just as much as the SACP needs the support of the ANC. The ANC, for instance, needs the material and to a lesser extent the financial support of the SACP and the Soviet Union to survive underground and to continue with its armed struggle while the SACP, on the other hand, needs the mass support of the ANC with its large African constituency to pursue its Marxist-Leninist ideals in South Africa. Moreover, the SACP also needs the international legitimacy that has been given to the ANC in its struggle for a "democratic" South Africa based on the principles of African nationalism. (21)

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19. Becker, International Terrorism: A Global Offensive, (Institute for Strategic Studies of the University of Pretoria (ISSUP), Strategic Review, July 1986, p. 8).
 20. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1985/1984, p. 182).
 21. K. Somerville, The USSR and Southern Africa Since 1976, (The Journal of Modern African Studies 22(1), 1984, p. 100).



1. THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND SINCE 1940

Since its formation in 1921, the SACP (then known as the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA)), has had close ties with the history of the ANC and the national liberation movement in South Africa. Although the ANC was predominantly an anti-communist (or non-communist) organisation in the years between the two world wars due to a mainly conservative African leadership, a number of prominent African members of the Communist Party were nevertheless part of the ANC's leadership structure in these years. Names that readily spring to mind are those of Josiah Gumede (President-General of the ANC from 1927 to 1930); E.L. Khaile (Secretary-General of the ANC from 1927 to 1930); and J.B. Marks, who became Secretary-General of the ANC in 1936. The latter two persons were both members of the Central Committee of the CPSA. Khaile was one of the first Africans to be elected to the Central Committee while Marks served as Chairman of the SACP from 1962 to 1972. A fourth prominent member of the Communist Party who served on the NEC of the ANC in the inter war years was Moses Kotane. Kotane joined the ANC in 1928 and the CPSA in 1929. By the end of the 1930's he had rose to prominence in both the ANC and the CPSA. In 1938 he was made General-Secretary of the CPSA, a position he held until 1978, and in 1943 he was invited by A.B. Xuma to serve on the ANC's Atlantic Charter Committee that drew up "African Claims".⁽²²⁾

Although the election to the ANC presidency of the more radically minded Dr Xuma in 1940 and the formation of the Youth League in 1943 brought some dramatic changes to the policy and direction of the ANC, and the role and position of African members of the CPSA had become more acceptable in the organisation, the role and influence of the CPSA in the ANC however did not accelerate until the end of the

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22. Information compiled from: Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, pp. 50 - 53, 75 - 76; Toussaint, A Man of Our Time. Joe Slovo Elected Chairman of the SACP, (The African Communist 106, Third Quarter 1986, pp. 20 - 23); Radu, The African National Congress (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 60 footnote 7).



1940's. The reason for this was two-fold. One, although Xuma was more radical than his predecessors, his leadership of the ANC was primarily conservative and two, the Youth League stood under the leadership of a strong African nationalist faction led by Anton Lembede and A.P. Mda who were its first two presidents.

By the end of the 1940's however, the leadership of Xuma and the influence of the Africanist under Lembede and Mda had begun to wane as the new leadership of the Youth League "began to appreciate the benefits of an alliance with South African Communists," wrote Stephen Davis. (23)

The first sign of this new direction in the ANC's thinking came with the signing of the so-called "Doctors Pact" between the ANC and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) in 1947, in which the leaderships of the two organisations decided to join forces in the struggle for Black political rights in South Africa. Although a great many interpretations had been attached to this agreement, the fact that the majority of the SAIC's leadership were staunch supporters of the SACP set the trend for a similar development in the ANC. Consequently, after 1947 the ANC began to work on an increasingly closer scale with the communist leadership of the SAIC and the CPSA.

The second major development that influenced the relationship between the ANC and the Communist Party was the election victory of the Nationalist Party under the leadership of Dr D.F. Malan in 1948, and the banning of the CPSA in 1950. This latter development more than anything else helped to consolidate the relationship between the ANC and the CPSA. According to Radu:

The banning of the CPSA had the consequence, certainly unintended by the government, of driving party cadres into the ranks of still legal organisations, first and foremost the ANC. What until

23. Davis, Apartheid's Rebels, p. 9.



1950 had been a mildly successful effort by the party to influence the ANC, became a classic case of 'entryism' - the start of the communist party's efforts to infiltrate and dominate all anti-apartheid groups, but principally the ANC. (24)

A further development that helped to accelerate closer co-operation between the ANC and the SACP after 1950 was the decline of the Africanist movement and the rise of a left-wing faction under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Duma Nokwe, Oliver Tambo and others in the ANCYL. (25) The latter faction increasingly came to dominate the thinking and decisions of the ANC in the 1950's. Radu wrote:

With the weak Dr Moroka as its leader the ANC was influenced by the ANCYL, ... to engage in a massive campaign of civil disobedience - the Defiance Campaign - to protest the first apartheid laws promulgated in 1951.

The latter campaign was organised by a Joint Planning Committee which stood under the leadership of prominent members of the SAIC and the CPSA such as Yusuf Dadoo, J.B. Marks, Y.A. Cachalia and others. The above committee met in Johannesburg which was the seat of the Transvaal ANC and the Youth League. The latter organisation then stood under the leadership of Nelson Mandela who was elected to its presidency in late 1950. In 1952 Mandela succeeded Marks, who was placed under banning orders, to the presidency of the powerful Transvaal chapter of the ANC. A former Communist Party member, David Bopape was made Secretary-General of the Transvaal ANC in 1944. (26)

Although the Defiance Campaign was a dismal failure in terms of its projected aims and objectives, it did have the effect of pushing some Youth League leaders further to the left. In 1953, with financial support from the underground Communist Party, an ANC delegation under

24. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 62).

25. See Mandela, No Easy Walk to Freedom, pp. 182 - 183.

26. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 62); See also Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, pp. 10 - 11. See also Mzala, How the ANC was Revived by the Youth League, (The African Communist 111, Fourth Quarter, 1987, pp. 50 - 62).



the leadership of Nokwe and Sisulu visited Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, presumably to seek financial and political support for the liberation struggle in South Africa.⁽²⁷⁾ Secondly, by the end of the same year Mandela presented a blueprint to the Transvaal ANC for the urgent structural reorganisation of the entire ANC to enable it to operate from the underground under a highly centralised command structure. The document which Mandela presented to the Transvaal ANC became known as the Mandela or M-Plan and was in many ways similar to the type of centralised organisational set-up normally associated with communist organisations and underground movements.

Unable to have its non-African members elected to the ANC's NEC in the 1950's, the underground SACP was also actively involved in the establishment or manipulation of "legal" front organisations to carry on its activities. In the same year that Mandela presented the M-Plan to the Transvaal ANC, the SACP leadership set up the Coloured People's Organisation (CPO).⁽²⁸⁾ The CPO, which was later renamed the Coloured People's Congress (CPC), stood under the direct leadership of senior communists such as Reginald September. In October of the same year, the SACP was instrumental in the establishment of the Congress of Democrats (COD).⁽²⁹⁾ The latter organisation stood under the leadership of known communists such as Abram Fischer, Ruth First (Slovo) and Joe Slovo to name but three of its more prominent members. Two years later in March 1955, a further "front" the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), was established. Shortly after its formation in 1955, SACTU was affiliated to the Moscow dominated World Conference of Trade Unions. Like the CPC and the COD, SACTU also stood under the control of well known communist leaders such as Stephen Dlamini, Vuyisile Mini, Moses Mabhida, Wilton Mkwayi and Leon and Norman Levy. With the formation of Umkhonto in 1961 SACTU in particular became an important source of recruitment

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27. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, pp. 62 - 63).
 28. E. Roux, Time longer than Rope, p. 398; Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 3, pp. 12, 19.
 29. For an indepth discussion of the relationship between the COD and the SACP see P.J. Coetzee, Die Geskiedenis van die South African Congress of Democrats (Unpublished MA Dissertation, RAU, 1977), pp. 71 - 89, 90 - 150.



for the organisation. This was particularly the case in Natal, where most of the leaders of Umkhonto in the province were recruited from the ranks of SACTU or its affiliated organisations.⁽³⁰⁾

According to Jordan Ngubane, an African journalist and member of the Liberal Party of South Africa, SACTU came to play a predominant role in the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto after 1961 because of its multi-racial character and the fact that it had a predominantly African membership. As such it provided an ideal recruiting ground for Umkhonto. From its inception in 1955 SACTU members had been encouraged to become members of the ANC and vice versa. Consequently, most SACTU members by the beginning of the 1960's were thus also members of both the SACP and the ANC. This meant that leaders of SACTU such as Moses Mahbida and Stephen Dlamini who were also leading members of the SACP, would also be members of the ANC and as such would have a direct influence on the decisions taken by the latter organisation's NEC. Ngubane claimed:

Under this arrangement, the African members were deliberately given a dual loyalty and leadership as a precaution against Luthuli's defecting one day. If he were to do that, Mahbida would assert himself as SACTU leader against Luthuli. Since Mahbida was always with the workers, he stood a better chance of pulling a substantial section of them (the African workers) in any showdown with Luthuli. And in any crisis not involving Luthuli, he could easily be upheld as the leader of the Africans.⁽³¹⁾

Although the SACP has always denied that the SAIC, the COD or SACTU were front organisations for communism, its control over these and other organisations was implicitly revealed in a statement by the

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30. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 11 - 15. See also Karis and Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge, vol. 4, pp. 63, 89 - 90; Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa, pp. 188 - 189; Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, pp. 221 - 225; Pike, A History of Communism in South Africa, pp. 303 - 304.
31. Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid, p. 165.



