

South Africa on the way to repression with a 'democratic' face

by Uwe Friesecke

During a visit in London at the beginning of May, the president of the African National Congress (ANC), Nelson Mandela, stated that one early decision of a new South African government would be for reentry of the country into the British Commonwealth. This announcement is the key for appreciating the profound strategic nature of the process of change in South Africa. Three years ago, when Namibia gained independence, Sam Nujoma, the head of the government in Windhoek, proceeded in the same way, and made entering the Commonwealth his first act in office.

The geopolitical goal of having the British flag flying on the Cape is being pushed forward in a new way. A certain historical tragedy was not lacking when Nelson Mandela, to whom the West has assigned the role of the man who will overcome apartheid, stated in London, "We have never forgotten that England is the home of parliamentary democracy, and that is what our efforts are directed toward," and thus paid homage to the very power that has been the incarnation of colonialism for the last 300 years. Has Mandela forgotten that it was the British who in 1909, in the House of Commons, passed the South Africa Act of Union, and thereby created the apartheid system in the first place?

Negotiations at the end of April in London of the South African government with its creditor banks were hardly noticed by the international press. These negotiations concerned the continuation of the third interim agreement between the banks and South Africa that runs out at the end of 1993. In 1985, the South African government declared a moratorium on the repayment of a part of its foreign debt, but has serviced the other part since then with substantial repayments. In 1985, the foreign debt totaled \$27.7 billion. At the end of 1992, it was still approximately \$18 billion. During the last six years, South Africa has annually repaid \$1 billion in debt, more than any other African country. The South African delegation offered at the London meetings, which took place at the Standard Chartered Bank, to repay a further \$5.5 billion through the year 2000, which, with interest payments, would entail approximately \$1 billion per year. The proposal was accepted quite positively, but the banks, and particularly the American banks involved, insisted that the ANC acknowledge the agreement.

From 1994 until the year 2000, according to the ideas of President F.W. De Klerk and also Mandela, there is to be a

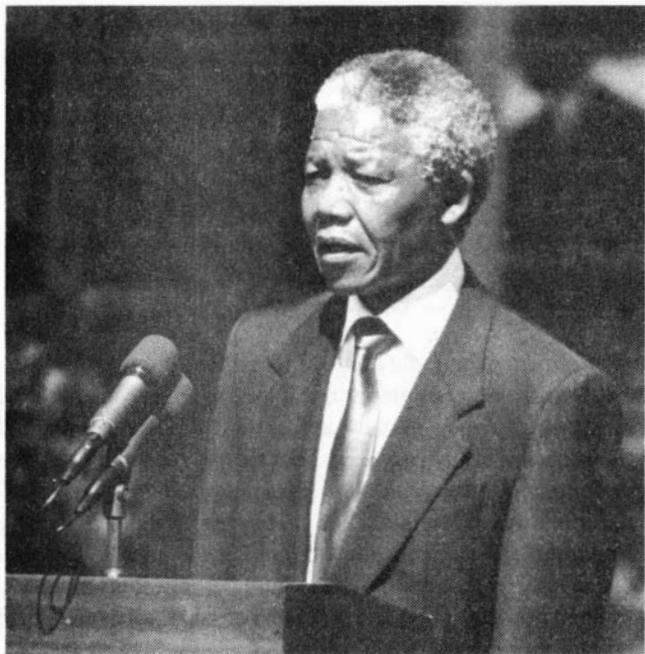
government of national unity. While, therefore, the multiparty discussions are preparing wide-ranging constitutional changes, there are already agreements being made behind the scenes that impose good behavior of the South African government toward the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the creditor banks. That is also true for the especially important economic area of mining. Consequently, the government is no longer allowed to levy commissions on newly granted mining rights, and at the end of 1993, all payments of commissions cease on rights that have already been granted.

Mining and apartheid

This is the actual heart of apartheid policy, which has not yet been questioned publicly. For 100 years, the gold, diamond, and strategic metal deposits of Africa were exploited for De Beers, Oppenheimer's Anglo-American Corp., and the London Rhodesia Corp. (Lonrho), among others, by a system of the most brutal repression in the mines of itinerant workers, who were packed together in infamous "dormitories." The geopolitical goal of the Anglo-American establishment is, without doubt, to maintain this control over raw materials in the post-apartheid era and to so influence the process of constitutional change that their interests are not endangered.

