

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES - BOSTON BRANCH

In accordance with the resolution passed at the 1976 Convention, our international work in the coming period will be focused around support for the liberation of Southern Africa, and the raising of our politics of international socialism and working-class liberation through this work.

Although still a small branch, we have succeeded in the past year in establishing the beginnings of a political periphery in our two priority industries, trucking and postal. Our main focus must continue to be the expansion and strengthening of our industrial work.

It is necessary, however, for us also to give particular attention to the establishment of a political periphery among black workers and in the black community as a whole. Work around Gary Tyler helped get this process under way; work around Southern Africa will enable us to consolidate and extend our inroads in this area. African liberation is a very real and immediate issue in the black community at this time.

Secondarily, Southern Africa support work will strengthen our credibility and periphery among some of the better elements of the Boston left, and open up recruitment possibilities in this area.

In the area of Southern Africa, we will pursue a dual strategy of initiating events and actions on our own when the situation in Africa is at a critical juncture, when we have established a strong enough periphery to pull off such undertakings without seriously draining the resources of the branch, or when resources (speakers, films, etc.) are made available to us by the national office; and when this is not possible, to participate in coalition activities initiated by other groups active around the issue, pushing for an orientation toward the black community and raising our own broader politics where possible.

Non-sectarian groups working around African liberation that we have had contact with thus far include the Southern Africa Solidarity Committee, an academia-based group of white leftists, and three groups

made up primarily of African students and emigres, the African National Congress, African Students and Workers for African Liberation, and Eritreans for Liberation in North America.

All of these groups have two key things in common: their rather vague, fuzzy "pro-liberation" politics, and their lack of any substantial base in the local working-class black communities.

The latter point is of key importance, since it is of course working-class blacks that we most want to build links with through this work. We should therefore make a particular effort to involve the black community in Southern Africa support work, through publicity, location and local sponsorship of demonstrations, etc., and push other groups that we form coalitions with to do the same.

Within the next several months we should aim to establish one or more viable, broad-based support committees for African liberation with real roots in the black community. Depending on how strong a periphery we can establish, and on what political differences develop between us and the groups mentioned above, we may choose to try and develop these committees from scratch, or to help build existing groups such as SASC and ASWAL and to increase our influence on these groups. Support committees will be involved in organizing demonstrations and fundraisers in support of liberation groups in Africa (ZANU/ANC in Zimbabwe, ANC? in Azania), sponsoring talks by leaders of these movements, etc. We would push for an emphasis on the independent struggles of the African working class, and for making the connection between the struggles against racist oppression in Southern Africa and here at home, particularly in Boston.

In this way we hope to win black contacts to the full politics of the IS, with Southern Africa as the starting point, and to recruit them into the organization. The same is true, though to a lesser extent, of left contacts that we encounter in the course of this work.

Links can easily be made between work around African liberation and other areas of our work. Black contacts made through our industrial work

and (especially) our work around Gary Tyler can be brought into Southern Africa support work to expose them to a concrete manifestation of our broader politics and to get them further involved in the work of the branch. And if we should undertake any sort of brief propaganda campaign around the elections (picketing a local campaign appearance, for example) the failure of both Ford and Carter to take any sort of meaningful stand on African liberation is one obvious example of the fraudulence of the "choice" in this election, and is especially important in light of Carter's special efforts to appeal to black voters.

Thus far our work around Southern Africa has consisted solely of participation and intervention in coalition demonstrations. This has been useful in developing a periphery within other groups involved in African liberation support work, and established us as a legitimate part of that support movement. Our presence as the only "sect" group invited to sponsor the recent Kissinger demonstration is indicative of this.

We are now in a position where we can take initiative on our own, and create a forum for raising our broader politics within the context of African liberation, specifically aimed at and heavily publicized in the black community.

This will take the form of a public address by Tapson Mawere of ZANU, with Paul Irish (a NY comrade on the staff of the American Committee on Africa) as a secondary speaker. We will also attempt to obtain a film, probably "Last Grave at Dimbaza". The forum will be built as an open public event, and other groups will be invited to join in the sponsoring of it and to bring literature, but not to supply speakers (except in the case of local black organizations such as TWWA). The forum is tentatively scheduled for Sept. 24.