Central Committee and quoted in The African Communist in 1975. In this it was stated that following the formation of Umkhonto in December 1961, it was decided by the Central Committee of the SACP that "the SAIC, CPC and SACTU should not do anything to jeopardize their legality by an open commitment to armed struggle".⁽³²⁾

Thus by the middle of the 1950's the national liberation movement in South Africa consisted mainly of pro-communist or communist front organisations such as the ANC, the SAIC, the COD, SACTU and the underground Communist Party which was in control or at least attempted to control these organisations. Of these five organisations that formed part of the so-called "Congress Alliance" by the end of the 1950's, at least three, namely the SAIC, the COD and SACTU were fronts for the underground SACP. According to Ngubane, the Congress Alliance (or Congress Movement as it was alternatively known) was set up not by the ANC as such, but by the Central Committee of the SACP to serve the needs of the banned Party after 1950. Ngubane further stated that while it might be difficult to prove that the Alliance or its various member organisations were communistic (this point was borne out by the failure of the State in the famous Treason Trial of 1956 - 1961 to prove that the Congress of the People and its leaders were under the influence of the banned Communist Party and that the Freedom Charter was a blueprint for the violent destruction of the South African state and its replacement with a communist society), they were nevertheless being manipulated by a communist inner core that stood under the control of the SACP, who in turn received its instructions directly from the Soviet Union. Ngubane claimed that:

If Moscow wanted a particular course of action taken in South Africa, the ANC was not approached directly. Word [first] went to the central core [which had its headquarters in Johannesburg and which was in communication with the Soviet Union

32. The Enemy Hidden under the Same Colour. (The African Communist 65, Second Quarter, 1975). See also Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 63).



via SACP agents in Mozambique, Dar-es-Salaam and London] and from there it was passed on to the Joint Consultative Committee of the Congress Movement, in which the Communist occupied a strong position. There they met as the 'representatives' of the 'national' organisations, and through the committee they forwarded the instructions to the national organisations as a directive. If there were differences too serious to be ironed out in the inner echelons of the apparatus, an 'all-in' conference was called. Here the opposition was swamped by the sheer volume of numbers, and ... as a result the conference took the prescribed action ... This, Ngubane claimed, is the tortuous course through which the Freedom Charter was taken in order to become the policy of the Congress Movement ... (33) [Authors brackets]

As far as the latter was concerned, Ngubane further claimed that the Congress of the People and the drafting of the Freedom Charter was the work of the "bosses of the underground Communist Party" and that leading ANC members such as Albert Luthuli were not consulted on the drafting of the Freedom Charter, nor did he know who was responsible for it. Apparently, Luthuli and other non-Communist leaders in the ANC were only approached with major decisions once these had already been decided. For instance, Luthuli was only informed by Moses Kotane that he was to attend the 1955 Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian nations in 1955, shortly before Kotane left for Indonesia. A senior member of the SACP and the ANC' NEC, Kotane clearly did not seek the approval or support of Luthuli, but merely went to inform him that he was leaving. This view is supported by Radu who stated that by the mid-1950's Luthuli had become little more than

a figure head for the ANC, poorly or never informed of decisions taken in his name and out of touch with the developments within the organisation. (34)

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33. Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid, pp. 183 - 184.
34. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 63). See also Ngubane, An African Explains Apartheid, p. 162 - 164.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE IN THE POST
SHARPEVILLE PERIOD

Whatever doubts there were about the role of the Communist Party and its underground leadership in Black politics in particular, and the national liberation struggle in general before 1960, were finally removed by the events that followed the Sharpeville incident in March 1960 and which culminated in the discovery of the combined underground headquarters of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto at Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, Johannesburg in July 1963. With the aid of the documentary and other material evidence that the police discovered at Lilliesleaf Farm, the State was able to prove what it was unable to do at the Treason Trial in 1956 - 1961. According to the evidence that the State presented in its case against the leaders of the NHC of Umkhonto, the SACP was solely responsible for the establishment and financing of Umkhonto in 1961. In Natal where Luthuli and his supporters remained influential in the local ANC, Umkhonto was established entirely with the aid and support of the local underground communist movement which found expression through SACTU and its affiliated organisations in the province.⁽³⁵⁾ Moreover the close relationship that came to develop between the SACP and Umkhonto in Natal was not limited to the region but was also found in other parts of the country. In the Eastern Cape, especially the Port Elizabeth region for instance, the local Umkhonto leadership was to such an extent controlled by members of the SACP and SACTU that Umkhonto, the ANC and the SACP became almost "indistinguishable".⁽³⁶⁾

Similarly, the instructions for and the funding of Mandela's African tour, which started in January 1962, also came directly from the Central Committee of the SACP, which never once consulted Luthuli, who was still President of the ANC at the time, on the matter. Until

35. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, p. 11.

36. Feit, Urban Revolt in South Africa, p. 257. See also the evidence of B.H. Hlapane in the trial of M. Naidoo, The Natal Witness (Pietermaritzburg), 1966.09.09.



he left South Africa in January Mandela stayed at Lilliesleaf Farm as the guest of the SACP.⁽³⁷⁾

On his return to South Africa some six months later, in July 1962, Mandela reported directly to the Central Committee of the SACP. According to Hlapane, who was a member of the Central Committee at the time, at this report-back meeting Mandela, to the surprise of everyone present, made it clear that in future the relationship between the ANC and the SACP had to be kept a secret especially where it concerned people outside South Africa. He told the Central Committee that this was necessary because communism was not a popular subject with Africa's newly independent states and their leaders. He said that while African governments were generally prepared to give financial support to the ANC and the armed struggle in South Africa, they were uneasy about the role of White communists in it. The feeling was, Mandela said, that they were not trustworthy. Consequently, Mandela was informed by the African leaders that unless the ANC severed ties with the communist movement it could not count on Africa's support for the armed struggle. Mandela further told the meeting that it was his firm intention to convey this message to the leaders of Umkhonto so that they could warn their cadres not to mention their communist affiliations when they were outside South Africa.⁽³⁸⁾

Much of Hlapane's evidence was later independently confirmed by Bruno Mtolo both in his evidence at the Rivonia Trial and later in his book, Umkonto we Sizwe, The Road to the Left. In the latter sources, Mtolo claimed that during a visit to Durban after his return from Africa in July 1962, Mandela warned the leadership of Umkhonto in the province that in future they were:

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37. See Mandela's own admission in Mandela, No Easy Walk to Freedom, p. 177.
38. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, pp. 154, 449 - 451. See also the Report of the Denton Committee on Security and Terrorism in Southern Africa, p. 21.



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not to let the other African states know that we were Communists, and told us that Eric Mtshali, who was a member of one of the first groups to be sent out of the country for military training, was stranded in Dar-es-Salaam because he showed off his Marxist ideas. Eric, who had left Dar-es-Salaam a few weeks previously, was without shelter or food until Mandela found him.... (39)

After Mandela had made his report to the Central Committee and informed them of his determination to convey his findings to the regional leadership of Umkhonto in the provinces, starting with Natal, it was felt that, since he had not defended communism abroad as was expected of him, he had betrayed the SACP and what it stood for. This, according to Hlapane, was an unforgivable sin that could not go unpunished. Hlapane claimed:

It was felt that Mandela was becoming a Pan-Africanist along the lines of Robert Sobukwe. As such he was told now to be disciplined; to sit down, but Mandela went further to say: 'I now feel that we've come to a breaking point: Even if we work together it will be behind the scenes. I now feel that I must go and report [to] my ... people ...' (40)

Mandela's alleged rebellious attitude had, according to Hlapane, suddenly become an embarrassment and a threat to the SACP. Consequently, it was decided that he should not be allowed to report back to the leadership of Umkhonto in the provinces. The result was that "he forced his way out," Hlapane said, meaning that he went against the instructions of the Central Committee. According to Hlapane, Rusty Bernstein, who was a member of the Central Committee, later said that Mandela was "an ambitious, undisciplined, reckless young man who thought he could go far, [but] this will show him [Bernstein was referring to Mandela being in jail] what we are going to do to anybody who is undisciplined. He is now in jail and he can

39. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 38 - 39.

40. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 276.



rot in jail because he feels heroes are made in jail." (41)

Hlapane went on to say:

I say this because, when Mandela came into the country he was given full protection by the Communist Party through Umkonto we Sizwe [from] Johannesburg right up to Lobatsi. ... But after he gave his report to the Central Committee, when Mandela proceeded to Durban, he was denied the same protection, and the Central Committee said, we can only give you the car and the driver [but] no protection. (42)

According to Hlapane, it was in fact known in SACP circles - and there were apparently people who were prepared to testify to the fact - that:

a certain woman gave information about the visit of Mandela to Durban. That being so, they felt that a commission of inquiry must be instituted, but that was not done, it was suppressed by the Communist Party, who, in fact, was dominated by the Whites. The handful of Whites that had the full control of the Communist Party and the ANC did what they wanted to do without anyone of us. (43)

Hlapane's willingness to turn on the SACP and to testify against his former comrades eventually cost him his life. His allegations, particularly on the role that the Communist Party had played in the Congress Alliance since the 1950's, severely embarrassed the SACP and its leaders, with the result that he was assassinated, allegedly by members of the ANC-SACP alliance at his home in Soweto in December 1983, exactly twenty-two years after the start of the armed struggle. (44)

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41. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 276.
 42. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 276.
 43. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 276.
 44. SA Bureau for Information, Talking with the ANC, 1986, p. 5.

In her recently published book on the ANC, Heidi Holland⁽⁴⁵⁾ however claimed that Mandela was not betrayed by the SACP to the South African police but by an agent of the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Although Holland provides no further information on the subject, especially on the source of her information, an article that has since appeared in the Johannesburg-based Sunday Times⁽⁴⁶⁾ has revealed that the CIA agent was probably Millard Shirley, who was the head of the CIA's covert operations section in Southern Africa at the time. According to the article, Shirley had direct access to the Central Committee of the SACP through an Indian member of the organisation who lived at Reservoir Hills in Durban. Shirley, who has been described by former South African police agent, Gerhard Ludi, as a super agent with a remarkable memory apparently passed the information he obtained from his Indian informer on to the South African police, who used it to arrest Mandela outside Howick on 5 August 1962. Mandela was disguised as a chauffeur for Cecil (Cyril) Williams who was a member of the SACP.⁽⁴⁷⁾ The ANC has since indicated that while it is plausible that Mandela's whereabouts in August could have been betrayed by a member of the CIA and that such rumours were in circulation at the time, this has never been proven. However, in an interview with the Sunday Times in June 1990, Ahmed Kathrada, the ANC's publicity secretary in South Africa, stated that:

There were all kinds of rumours at the time of Mr. Mandela's arrest, including that he had been given away by the CIA. I was very surprised that he was captured. I am not going to claim that we [the ANC] know who gave Mr. Mandela away in 1962, but we do have our own theories. We [however] cannot discount the possibility that forces hostile to us are attempting to sour relations between ourselves and the US for obvious reasons.⁽⁴⁸⁾

With the arrest of Mandela the position of Commander-in-Chief of Umkhonto immediately shifted to Raymond Mhlaba who, unlike Mandela,

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45. H. Holland, The Struggle. A History of the African National Congress, p. 138.
 46. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1990.06.17.
 47. Pike, A History of Communism in South Africa, p. 40. See also Holland, The Struggle, p. 138.
 48. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1990.06.17.



was a veteran member of the SACP. With Mandela in prison, the NHC of Umkhonto and the NEC of the ANC came directly under the control of communist leaders such as Joe Slovo, Wilton Mkwayi, Raymond Mhlaba and others. Abram Fischer also began to play a key role in the development of the armed struggle during these years. Like Slovo, Fischer was a veteran of the Communist Party and a member of its inner circle.⁽⁴⁹⁾ After the destruction of the NHC following the raid on its Rivonia headquarters in July 1963, Fischer and Mkwayi were instrumental in setting up a replacement NHC to guide Umkhonto. Unfortunately for them, by this stage the police were repeatedly making breakthroughs with their investigations into the sabotage campaign and both Fischer and Mkwayi were arrested in 1964.

3. THE POST-RIVONIA PERIOD. THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE IN EXILE

With the collapse of the communist underground movement inside South Africa by the mid-1960's, the underground structures of the ANC and Umkhonto rapidly collapsed with it. Without the financial and organisational leadership of the SACP, neither the ANC nor Umkhonto could continue with their underground activities in South Africa after 1965. Although attempts were made between 1967 and the end of 1968 to send Umkhonto guerrillas through Rhodesia to South Africa, these came to nothing with the result that for almost a decade between the mid-1960's and the outbreak of the Soweto uprising in June 1976, South Africa was relatively free from acts of sabotage by the ANC and Umkhonto.

Although relatively little is known about what really transpired between the ANC and the SACP in exile, following the demise of the

49. For a more detailed discussion of this history see: Weyl, Traitor's End, Chapters 9 and 10; Vermaak, The Red Trap, pp. 67 - 124; Vermaak, Braam Fischer. The Man with two faces, Chapters 3 - 17; Ludi and Grobbelaar, The Amazing Mr. Fischer, Chapters 4 - 13.



combined underground inside South Africa in 1965, indications are that several meetings were held between 1965 and the beginning of 1969 in which the relationship between the SACP, the ANC and Umkhonto, as well as the exact role of the SACP and Marxism in the armed struggle was discussed. According to Lodge⁵⁰ the SACP leadership initially wanted to set up an own cadre group among the members of the liberation movement, particularly Umkhonto, to serve its specific needs. But in the end, after lengthy discussions with leaders of the ANC's NEC, it was decided that the idea was impractical and that the SACP should rather throw its full if not inconsiderable weight behind the ANC and Umkhonto. Of course for this to come about the ANC had to open its membership to non-Africans and people of all political persuasions. Moreover, to accommodate the racially mixed leadership of the SACP, the ANC also had to agree to the establishment of a separate organ to guide the activities of Umkhonto, and which would allow White communists such as Slovo to serve on it, as had been the case with the old NHC of Umkhonto inside South Africa. But the idea of opening the leadership of the ANC to non-Africans, particularly communists, did not appeal to everyone in the ANC's NEC. ANC leaders such as Alfred Kgogong, Robert Resha, Tennyson Makiwane, and several others (many of them were later expelled from the ANC), were alarmed at the creeping influence of the SACP on the affairs of the ANC's Mission in Exile. By 1969 however, their opposition had been sufficiently eroded in the ANC to allow the SACP to convince the ANC's NEC to open up its membership to non-Africans, even if this was to be on only a limited basis. This latter development was facilitated by two specific factors. One, since 1964 the Soviet Union and its supporters had become the chief supplier of arms and related equipment to the ANC-SACP alliance and thus Umkhonto; and two, the combined operations between the ANC (Umkhonto) and ZAPU had produced virtually no positive results by the end of 1968. By this stage too the problems associated with the conducting of an armed struggle from exile over long distances, had become more than the ANC-SACP alliance could cope with. Conditions

50. Lodge, Black Politics in South Africa, p. 301.



in general were thus favourable by the beginning of 1969 for increased SACP involvement in the day-to-day affairs of the ANC and Umkhonto whom it aimed to bring under its direct control. The first step in this direction came with the formation of a "Revolutionary Council" staffed by members of the SACP to direct the affairs of Umkhonto in 1969. Although the full membership of the Revolutionary Council was never publically revealed, at least three of the SACP members who were appointed to the Council in 1969 were senior Politbureau members of the Communist Party. They were Slovo, Yusuf Dadoo and Stephen Dlamini.⁽⁵¹⁾ Other senior communists who served on the Revolutionary Council in later years were Moses Mabhida, Joe Matthews, Moses Kotane and Reginald September.

In addition to the formation of the Revolutionary Council, the ANC-SACP alliance also adopted a document on "Strategy and Tactics" that was allegedly drawn up by the SACP. This document which has been referred to earlier in this study, was largely a watered-down version of the SACP's 1962 programme "The Road to South African Freedom" which too was authored by Slovo and Matthews.⁽⁵²⁾

Further indications of growing SACP control over the affairs and decisions of the ANC and Umkhonto after 1969 can be found in the fact that although the Morogoro Consultative Conference was an ANC event, two senior leaders of the SACP were in control of the proceedings. While it is true that both Marks, who acted as chairman, and Mabhida were also members of the ANC's NEC, these two persons were more senior in the SACP than the ANC. Marks for instance was elected

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51. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, p. 300); Karis, Revolution in the Making, (Foreign Affairs 62, 1983, pp. 383, 395); South Africa: The ANC, (Africa Confidential 27 (25), 1986.12.10, p. 2).
 52. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2). See also Herbst, Prospects for Revolution in South Africa, (Political Science Quarterly 103 (4), 1988, pp. 665 - 667).



