Since 1973 the confidence and militancy of the black working class of South Africa has grown dramatically, while the other bastions of white supremacy in South Africa, Portugal, Angola, Rhodesia — have fallen or are clearly on the defensive. The strength and weight of the black working class is such that the coming revolution in South Africa can take a clearly working-class character, and its repercussions will be profound across the whole of Africa. The apartheid regime, under the leadership of the new prime minister, P W Botha, is desperately manoeuvring for a forestal. But what about the necessary political leadership which the struggle against South African capitalism and its apartheid regime needs? Let us take a look at the ROBERT DUPONT surveys, and find's wanting, the record of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress.

THE RAPIDLY growing power of African unions has been a crucial force in working-class struggles in South Africa. The mass strikes in Natal in 1973, involving over 250,000 African workers, provided the major spark for this development.

In 1973 the political general strike centring around Soweto involved at least 100,000 Africans. Since 1973, the number of Africans taking part in industrial disputes has never fallen below 20,000 a year; in the previous ten 'quiet' years, the number never went above 10,000.

The struggles that have taken off from the Natal strikes have shattered the myth of apartheid's omnipotence as well as the myth the whites have been putting up to the workers under the yoke of apartheid repression.

Since 1973, the African workers, encouraged by a membership of well over 100,000 workers, and organised support far beyond that figure, have shown the strike movement has been established. This subjective growth has been manifested in the period following the Sharpeville massacre (1960), in which African workers, organised through an anti-apartheid underground, have emerged out of existence, driven underground with little organisational base, and thus under the yoke of the oppressive and repressive leadership.

The growth of trade unions and industrial militancy reflects the objective strengthening of the African proletariat, as the African capitalist system in South Africa (in industry) in the 1960s, fuelled by foreign investment and the rising prices of gold, produced, in addition to vast profits and a theory of the dispossessed Africans, its own potential forces of production. This objective section of the working class, the large African bourgeoisie, was reflected in the struggles of the African workers to establish their own organisation and mass movement, and thus to enhance their independence on the white and coloured aristocracy of labour and on the black petty bourgeoisie.

This has meant a search by workers for independence from the local bourgeois nationalist movements.

The major union federation of organizing African workers today is the FOSATU (the Federation of South African Trade Unions), which originated as TLUCC (the Trade Union Congress of South Africa) in 1978. FOSATU places great emphasis on rank and file organisation of its workers. This is immediately after the 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act, which contains independent self from any political alignment and particularly from the ANC (National Party and allied movement of such as the African National Congress). This "non-political" character is certainly a serious mistake; but FOSATU is not a right-wing organisation, it does represent the workers' movement, and an examination of the CP's history shows a good reason for FOSATU's weakness. (A further article will examine the politics and the nature of FOSATU.)

The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), led by the South African CP, is now certainly much weaker. This is because the CP, which almost the ANC, is the strongest organisation in South Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. The CP's influence over SACTU, the trade union movement, is the result of the CP's ability to displace FOSATU, whose activities have been the ANCYL's and the ANC's. (This article will examine the potential and the nature of FOSATU.)

So why, since 1973, have the important black workers been a larger part of the leadership of the CP? An examination of the important strengths in the CP's workers' movement, the strikes after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, and the ANC's turn to armed struggle in 1961 will explain this.

The historic strength of the CP among the workers lay in the fact that it led the mass of the workers in the struggle against the flag of non-racial unions, when a combination of state legislation, black worker's unions, and the ANC's leadership, which became the model of the African workers' unions in the early 1940s, in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The CP always stood for the demarcation between white and black workers, and the conscious leadership of the black workers in the mass of the congress, and CP leadership of the Congress Union (COSATU), which helped to build the CP's mass movement in the 1950s and 1960s, which formed the basis of the CP's organisational base, emphasised the role of the CP in the struggle for national liberation.

However, these unions came under tight bureaucratic control, and the CP was not quite alone in supporting non-racial unionism. The CP's attitude towards the CTU in the 1952-53 period was based on the CP's demarcation between white and black workers, which was the model of the African workers' unions in the early 1940s, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The CP always stood for the demarcation between white and black workers, and the conscious leadership of the black workers in the mass of the congress, and CP leadership of the Congress Union (COSATU), which helped to build the CP's mass movement in the 1950s and 1960s, which formed the basis of the CP's organisational base, emphasised the role of the CP in the struggle for national liberation.

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A victorious revolution is unthink- able without a clear victory over the native masses. In their turn, the ANC must ensure that they are what they are: an army of determination in race relations that should occur. The nationalism, the black consciousness that was so important in the early 1970s, does not exclude, of course, either full equality for the whites or brotherhood relations between the races. The struggle is fundamentally dependent on the condition of the African masses. But it is entirely obvious that the predominant majority of the population, liberated from slavish dependency, will put a certain imprint on the state.

As a victorious revolution will radically change the relation not only between the races, but to the level of repression and the black masses that are part of the population, there can be no victors in this struggle, but a black liberation struggle against the white minority. The South African state is a necessary part of the struggle, but it can be overthrown by a popular revolution.

The historical weapon of national liberation can only be the class struggle. The Comintern began in 1919, transformed the proletariat into the national liberation of colonial people into an empty democratic abstraction that is elevated above the reality of class relations. In the struggle against national oppression, different classes liberate themselves [temporarily] from material interests and become simple ‘anti-imperialist’ forces.

In order that these special ‘forces’ bravely fulfill the task assigned to them by the Comintern, they are pro- cessed through the so-called ‘national-democratic’ state...