The ANC's silence on this crucial fact casts doubt upon its conduct and struggle for power, and puts the leadership of the ANC, which is dominated by the South African Communist Party (SACP), into a blatant contradiction with its publicly represented claim of being the principal spokesman for the anti-apartheid struggle of the black population. Neither Mandela nor the ANC negotiations leader, Cyril Ramaphosa, former chairman of the mine workers union, has questioned the repression of the black population through indebtedness to the IMF and the structure of the mining system.

Even today, 40% of the population is unemployed, the educational system for the black population has largely collapsed, and the direst poverty is everywhere. Yet the ANC is preparing behind the scenes to agree to the demands of the IMF and the Anglo-American establishment to plunge the black population of South Africa into ruin, as is already the case in other countries on the continent, for example, in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.



Nelson Mandela is calling for South Africa's reentry into the British Commonwealth. Doesn't he remember that the British created apartheid in the first place?

The strategy of tension

The uninterrupted violence that South Africa is experiencing is being fomented to keep the decisive topic, the economic future and foreign policy orientation of the new country, out of the negotiations, and to heat up confrontations between whites and blacks as well as within the population groups.

The murder of ANC leader Chris Hani on April 10, the cold-blooded murder of five white hotel guests in East London on May 1, the professionally set ambush of a police bus in Soweto on May 5, in which four policemen were killed, as well as murders of white farmers in the countryside, are not spontaneous actions, but directed intelligence operations that utilize agent infiltration of all political camps. There are indications that members of the British Special Intelligence Service have played a role, as well as former Soviet Spetsnaz (special forces) members. The De Klerk government has up to now refused to investigate the so-called third force which many believe is implicated in the killings, because it will then have to acknowledge the participation of at least parts of the intelligence apparatus. That means that the same political power groups of the establishment that are seeking, with a great display of propaganda, to guide the constitutional discussions in directions that are not dangerous to them, are ultimately responsible for the escalation of violence in the country.

Liberation from the apartheid system

Great pressure from British circles is now being exerted on the chairman of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Mangosuthu

Buthelezi, to acknowledge the agreements between the National Party (De Klerk) and the ANC (Mandela, Ramaphosa) and thus bring a "democratic constitution" safely to completion. On the conservative side, a committee of former police and Army generals has been formed, in typical Boer fashion, that will seek, appropriate to their historical instinct, to bring together a broad front of Afrikaners to form a separate state for whites. With the deterioration of the economic situation, these developments are moving toward broader confrontations that could very quickly turn into uncontrollable disintegration and bury the future of a new South Africa before it has come into existence.

A new South Africa that is to fulfill the hopes of its black population for freedom, justice, and the realization of such inalienable human rights as equality before the law, cannot be negotiated by means of dubious deals behind the scenes between the ANC and the Anglo-American establishment. The axioms of the apartheid state must be changed. That concerns not only the political constitution, but also the economic order and the general goal of the state.

A new South Africa has a mission for the African continent. Previously, the South African economy had a reservoir of technology, science, and trained specialists (in agriculture, medicine, engineering, etc.) that could be mobilized for the reconstruction of the African countries of the north, which have been ruined by 20 years of IMF policy. The historic mission of a new South Africa consists in challenging the power of the IMF for all of Africa and going over to the side of those who are seeking a way out of the apocalypse of the continent, and therefore are striving for the creation of a new just world economic order. The mission of a new South Africa lies in the rapid buildup of infrastructure, the development of modern agriculture, and the industrialization of Africa.

Only this orientation also offers the perspective for economic growth and the elimination of poverty in South Africa itself, which is the precondition for the success of any change in the constitution. Finally, such an economic development program and a Grand Design for Africa offers the only realistic chance for defining the identity of the new South Africa in such a way that all citizens can again find themselves in it and overcome the existing chasm between white and black and between blacks.

Domestically, the system of itinerant mine workers must be abolished, and the legal preconditions must be created to allow the proceeds from mining to flow into the development of the country. Neither the ANC nor the groups participating in the multiparty negotiations that are in opposition to the ANC, such as the Inkatha or the Conservative Party, have placed these fundamental questions on the agenda. As long as that does not happen, the hopes for freedom and justice for all South Africans bound up with the negotiations will remain disappointed and betrayed, and will lead the way further into chaos.