Chairman of the SACP upon its reconstruction in 1953 and held the position until his death in 1972. Mabhida too was more active in the SACP and SACTU than the ANC although he held senior positions in all these organisations. In 1963, while attached to the World Federation of Trade Unions, Mabhida was instructed by Oliver Tambo to devote himself full-time to Umkhonto and the armed struggle. In 1978, following the death of Moses Kotane, Mabhida was elected to the powerful position of General-Secretary of the SACP.⁽⁵³⁾ Perhaps less well-known was the fact that a formal declaration of alliance between the SACP and the ANC was apparently agreed to at Morogoro. According to Radu, in terms of this agreement, which was kept a secret, no ideological views other than those expounded by the SACP would be allowed. In other words, it became a heresy for anyone within the liberation alliance after 1969 to assume an anti-communist stance. The effect of this was that it effectively closed the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto to ideological influences other than Marxist-Leninism and Marxist-Stalinism. Radu wrote:

An SACP account of the Morogoro gathering sheds particularly clear light on the authoritarian nature of the ANC decision-making. At that conference, the non-African members admitted to the ANC at the time were appointed by the ANC executive and were 'neither singly nor collectively consulted on the composition of the new executive'. Indeed, the NEC had previously mandated acting-President-General Tambo 'assisted' by SACP stalwarts Kotane and Marks, to reconstitute the executive (selections that were ratified pro-forma by the conference).⁽⁵⁴⁾

In view of these and other factors it can thus be argued that by 1969 the ANC and Umkhonto had been brought firmly under the control of the SACP and that the latter continued to consolidate its control over the National Liberation Movement. In a report in which it traced

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53. The African Communist 106, Third Quarter, 1986, pp. 20 -30.
54. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 65).



the history of the ANC-SACP alliance and the role of the SACP in it, Africa Confidential⁽⁵⁵⁾ claimed that since the Morogoro Consultative Conference, the ANC's president, Oliver Tambo, who was not a member of the SACP, had become little more than "a pawn manipulated by the SACP". It stated:

The Party quarantined ... Oliver Tambo, bestowed upon him an aura of adulation as a successful tactic to manoeuvre him out of the day-to-day political life of the ANC by keeping him on an exhaustive round of diplomatic visits. He is hardly ever at his headquarters and is ill-informed about events within the movement. The principle of accountability, which is sacred within the Party, has not been respected when it concerns Tambo. The presidential staff headed by the Administrative Secretary of the President-General's Office, Anthony Mongalo, is, with the possible exception of Mrs. Masondo, an SACP fief. ... there was in fact confusion within the party over the role of their pointman, Mongalo. Some felt that since he was in such a highly visible post, it would not be wise for him to participate in inner Party life, which centres upon the basic Party units which meet fortnightly.... So pervasive is Party influences that it is hard to distinguish Party from non-Party in the ANC and all and sundry speak one language, Marxism.⁽⁵⁶⁾

Africa Confidential's account of the SACP influence in the ANC after 1969 is confirmed by other sources. In an article entitled, 'The African National Congress: Cadres and Credo' published in 1987, Michael Radu claimed that while the ANC is emphatically not anti-communistic, "it is ironical how the ANC's attempt to provide a multi-racial image of itself has turned to the advantage of the SACP members in its ranks, most of whom are non-Black; - to object to the Communist influence is to automatically make oneself vulnerable to accusations of racialism." Radu further pointed out that by the time

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55. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).
56. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).



of the Morogoro Conference, the differences between the ANC and the SACP within the alliance had virtually disappeared and the ANC had come to show a much clearer Marxist-Leninist approach by stating that the armed struggle, while still national, was taking place in:

a new kind of world - a world that is no longer monopolised by the imperialist world system; a world in which the existence of the powerful socialist system has altered the balance of forces; a world in which the horizons liberated from foreign oppression extend beyond mere formal political control and encompass the element which makes such control meaningful - economic emancipation. In the last resort it is only the success of the national democratic revolution which - by destroying the existing social and economic relationships - that will bring with it a correction of the historic injustices perpetuated against the indigenous majority and thus lay the basis for a new - and deeper internationalist - approach. (57)

Radu went on to say that not only was Mandela's declared belief in Western democracy gone by the beginning of the 1970's, but it had clearly been replaced by the traditional Soviet-style strategy of a two-stage revolution, namely a national democratic stage followed by a socialist stage. In reference to Mabhida, Radu pointed out that in 1981 he had quoted Lenin to the effect that "the national liberation movement is a necessary ally of the proletariat revolution". (58) Some four years later in 1985, the ANC in its official publication Sechaba elaborated on the close relationship that existed between the two stages of the revolution by stating that:

the national revolution ... is the special province of the oppressed nationalities; the socialist revolution takes the form of a class struggle led by the working class of all national groups. The two stages of the revolution therefore co-exist.... They interact They are as

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57. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, pp. 71 - 73).
58. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 73).



closely knit as Siamese twins. To separate them would need a surgical operation which might kill or cripple both. (59)

Given these views and interpretations of the ANC-SACP alliance it is fruitless, argues Radu, to even be concerned about whether the ANC was dominated by the SACP or not. Since 1969, the ANC and the SACP have come to speak one and the same language, namely the liberation of South Africa from White domination, which had come to mean only one thing, the total destruction of capitalism and its replacement with a system of Marxist-Leninist communism. (60)

This line of argument was supported by Andrew Prior, who wrote that there can be little doubt that the ANC and the SACP enjoyed close links, and that the latter was anxious to establish its credentials as part of the liberation movement in South Africa. (61) In order to do so, argued Prior, the SACP identified itself totally with the aims and objectives of the ANC to establish a democratic state. In view of the latter aim the SACP was willing to subordinate parts of its organisation to direct ANC control. But, argued Prior, the SACP's short term goals should not be confused with its long term goals in which it saw the ANC and its emphasis on a national democratic revolution as only the beginning and not the end of the liberation struggle in South Africa. This point was made abundantly clear by the SACP in its 1962 programme "The Road to South African Freedom" as well as in subsequent publications. For instance in a joint publication with Basil Davidson and Anthony Wilkinson in 1976, Slovo made it clear that while there can be little doubt that the implementation of the Freedom Charter will in itself be a giant step towards social and national emancipation, there were clearly a number of further phases that could be envisaged. He went on to say that, should the liberation struggle bring to power a revolutionary democratic alliance dominated by the proletariat and the peasantry

59. Sechaba, June 1985, p. 8.

60. Radu, The African National Congress, (Problems of Communism, July - August 1987, p. 73).

61. Prior, South African Exile Politics, (Journal of Contemporary African Studies 3 (1/2), 1983/1984, pp. 189 - 190).



which he stated was on the agenda in South Africa), the post-revolutionary phase could surely become:

the first stage in a continued process along the road to socialism ... A state dominated by the working class and the peasantry ... will from its inception, begin to lay the basis for taking the country along the road to socialism. Without this there can be no real solution to the national or social problems of the majority of the South African people. (62)

Slovo also stressed the fact that the continuing role of an "independent class orientated movement" as part of the revolutionary front is historically vital, despite the absence of any basic policy divergence between the ANC and the SACP on the main aims, strategy and thrust of the liberation struggle. (63)

4. THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE AND THE POSITION OF UMKHONTO IN THE POST 1976 PERIOD

The control and influence that the SACP had managed to gain over the ANC and particularly over Umkhonto and the armed struggle in 1969, was further consolidated and extended in the 1970's and 1980's. Two major events that facilitated this development in the mid-1970's, were the establishment in 1975 of Marxist governments in the two former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and the influx of thousands of new and Black recruits into the ranks of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto following the Soweto unrest of June 1976. The first development came at a time when Umkhonto was in desperate need of forward bases and other facilities close to South Africa's borders, in order to resume the armed struggle. With the granting of independence to Angola and Mozambique, but more important with the establishment of Marxist regimes in these regions, the SACP and Umkhonto - which it controlled through its leadership of the Revolutionary Council - was placed in a position to rapidly move its

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62. B. Davidson, J. Slovo and A. Wilkinson, Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution, p. 149.
63. Davidson et al, Southern Africa: The New Politics of Revolution, p. 149.



trained cadres in and out of the country as well as to recruit those leaving the country for military training. The importance of Angola and Mozambique was borne out by the fact that by 1977 the ANC and Umkhonto, under the leadership of the SACP, had already established a number of facilities in these two countries for the training of recruits and the control of the armed struggle in South Africa. With the headquarters of the Revolutionary Council established in Maputo, Mozambique, by 1977, Slovo and other communist leaders who served on it, were in full control of both the ANC and Umkhonto's activities in South Africa.

