

# South Africa at the crossroads between vision and pragmatism

by Uwe Friesecke

The murder of the chairman of the South African Communist Party, Chris Hani, on April 10, and the ensuing escalation of violence at protest demonstrations of followers of the African National Congress (ANC) throughout the country, shows clearly what a powderkeg South Africa is, despite the negotiations of the government, the ANC, the Inkatha, and other parties. There is a danger that the maelstrom of violence will nullify all efforts for a peaceful transition to a non-racist constitution in South Africa. Unless far-sighted political leaders appear now with a vision for a new South Africa that attacks the most important political injustices of the apartheid system, the murder of Hani could be the beginning of a nightmare which informed political observers in South Africa have warned about since the beginning of this year—civil war between black and white, as well as escalation of the latent warfare between various groupings within the black population. South Africa could become a further tragic example on the African continent of how a country, in the wake of the call for democracy, first becomes ungovernable, and then finally degenerates into uncontrollable disintegration.

The supposed murderer, Janusz Walus, is a member of the Afrikaan Resistance Movement (AWB) and the Afrikaan National Socialist Movement (ANS), whose leader, Koos Vermeulen, is a leader of the world apartheid movement, which will foot the bill for Walus's legal defense. This alone already indicates that the murderer did not act alone, but was deployed for this murder as an extreme right-wing, politically motivated agent of secret service circles as a part of a comprehensive destabilization campaign against South Africa.

The murdered Chris Hani belonged to the hard core of ANC leaders who, as longtime members of the Politburo of the Communist Party (SACP), did not abandon their communist convictions after the fall of Gorbachov and the disappearance of the Soviet Union. For many years, Hani was the protégé of the white chairman of the SACP, Joe Slovo, whom he eventually replaced as chairman in 1991. Hani established his name especially as the leader of the militaristic wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe. He was one of the few who survived the first military operation of the ANC in 1967 in the north of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), the so-called Wankie

Operation. In 1983, he led the ANC brigade in Angola against UNITA. In February 1984, he was successful in breaking up the revolt of the Umkhonto we Sizwe against the ANC leadership in Angola. He made his reputation especially among the radicalized youth of the townships, although on the other hand, his role in the management of the infamous ANC prison camps in Zambia, Angola, and Tanzania was never revealed. Also, it may be a *post facto* myth that Hani, who stems from the school of the hard-core Stalinist Slovo, was the key person in the integration of the township youths into the negotiation process. To be sure, over the last few weeks Hani had spoken out clearly for a negotiated solution, and had avoided repeating his previous threats to resume the armed conflict—threats which had made him into the most prominent bogeyman figure to the whites—but this in no way gave him the stature to convincingly present a vision for a new South Africa.

Hani embodied the worsening dilemma confronting the ANC leadership. Just as during the exile period, convinced communists now exert the dominating influence on the ANC's 25-member National Executive Committee. For example, it was ironically a paper written by the SACP's longtime chairman Joe Slovo, titled "Strategic Perspectives," that at the end of last year brought the ANC's position close to that of South African President Frederik De Klerk. With its acceptance of this paper, the ANC renounced its short-term goal of becoming a majority party, and agreed to the concept of a division of power within a government of national unity for a transition period up to the year 2000. Of course, the longer the negotiations for a dissolution of the apartheid constitution get drawn out, the more evident the danger becomes that formal and procedural questions will prevent any progress, while social tensions increase along with economic and political conflicts.

On the decisive questions of ensuring a just economic future for South Africa, the confirmed communists can find no practicable answer. For that reason, the greatest challenge for the ANC consists in freeing itself from the dominance of communist traditions, and again taking up the ideals which helped bring the ANC into existence in 1912.

## Multiparty negotiations resumed

The political leaders of 26 parties, governments, and organizations resumed multiparty negotiations on April 1, picking up the pieces after the failure last year of constitutional negotiations in the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). The new forum has still not given itself a name, and so far has only established a structure for negotiations on four levels. Participants in the meeting, in addition to the ANC, included the Communist Party, the ruling National Party, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Conservative Party, and the Pan-African Congress (PAC). This new forum for negotiations is supposed to open the way for general elections and the adoption of a new constitution. According to the ideas of the ANC and the government—which the other parties are far from accepting—a transitional executive council is to be formed at mid-year. At the end of the year, the present tricameral parliament will pass a transitional constitution that will lead to the first non-racial elections and the creation of a constitutional assembly in the spring of 1994. Out of these elections, a coalition government of national unity will emerge, in which all the parties who can win a certain minimum number of seats will participate. This coalition government is to govern until the year 2000, and will then be dissolved after new elections by a majority government.

It is extremely questionable whether this method, whereby the De Klerk government and the ANC with its chairman Nelson Mandela are seeking to establish themselves as the “principal actors” in the process of change in South Africa, will be able to handle the situation in the country. In particular, the communist leadership of the ANC can scarcely claim to automatically represent the majority of the 30 million blacks. Further attempts by De Klerk and the ANC-SACP leadership to preset the path to change in their own direction, cannot help but increase the tensions with the other participants.

## World depression strikes in South Africa

South Africa's economic situation is the real Achilles' heel of the process of change in the country. It is already characterized by a dangerously high level of unemployment. Since 1989, some 250,000 jobs have been lost. In the formal economy, 57% of the population capable of working were employed at the end of 1992, and in the informal sector, 20%. That gives an average unemployment of more than 20%. Unemployment is relatively much higher among the black population than among the white, and is especially devastating in the townships, where there is generally no prospect of meaningful employment for the radicalized youth. So far, no initiative has been taken in the context of the multiparty negotiations, to put the all-important economic future of South Africa onto the agenda. On the contrary, Finance Minister Derek Keys, who used to be manager of the second largest mining company Gencor, has just commissioned the drafting of a plan for the “structural adjustment”

of the economy, which through extensive deregulation and liberalization of South Africa into a cheap labor pool, will sooner or later destroy the economy's highly qualified technological potential and will wreck the development of its internal market.

South Africa is running the risk of committing the oft-repeated blunder of seeking a political solution to its problems without at the same time seeking a clear programmatic perspective for its economic development. The key to mastering South Africa's internal problems lies in the strategic role that the country's industrial and technological potential would play in the development of the entire African continent. For that, it will require a great plan, especially for construction of infrastructure, the development of modern agriculture, and the industrialization of sub-Saharan Africa; and the economy of a new South Africa must be a leading participant. Such an economic perspective would create the stability needed to solve the political constitutional problems.

The murder of Hani bears the signature of those who, for geopolitical reasons, are working to destabilize South Africa, at the same time as two other key countries for Africa, Kenya and Nigeria, are plunging into ungovernability. If this destabilization strategy succeeds, the African continent will be deprived of any chances for development for many years to come. It is time that responsible South African leaders take a stand on these fundamental strategic dangers and challenges.

## EIR Audio Report

Your weekly antidote  
for New World Order 'news'

Exclusive news reports and interviews  
Audio statements by Lyndon LaRouche

**Updates On:**

- The Real Economy
- Science and Technology
- The Fight for Constitutional Law
- The Right to Life
- Food and Agriculture
- The Arts
- The Living History of the American Republic
- Essential Reports from around the Globe

### \$500 for 50 Issues

An hour-long audio cassette sent by first-class mail each week. Includes cover letter with contents.

Make checks payable to:

### EIR News Service

P.O. Box 17390, Washington, D.C. 20041-0390

Phone: (703) 777-9451

Fax: (703) 771-9492