Although the mass influx of new recruits into the ranks of the alliance and Umkhonto provided the SACP with the manpower it needed to resume the armed struggle in the mid-1970's, as well as to re-introduce its Marxist teachings into South Africa via these new recruits, the latter's Black Consciousness orientation initially presented a serious problem for the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Council leadership. According to Africa Confidential⁽⁶⁴⁾ the SACP was apparently so alarmed by the influx of so many Black Consciousness African youths into the ranks of the ANC-SACP alliance after 1976, that it immediately initiated a programme to turn these BC youths into loyal Marxists. For this purpose, Francis Meli, the later editor of Sechaba was sent to the Nova Katenga training camp in Angola to serve as its first political commissar. In addition, Andrew Masondo, the later Head of the ANC's Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania and a member of the Central Committee of the SACP, was appointed National Commissar of the ANC to ensure that "even those outside the army were within the Party's ideological ambit".⁽⁶⁵⁾

Although Meli was a devoted member of the SACP and a strong protagonist of Marxism, his appointment as political commissar for Umkhonto

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64. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).
65. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 2).

in Angola proved to be a poor choice. He was apparently too impatient and too critical of the new Soweto generation of recruits to be functional, with the result that in the end he was replaced by the more "fatherly" Marxist and Communist Party leader, Mark Shope. It was under the latter, a former Secretary-General of SACTU, and Jack Simons, a fellow communist who assisted him, that the Soweto youths were eventually "converted" from Black Consciousness to Marxism and communism.

Under the combined leadership of Shope and Simons, the cream of the Sowetan youths were later also recruited into the SACP. They included among them figures such as Thami Zulu, 'Che' Ogara, Peter Mayibuye, Lensoe 'Captain' Moekoetsi (he was however expelled from the SACP in 1984), Motso Mokgabudi and Khumalo Migwe.⁽⁶⁶⁾ According to Africa Confidential once the ANC had taken these converted Sowetans on board, it was even more rapidly transformed from within. Those who resisted this transformation or who objected to it, were either expelled from the organisation; dropped from the inner circle of the SACP or, in worse cases, sent for "re-education" in one of the several ANC-SACP penal/rehabilitation facilities that were set up after 1976. Some of these facilities were in Angola, while others were in Tanzania and Zambia. Conditions and treatment in those camps were so severe that most ANC and Umkhonto cadres feared them. The result was that the cadres who did not agree with ANC-SACP policy normally kept quiet about their feelings for fear of being sent to one of those camps.

It can thus be argued that the SACP leadership both in the ANC and Umkhonto had not only gained full control over these organisations and the armed struggle by the mid-1980's, but was determined to maintain it with an iron fist. In this, argued Africa Confidential, White communists such as Slovo, Ronnie Kasrils, Simons, Brian Bunting, Albie Sachs and others have played a major role.⁽⁶⁷⁾

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66. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, pp. 2 - 3).
67. South Africa: The party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 3).



5. THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE AND THE SOVIET POLITICS OF GLASNOST
SINCE 1985

Although the SACP has been a loyal follower of the Soviet Union and the ideologies of Marxist-Leninism since the 1920's, the changes and reforms effected to these ideologies and to Soviet politics by President Mikhail Gorbachev since he assumed power in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980's has presented the organisation with a serious problem. While the SACP has given verbal support to Gorbachev's reform initiatives in the Soviet Union, it has nevertheless persistently refused to alter its own views and policies in accordance with what has been transpiring in the Soviet Union and the rest of Eastern Europe since 1985. In view of their close alliance with the SACP and the apparent control that the latter had over them, the ANC and Umkhonto have equally resisted these changes and have on numerous occasions indicated their support for the SACP, which as recently as its 7th Congress at Havana, Cuba, in June 1989, has renewed its undying support for the orthodox principles of Marxist-Leninism. The direct result of this has been the persistent suppression of the more moderate views of ANC and SACP leaders such as Thabo Mbeki, Lindiwe Mabuza, Mzala and others until the beginning of the 1990's when the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe eventually forced the hardliners in the liberation alliance to change their stance.

Consequently, in January 1990 the SACP unexpectedly released a new policy paper entitled "Has Socialism Failed",⁽⁶⁸⁾ in which the Party took a hard new look at the developments that had been taking place in the Soviet Union since the mid-1980's. It came to the conclusion that the SACP (and thus the ANC) had little choice but to adjust to these changes in order to keep pace with the developments and changes that have been taking place both outside and inside South Africa.⁽⁶⁹⁾

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68. For a critical review of the SACP policy paper "Has Socialism Failed" see D. Kunert, Glasnost, New Thinking and the ANC-SACP Alliance, pp. 1 -15.
69. The Weekly Mail (Johannesburg), 1990.01.19 - 25.

In view of these and other facts, there can be no doubt that, although the ANC and the SACP have persistently claimed over the years that they were separate organisations and that neither had a dominant claim over the other, the truth is that besides superficial differences such as the fact that they have retained separate names, there was virtually no real difference between the ANC and the SACP and that both organisations and their military wing, Umkhonto, spoke the same language, Marxism. Similarly, given the nature of the ANC and SACP's dependence on the Soviet Union for both its arms and ideological support, the ANC has had little choice but to subject itself to the leadership and ideological domination of the SACP and the Soviet Union. Anyone who opposed this view or refused to accept the hegemony of the SACP, were summarily expelled from the ANC or demoted to the rank and file. As a result, by the mid-1980's the existing differences within the ANC-SACP alliance were no longer between non-communists and communists or between class and nationalism, but rather between shades of communism.⁽⁷⁰⁾

6. THE INTERLOCKING MEMBERSHIP BETWEEN THE ANC, THE SACP AND UMKHONTO

One aspect of the SACP relationship and control over the ANC and Umkhonto that can be gauged with reasonable accuracy, is the degree of overlapping in membership that had come to exist between the three organisations. Although the SACP membership of the ANC was not predominant in the 1950's due to the fact that it preferred to spread its members through the different front organisations of the Congress Alliance, the situation rapidly changed after the banning of the ANC in 1960 and the remainder of the Congress Alliance members shortly thereafter. After 1960, the ANC and the SACP became mutually dependent on one another.

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that most of those who became part of the underground ANC in 1960, automatically became part also

70. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 3).



of the broader underground communist movement. Many were unaware of this latter development, while others again were told that their membership of the ANC also required them to be a member of the underground SACP, or its fronts such as the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). SACTU was the only component of the Congress Alliance that was never banned by the government. Similarly members of the SACP and SACTU were instructed to join the ANC. This insistence on dual membership was extended to Umkhonto in 1961. According to Bruno Mtolo, who served on the Regional Command of Umkhonto in Durban, when Stephen Dlamini, who was a member of both the ANC and the SACTU discovered in 1960 that he, Mtolo, was a member of the ANC but not of the SACP or SACTU, he was immediately instructed to join the latter organisations since it had become the policy of the ANC (and the SACP) that its members should also be members of SACTU and vice versa. "Dlamini", Mtolo said, "pointed out to me that because of the banning of the ANC it now became very important that I should be a member of SACTU." In order to comply with this Mtolo joined the "Hospital Workers Union" in Durban, which was an affiliate of SACTU in Natal.⁽⁷¹⁾

This dual or interlocking membership was not a phenomenon of the relationship between the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto in the provinces and regions only, but it was also present at the national level in Johannesburg and elsewhere. A break-down of the leadership of the NHC in Johannesburg and the Regional Command structure of Umkhonto in Natal, reveals the extent to which the leaders of the SACP had become the leaders of the ANC and Umkhonto by 1963. Of the ten people brought to trial in 1963 for their alleged membership of the NHC of Umkhonto - namely Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Dennis Goldberg, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Lionel Bernstein, Raymond Mahlaba, James Kantor, Elias Motsoaledi, and Andrew Mlangeni - only two, namely Mandela and Sisulu, can be singled out as non-members of the SACP.⁽⁷²⁾ Although Sisulu had been listed by some sources as not

71. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, p. 11.

72. Supreme Court, Transvaal Division, Case 65/1964, The State against N. Mandela and others, Revised Indictment, p. 1.



being a member of the SACP, others again have listed him as a member, probably due to the fact that he attended several SACP meetings in the 1960's.⁽⁷³⁾

Similarly, of the remaining 26 or more people listed by the State in the Rivonia Trial as being alleged members of the NHC of Umkhonto or as having associated with it, namely, Arthur Goldreich, Harold Wolpe, Vivian Ezra, Julius First, Ruth First, Michael Harmel, Bob Hepple, Percy John Hodgson, Ronnie Kasrils, Moses Kotane, Arthur Letele, Tennyson Makiwane, John B. Marks, Johannes Modise, George Naicker, Billy Nair, Looksmart Ngundle, Duma Nokwe, James Radebe, Robert Resha, Joe Slovo, Harold Strachan, Oliver Tambo, Benjamin Turok and Cecil George Williams, only four, namely Letele, Makiwane, Resha and Tambo could be considered to be non-communist. The rest were either members of the Communist Party or active sympathisers of it. The latter category probably also included Resha, but there is no certainty about him.⁽⁷⁴⁾

This similarity prevails when one examines the leadership of Umkhonto in Durban. According to Mtolo, virtually the entire leadership of Umkhonto in Durban if not the rest of the province, were drawn from the underground Communist Party. The leading figures in the Regional Command in Durban who were members of the SACP or SACTU were Curdnick Ndlovu (Captain), Ronnie Kasrils (Lieutenant), Eric Mtshali (Sergeant), Billy Nair, Brian Chaitow (Chief Technician) and Mtolo (assistant to Chaitow). Of these six people apparently only Ndlovu was a member of the ANC, but even so, according to Mtolo, his sentiments were more with the SACP and SACTU than with the ANC.⁽⁷⁵⁾

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73. Supreme Court, Cape Division, CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 154.
 74. Supreme Court, Transvaal Division, Case 65/1964, The State against N. Mandela and others, Revised Indictment, p. 4. See also Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 154.
 75. Mtolo, Umkonto we Sizwe, pp. 16, 23.



According to a further informant, namely Hlapane, meetings of the SACP held in Johannesburg were regularly attended by members of the ANC. After December 1961 these meetings often also included leaders of Umkhonto from both its national and regional structures. Several of Umkhonto's national leaders such as Sisulu, Mbeki and others were for instance at the SACP National Congress that was held in Johannesburg in November 1962 at which the Party adopted "The Road to South African Freedom". According to Hlapane, the same Congress also elected a new Central Committee consisting of Bernstein, Harnel, Kotane, Marks, Mbeki, Sisulu and Slovo, all of whom were also leaders of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Later several other ANC-Umkhonto leaders were co-opted onto the Central Committee of the SACP. They included Mhlaba (sometimes spelled Mahlaba), Shope and Hlapane. (76)

When Hlapane was asked in 1966 to comment on the degree of overlapping between the ANC and the SACP, he said:

I will put it this way ... the Central Committee had amongst its members some members in the National Executive of the ANC as members of the Central Committee The position is that members of Congress did not know exactly what was going on, on the higher level insofar as the leaders are concerned. ... There was no difference between the African National Congress and the Communist Party in the higher body. But there was a difference in the lower organs of ANC and ... the Communist Party. They did not meet in common. They met in separate cells Matters of ANC, regarding policy ... were first discussed by the Central Committee before they go to even the National Executive of the ANC. (77)

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76. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, pp. 154 - 158. See also Ludi and Grobbelaar, The Amazing Mr. Fischer, pp. 38 - 39.
77. Supreme Court, Cape Division, Case CC 67/1966, The State Against Fred Carneson, Evidence of B.M. Hlapane, p. 158.



With the destruction of the underground in South Africa by the mid-1960's and the transfer of the control of the liberation struggle to the External Mission of the ANC and the SACP after 1969, the interlocking membership between the two organisations and Umkhonto became complete. This state of affairs was confirmed by three developments namely, one, the transfer of control over Umkhonto from the ANC's NEC to the SACP created and controlled Revolutionary Council; two, the opening up of the ANC's membership to people of all races, and three, the reduction of the ANC's NEC from 23 to nine members to ensure a communist majority on it. Of the nine members who were elected to the NEC in 1969, at least four, namely Marks, Mabhida, Kotane and Joe Matthews were senior members of the SACP.⁽⁷⁸⁾ In addition to them a possible further three NEC members namely Alfred Nzo, Mzwai Piliso and Thomas Nkobi were also members of the Communist Party. According to the report of the Denton Sub-Committee on Security and Terrorism in Southern Africa published in the United States in 1982, both Nzo and Piliso were members of the SACP. In 1986 Africa Confidential however excluded Nzo from its list of communist members despite the fact that Nzo was a recipient of the Lenin Peace Prize.⁽⁷⁹⁾ A further member of the NEC that has been identified by some sources as a member of the SACP but denied by others is Nkobi. In an article that appeared in the Sunday Times in May 1986, for instance, Lodge claimed that Nkobi (Treasurer-General of the ANC) was a member of the SACP.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Yet in an article published in Africa Confidential in May 1990, Nkobi was singled out as one of eight NEC members who were not members of the SACP. The latter list also included the name of Joe Modise, the Chief of Umkhonto, whom Lodge had listed in 1986 as being a member of the SACP.⁽⁸¹⁾ The issue is further complicated by the fact that Piliso, listed by the Denton Sub-Committee in 1981 as being a member of the SACP, was listed by both Lodge in 1986 and

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78. Legum, Africa Contemporary Record, 1968 - 1969, p. C153.
79. South Africa: The ANC, (Africa Confidential 27(25), 1986.12.10, p. 2). See however Nzo's support for the SACP in A. Nzo, Message of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, London, July 30th, 1986, pp. 1 - 5.
80. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1986.05.11 (A "Who's Left of Whom" Guide to ANC Leaders).
81. South Africa: The Party's Dilemma, (Africa Confidential 31(9), 1990.05.04, p. 1).



Africa Confidential in 1990 as being a non-SACP member.⁽⁸²⁾ Clearly the picture on who in the ANC's NEC are members of the SACP and who are not is a confusing one, as a result of the secrecy attached to the membership of the SACP.

However, assuming that Nzo and possibly either Nkobi or Piliso were members of the SACP, then it means that out of the nine people elected to the ANC's NEC in 1969 between six and seven were members of the SACP which meant they were in the majority. Such a majority of SACP members in the NEC would have given the Communist Party a veto over all major decisions taken by the ANC after 1969. Moreover, what the SACP could not control through its majority on the ANC's NEC, it could easily do through its control of the Revolutionary Council that directed the affairs and decisions of Umkhonto. The latter council became firmly under the control of the SACP rather than the ANC in 1969 and remained so until it was dissolved in 1983 and replaced with a Political Military Council (PMC).

The latter organ was at the centre of the new organisational structure designed by Slovo to serve the armed struggle in South Africa after 1983. Before it was dissolved in 1983, the Revolutionary Council consisted of the following ANC-SACP leaders: Tambo (Chairman), Dadoo (Deputy-Chairman, who died in 1983), Nzo, Modise (Chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe), Slovo (Deputy Chief of Umkhonto, who was for many years Commander-in-Chief of Umkhonto), Sizakele Sigxhashe, Mabhida (he was also General-Secretary of the SACP), Henry Makgothi (he was also the ANC's Secretary of Education), Jacob Zuma (he was a senior member of the SACP's Central Committee) and Leonard Dilinga, of whom little is known.⁽⁸³⁾

Hlapane earlier stated to the Denton Committee that at least seven out of the above ten members of the Revolutionary Council were

82. South Africa: The Party's Dilemma, (Africa Confidential 31(9), 1990.05.04, p. 1).

83. J. Denton, Report of the United States Sub-Committee on Security and Terrorism in Southern Africa, 1982, p. 23.



members of the SACP. The majority of them, with the exception of Slovo, were also members of the ANC's National Executive Committee which had steadily grown from its nine members in 1969 to more than 22 members by the early 1980's.

Most of those who served on the Revolutionary Council of Umkhonto in 1983 automatically transferred to the new Politico Military Council (PMC). Charged with the responsibility to co-ordinate both the political and military aspects of the armed struggle inside South Africa after 1984, the PMC became one of the most important - if not the most important - organ of the ANC-SACP alliance in the mid-1980's. With its emphasis on the political and military co-ordination of the armed struggle, the PMC included representatives from the Army (Umkhonto); the Intelligence and Security Department; as well as the political, educational and labour wings of the liberation alliance. The 15 members of the PMC and the various divisions they represented were as follows in 1988.

7. THE POLITICAL MILITARY COUNCIL (PMC) OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE⁽⁸⁴⁾

1	Oliver Tambo	Chairman
2	Alfred Nzo	Vice-Chairman (ANC Secretary-General)
3	Thomas Nkobi	Vice-Chairman (ANC Treasurer-General)
4	Joe Slovo	Vice-Chairman (SACP General-Secretary since 1987)
5	John Nkadimeng	Vice-Chairman (SACTU General-Secretary)
6	Josiah Jele	Executive Secretary (the most important member of the PMC)
7	Chris Hani	Army (Chief of Staff since 1987)
8	Joe Modise	Army (Chief of the Army)
9	Steve Tshwete	Army (Political Commissar until fired in 1988 for violating the policies of the ANC)
10	Ronnie Kasrils	Army (Chief of Military Intelligence)
11	Jacob Zuma	Intelligence and Security Department ANC/Umkhonto
12	Sizakele Sigxhashe	Intelligence and Security Department ANC/Umkhonto
13	Joe Nhlanhla	Intelligence and Security Department ANC/Umkhonto
14	Mac Maharaj	Political Department
15	Thabo Mbeki	Ex Officio Member

84. South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29(16), 1988.08.12, pp. 1 - 3).



An analysis of the members of the PMC reveals that at least nine of them, namely Slovo, Nkadineng, Jele, Hani, Modise, Kasrils, Sigxhashe, Maharaj and Zuma were members of the SACP's Polit Bureau and Central Committee. Of the remaining six members, at least a further four, namely Nzo, Nkobi, Tshwete and Nhlanha were possible members of the SACP.⁽⁸⁵⁾ That left only Tambo and Mgwayi as non-communist in the PMC.

8. THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ANC (1985)⁽⁸⁶⁾

By the time of the Kabwe Consultative Conference in 1985, the NEC of the ANC had undergone a substantial transformation to the point where virtually all its members, with the exception of a small handful, among them Tambo, were members of the SACP. At the same time the NEC had increased in size from 22 to 30 members by the mid 1980's with the proviso that five more members could be co-opted onto the Executive, should there be a need for it.⁽⁸⁷⁾ The reason for the extension of the NEC by the mid-1980's was undoubtedly two-fold, namely to accommodate the changes that had been effected to the membership of the NEC at the Kabwe Conference (after 1985 non-Africans were allowed for the first time to become full members of the NEC) and to make room for the new generation of up-and-coming post-Soweto leaders who were making increasing demands for a greater say in the affairs and direction of the ANC and the armed struggle in South Africa.

Lodge,⁽⁸⁸⁾ in his analysis of the 1985 Kabwe Conference, argued that the extension and election of new members to the NEC can be seen as a re-affirmation of leadership and an affirmation of the earlier

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85. South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29(16), 1988.08.12, pp. 1-3). See also South Africa: Inside the Communist Party, (Africa Confidential 29(17), 1988.08.26, pp. 2-5). SABI, Talking with the ANC, 1986, p. 14.
86. ANC, Report, Main Decisions and Recommendations of the Kabwe National Consultative Conference, p. 10.
87. ANC, Report, Main Decisions and Recommendations of the Kabwe National Consultative Conference, p. 10.
88. Lodge, Mayilome! Let Us Go To War: From Nkomati to Kabwe, The African National Congress, January 1984 - June 1985, (The South African Review Three, pp. 18 - 19).



Ideological balance in the organisation's hierarchy of power. The ANC-SACP-Umkhonto members who were elected or re-elected onto the National Executive Committee of the ANC in 1985 were as follows: (**)

The National Executive Committee (NEC) 1985

1	Oliver Tambo	President
2	Alfred Nzo	Secretary-General
3	Thomas Nkobi	Treasurer-General
4	Thabo Mbeki	Director of Information and Publicity
5	Dan Tloome	Deputy Secretary-General
6	Moses Mabhida	Member
7	Johnny Makatini	Chief of International Department
8	Henry Makgothi	Secretary of the Education Department
9	Dr Simon Makana	Administrative Secretary
10	Gertrude Shope	Chief of Women's Secretariat (league)
11	Stephen Dlamini	(President of SACTU since 1967)
12	John Nkadimeng	Chairman ANC Political Committee
13	Joe Modise	Commander of Umkhonto
14	Joe Slovo	Chief of Staff of Umkhonto to 1987
15	Mzwai Piliso	Chief of Intelligence and Personnel
16	Dr Pallo Jordan	Head of the ANC's Research Department
17	Dr Francis Meli	Editor of <u>Sechaba</u>
18	Dr S. Sigxashe	Former Director of Information and Publicity. Also a member of ANC, NWC and of the PMC.
19	Mac Maharaj	Senior officer of Umkhonto
20	Reginald September	Member
21	Robert Conco	Member
22	Jacob Zuma	ANC Representative in Mozambique and Swaziland
23	Florence Mophosho	Member
24	Chris Hani	Political Commissar of Umkhonto 1982-1987
25	Joe Nhlanhla	Chairman of the ANC Youth League
26	Aziz Pahad	Member
27	James Stuart	Member
28	Ruth Mompati	Member
29	Anthony Mongalo	Member
30	Cassius Make	Member

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89. For more information on the subject see: ANC, Report, Main Decisions and Recommendations of the Kabwe National Consultative Conference, pp. 7 - 8; Lodge, Mayilome! Let Us Go To War: From Nkomati to Kabwe, The African National Congress, January 1984 - June 1985, (The South African Review Three, pp. 18 - 19); SABI, Talking with the ANC, p. 14; The African Communist 106, Third Quarter, 1986, pp. 20 - 41; South Africa: The ANC, (Africa Confidential 27(25), 1986.12.10, pp. 1 - 4).

Based on information obtained from various intelligence sources, the South African government alleged in 1986 that at least twenty-three of the thirty people that were elected to the NEC at Kabwe in 1985, were members of the SACP.⁹⁰ Those on the NEC whom the government did not suspect to be members of the SACP were Tambo, Makatini, Makana, Conco, Zuma (who has since been identified as a member of the SACP⁹¹), Mompoti and Make. Major Craig Williamson of the South African police, who had successfully infiltrated the ANC in Exile in the 1970's supported this allegation. He believed that at least twenty-five of the thirty members elected to the ANC's NEC in 1985 were members of the SACP.⁹²

These claims were however disputed by both Lodge and the ANC. According to Lodge, only six members of the ANC's NEC were members of the SACP while a further thirteen were possibly members of the SACP. Those listed by Lodge in 1986 to be members of the SACP were Slovo, Maharaj, John Gaetsewe (it is not clear why Lodge listed him, since he was not elected to the NEC in 1985), Nkobi and Tloome. It is not clear who the sixth person was. The thirteen identified by Lodge as being possible members of the SACP were Pahad, Stuart, Meli, Mongale, Make, Nzo, Modise Dlamini, Nkadimeng, Shope, Makgoti and Zuma. The remaining eleven members of the ANC's NEC were either not communist or too little was known about them to classify them as being members of the SACP, argued Lodge. They were: Tambo, Jordan, Sigxashe, Makatini, Hani (he too has since been identified as a senior member of the SACP), Piliso, Mbeki (junior), Thozamile Botha (he was coopted in 1986), Makana and Nhlanhla.⁹³ Botha, like Gaetsewe was not

90. SABI, Talking with the ANC, pp. 13-14.

91. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31(1), 1990.01.12, p. 3).

92. SABI, Talking with the ANC, p. 14.

93. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1986.05.11 (A "Who's Left of Whom" Guide to ANC Leaders). For a list of the members elected to the ANC's NEC at Kabwe in 1985, see ANC, Report Main Decisions and Recommendations of the Kabwe National Consultative Conference, pp. 7 - 8; and Documents of the Second National Consultative Conference of the ANC, Zambia, 16 - 23 June 1985, p. 41.



elected to the NEC in 1985. He was co-opted onto the NEC only later on.

As far as the ANC itself was concerned, the figures quoted by the South African government, Williamson and Lodge were far too high. According to Meli of the ANC, only five members of the ANC's NEC were also members of the SACP. He did not say who these members were however. (**)

An interesting aspect of Lodge's interpretation of the relationship between the SACP and the ANC, is that although his figures differ from that of the South African government and Williamson, they do suggest that the SACP most probably had a majority in the ANC's National Executive Committee by 1985.

Since 1985, however, the ANC's National Executive has undergone a number of changes in membership due to deaths and assassinations. Mabhida for instance died in 1986. The same year also saw the death of Florence Mophosho, while Make was assassinated in Swaziland in 1987. To compensate for the death of these people, new members were co-opted onto the NEC between 1987 and 1988. The first was Thozamile Botha to whom we have referred above. (***) As one of the post-Soweto generation of Black leaders, his appointment was seen as a victory for the younger generation of Soweto leaders. In July 1988 further changes were made to the NEC. According to Africa Confidential (****) at least seven new members were co-opted onto the NEC. This was done partially to increase the membership of the NEC in accordance with the resolutions adopted at Kabwe, and partially to counter the growing influence of Hani and his militant faction in the executive. Those who were coopted onto the NEC in mid-1988 were: Steve Tshwete (his appointment to the NEC was apparently

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94. The Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 1986.05.11 (A "Who's Left of Whom" Guide to ANC Leaders).
 95. The Daily News (Durban), 1987.07.15; The Daily News, 1990.02.28; See also B. Barrett, A Profile of the ANC, Inkatha Institute Publication (Unpublished) 1988.06.8, p. 52.
 96. South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29(16), 1988.08.12, pp. 1 - 2); The Citizen (Johannesburg), 1988.03.02; The Daily News (Durban), 1990.02.28.

compensation for his dismissal from the post of Political Commissar of Umkhonto in Angola), Ronnie Kasrils (Chief of Military Intelligence for Umkhonto and a senior member of the SACP), Jacqueline Molefe (Chief of Communications for Umkhonto and presumably also a member of the SACP), Sindiso Mfeyane, Stanley Mabizela (ANC representative in Zimbabwe), Timothy Mokwena and Jacky Selebi. The latter was Secretary-General of the ANC's Youth and Students' Section and a spokesman for the ANC in Lusaka. Of the seven newcomers to the NEC at least three, namely Tshwete, Kasrils and Selebi, were members of the SACP. A fourth, namely Molefe is probably also a member of the SACP but there is no certainty. She held the position of Head of Communications in Umkhonto.⁽⁹⁷⁾

In addition to the role played by the SACP in the ANC's executive committee, and Umkhonto Political Military Council and its Exile National High Command, it also had access to approximately 44 countries around the world via the External Mission of the ANC.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Exactly how many of the ANC's official representatives were card-carrying members of the SACP is not possible to say but one can assume that those selected for service in communist countries such as East Germany, Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Algeria and Libya would almost certainly have been members of the SACP. Even in non-Communist countries such as France and Italy, members of the SACP appear to have been in charge of the official missions of the ANC. Tony Mongale, identified by Lodge as a possible member of the SACP, was the ANC's representative in Italy from 1972 - 1978, before he was transferred to Berlin. Similarly, the ANC's chief representative in Paris, France, Mrs. Dulcie September, was also a member of the SACP. Although Mrs September's membership of the SACP had been denied by the ANC and the SACP, the fact that the French Communist Party was responsible for her funeral arrangements after she was assassinated

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97. South Africa: Hani's Rise, (Africa Confidential 29(16), 1988.08.12, p. 1); South Africa: Inside the Communist Party, (Africa Confidential, 29(17), 1988.08.26, pp. 2 - 5).
98. The Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Security Legislation, R/P, 90/1981, p. 57. See also The Daily News (Durban), 1990.04.11 (A New Privileged Elite).



in 1988, has led many to believe that she was a senior member of the SACP, despite the denials. According to press reports at the time, several ANC members privately expressed their concern at the role that the French Communist Party played in Mrs September's funeral arrangements as well as by their presence at her funeral.

A member of the French Liberal Party apparently later remarked that, if there was still any doubt as to the role of the SACP in the ANC, the funeral of Mrs September had finally dispelled this. The South African government, he pointed out, was right in its claims that the ANC was communist controlled. (**)

9. SOVIET MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE

A further area of strong communist support for, if not domination over the ANC since the mid-1960's, has been in the field of Soviet material, in particular military support for the armed struggle. After Moscow and its satellite states first began to supply arms to the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto in the mid-1960's, the Soviet Bloc quickly became the largest if not the only supplier of military hardware to the ANC and Umkhonto. Indeed, the ANC's Mission in Exile had made virtually no progress in obtaining military support for Umkhonto before 1963/64 when Slovo and Marks took control of all aspects of Soviet arms supplies to Umkhonto. Western governments such as Sweden, Denmark and Holland were prepared to give financial and "humanitarian" aid to the ANC, but refused to provide the armed movement with any military hardware. While the ANC had repeatedly stressed the fact that its reliance on Soviet military equipment did not in any way influence its ideological beliefs, there can be little doubt that Soviet weapon supplies and communist ideological support went hand in hand as far as the armed struggle in South Africa was concerned.

99. The Daily News, 1988.03.30; The Sunday Tribune (Durban), 1988.04.10; The Daily News, 1988.04.11 (Reds harm ANC image at funeral).



Without the arms from the Soviet Union and its Eastern Bloc allies, the ANC and Umkhonto would not have been able to pursue the armed struggle in South Africa, irrespective of how big an effort it made.

Thus, for the ANC to claim that by accepting Soviet arms, it did not necessarily accept the ideology that went with it, was wishful thinking. Even if the ANC had a genuine desire to follow such a non-aligned policy, the Soviet Union would simply not have allowed it. The recent changes in Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev and the effect it had on the ANC-SACP alliance, particularly on the SACP, provided clear proof of this. Up to the beginning of 1990, when the SACP finally altered its stance on the reform initiatives of the Gorbachev administration in the Soviet Union, the ANC, like the SACP, maintained an orthodox Marxist point of view on aspects such as the armed struggle and negotiations with the South African government. It was only with the collapse of orthodox communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and after the SACP's leadership became convinced that Gorbachev had sufficient support in the Soviet Union to continue with his political and economic reforms, that the ANC began to change its stance on negotiations and a possible negotiated settlement in South Africa. (100)

CONCLUSION

Although the SACP has never in its long history of association and co-operation with the ANC, especially since the banning of the ANC in 1960 and the formation of Umkhonto in 1961, admitted to the fact that it was in full or even partial control of the liberation movement in South Africa by virtue of its control of the ANC and Umkhonto, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that this was indeed the case: that the SACP was not only the senior of the two partners in the ANC-SACP alliance, but that it was in fact in financial control of the ANC and the armed struggle since 1961. By 1969 it had also secured both organisational and ideological control over the ANC.

100. See following copies of South African Update: vol. 1, no's. 1, 2, 3 and 4, 15 July - 31 August 1989.



It is interesting to note that those who were in disagreement with this interpretation of the relationship between the SACP and the ANC, were normally those who either have close ties with the liberation alliance, or who were in broad support of the aims and objectives of the Alliance. In their assessment of the relationship between the SACP, the ANC and Umkhonto, these people appeared to ignore or minimise important factors such as the degree of interlocking membership between the members of the liberation alliance or the type of stereotype Marxist language they all spoke.

They further seemed to ignore the fact that in each of the major liberatory wars fought in Africa since the end of the Second World War, such as in Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, material support for the guerrillas and Marxist ideology went hand in hand. In each of the above countries where communist arms and other forms of communist support formed the backbone of the guerrillas' struggle for national liberation, Marxist forms of government were set up after independence. In view of this development, it is not unrealistic to argue that the so-called "struggle for national liberation" led by the ANC-SACP alliance, was not so much a struggle for the liberation of the country's Black masses from oppression, but the desire to set up a Marxist "democracy" in which the SACP - and not the ANC - would ultimately be in control.

Further evidence of the role that the SACP played in the ANC-SACP alliance and the liberation struggle in South Africa, can be gained from the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since Gorbachev came to power in 1985, and the effect that this has had on the SACP and the ANC. Although both the SACP and the ANC steadfastly resisted the reforms initiated by Gorbachev since the mid-1980's, these reforms had such a dramatic effect on the course of orthodox communism and the unity of the entire communist world, that by the end of the 1980's even the SACP and the ANC could no longer ignore it. As a result, by the beginning of 1990 the SACP - to the surprise of many observers - released a policy document entitled "Has Socialism Failed" in which it questioned its past



approach to Marxist-Leninism and the reforms brought about by Gorbachev. The reason for this was clear. Since the middle of the second half of the 1980's, the SACP and ANC leadership, particularly the military and Stalinist hardliners, had experienced increasing criticism and pressure from within their own ranks because of their inability to adjust to the changes that were taking place around them. The most criticism came from the "moderates" who were concerned that if the alliance did not take cognisance of the changes that were taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, it would become isolated by the speed with which things were developing, particularly inside South Africa.

The simple fact of the matter was that the ANC and the SACP were faced with a situation by the end of 1989 over which they had little or no control. Caught between the collapse of orthodox communism in Europe and the growing desire, both in the Soviet Union and South Africa, for a negotiated settlement to the latter's racial and political problems, the communist hardliners in the SACP and the ANC had little choice but to review their stance on orthodox Marxism. The fact that the latter decision was seen to be made by the SACP alone and that the new policy directions being pursued in the Soviet Union then also became the policy of the ANC, is clear indication of the fact that the SACP was the senior partner in the ANC, and that it controlled virtually every aspect of the latter. (101)

Perhaps what Mandela told the Rivonia Court in 1963 still held true for the relationship between the ANC and the SACP at the end of the 1980's. He said:

It is perhaps difficult for White South Africans with an ingrained prejudice against Communism, to understand why experienced African politicians so readily accept Communists as their friends. But

101. The Weekly Mail (Johannesburg), 1990.01.19 - 25; South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential, 31(1), 1990.01.12, pp. 1 - 4). See also Kunert, Glasnost, New Thinking and the ANC-SACP Alliance, p. 5).



to us the reason is obvious. Theoretical differences among those fighting against oppression are a luxury which cannot be afforded. What is more, for many decades Communists were the only political group in South Africa who were prepared to treat Africans as human beings and as their equals; who were prepared to talk with us, eat with us, live with us, and work with us. They were the only political group which was prepared to work with the African for the attainment of political rights and a stake in society. Because of this, there are many Africans who, today, tend to equate freedom with Communism ... (102)

This explanation undoubtedly still held true for the ANC's relationship with the SACP by the end of 1988.

102. Mandela, No Easy Walk to Freedom, p. 181.