

## Freedom Can Be Won

### A Call to the South African People

*From the Augmented Meeting of the Central Committee of the SACP. The Call was circulated illegally in the country and reproduced in the Party's quarterly journal in 1970*

How can we, the oppressed working people of South Africa, free our country from white minority domination and win power for the people? This is the main question that faces us all. This was the main question that was discussed by the historic 1970 meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Our people have many serious problems and grievances.

Every non-white in South Africa knows the daily insults and hardships of life in our country.

We are not allowed to vote, not allowed to move freely, told we are "inferior". Racist lies are even taught to our children under "Bantu education".

People are heartlessly sent away like cattle to "resettlement areas".

Every African knows well the problem of the *pass laws* which send a million to prison every year, and subject every man and woman to brutal terror by the police.

There is the burning problem of *land* -- nearly 90 per cent of the land is in the hands of whites, while Africans starve in the reserves or work for next to nothing as farm-labourers.

The black worker faces an impossible task of trying to live starvation *wages*; he is denied the chance of a skilled job and has no trade union rights, while prices, fares, rents go up all the time.

The *Coloured* and *Indian* people are also the victims of apartheid, of Group Areas, Bantustan and other vicious and cruel laws.

All these grievances and many others are well known to us. We talk about them all the time. But in our hearts we know also that we will never be rid of these evils until we get rid of the *main* problem - white minority rule.

There is a Way!

The government and the system it upholds can be overthrown, The whole of world history teaches us that unjust minority governments cannot last. Over the past twenty years alone, practically the whole of Asia and Africa have seen the people winning their right to their own governments.

Freedom can and will be won in South Africa as well.

But we must not deceive ourselves. Our freedom will not drop from the skies. Nor will it be brought to us from outside South Africa. We have hundreds and millions of friends all over the world who want to see South Africa restored to the people of this country. But not all their resolutions and protests will help *unless and until the people of our country stand up and fight for themselves.*

How are we to do this?

We must study and understand the situation in our country and its place in the world.

We must organise and unite our forces.

We must be resolved to resist, defy and oppose oppression in every form and in every way.

We must be armed and ready to fight - if need be to die - for our freedom.

### **Understanding the World**

The first step to changing the world is understanding it.

Our struggle for freedom in South Africa is not an isolated one. It is part of a world-wide conflict that is going on. On the one side are the forces of socialism, of national liberation and of peace. On the other are the forces of imperialism, of exploitation and of war.

It is this conflict which will decide the future of South Africa and of all men and women everywhere.

We need to understand this conflict because above all we need to understand who are our friends and who are our enemies.

We must look at people's deeds as well as their words!

The imperialist governments, like those of the United States, Britain, France and West Germany, pretend to be opponents of apartheid. But what do they do about it in practice? They help the Vorster regime in every way they dare to: with money, with trade, with arms. Indeed they are partners in the oppression and exploitation

of our people. Look around you at all the British, American, West German and French businesses and factories in our country. They are doing very well out of apartheid, because it means low wages and big profits for their capitalists.

That is why they sabotage every United Nations decision for the boycott of South Africa. To appease world opinion, especially in African and Asian countries, they say they are against apartheid. But who can believe them?

## **Imperialism**

The United States of America claims to be in favour of equality and peace. But for years now they have been carrying on the most cruel and murderous war to subdue the people of Vietnam. Their treatment of the black people in their own country is a disgrace.

The United States, Britain, West Germany and France are *imperialist* countries, controlled by huge capitalist monopolies. These monopolies are only interested in increasing their huge profits, by dominating other nations, by investing abroad to exploit cheap raw materials and labour, by aggression and war.

Imperialism is the enemy of all humanity.

It is the friend of reaction and racialism everywhere; the friend of neo-Nazi Vorster South Africa. South African imperialism is a part of and closely tied up with world imperialism.

The imperialists invented the lie of racialism to justify their enslavement and robbery of most of the world's peoples. They preach that some races are 'better' than others, and that therefore it is all right for two-thirds of the people of the world to live miserable and short lives, deprived of enough food, clothes and shelter, without land, education for their children, security or leisure.

The capitalists find these ideas very useful. Here in South Africa we have seen how racialism has degraded and deformed the white workers. Instead of fighting the bosses, they join with them in oppressing their black fellow-workers, and think only of keeping the African out of a skilled job.

Imperialism - monopoly capitalism - is the enemy of all the people's aspirations for peace and happiness. Above all they hate and fear socialism which will put an end forever to the exploitation of man by man and to every form of racial and colour discrimination.

## **The World Fight Against Imperialism**

When we just look at our own country, it seems that there is nothing but a bitter and endless struggle between us and the oppressors; that they have the backing of the big powers like the United States, Britain, France and Germany.

But this is not the whole picture. We, the oppressed peoples of South Africa, have our friends and allies as well. They are hundreds and millions of working people, people who want peace and freedom, who want national freedom, a better life and socialism. Our common enemy is imperialism.

The people of Vietnam are under savage attack by a powerful and ruthless enemy: United States imperialism, which year after year has been trying by fire and terror and starvation, in which hundreds of thousands have been murdered by Yankee troops, napalm and other weapons, to force them to submit. But the Vietnamese did not submit and never will submit. They value freedom more than life itself. That is why they cannot be defeated. Their example is an inspiration to us. They are our friends and comrades in arms, and their victories are our victories.

Our fellow-Africans in Egypt have for several years now been under violent attack by the Zionists of Israel, who are armed and incited by US imperialism to do their dirty work in North Africa and the Middle East. But - given generous and powerful assistance by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries - the Egyptian people will not submit, to having half of their country occupied. They are fighting back for freedom and independence. They too are our friends and allies.

## **Our Neighbours**

Nearest and closest to us are our fellow-Africans in the border countries and further north.

There are the people of *Namibia* - South West Africa.

We all know that this huge country has been unlawfully seized by the government of South Africa. They have taken the best farmlands and handed them over to white farmers. They have laid their hands on the rich mineral deposits, including diamonds and uranium, and sold them to big foreign monopolies. They are forcing the indigenous peoples to undergo the indignity and terror of apartheid.

The brother-peoples of Namibia are not submitting. They are organising and fighting back. They are not waiting for the United Nations which passes fine resolutions - but can do nothing because the US, Britain, France and other imperialist countries sabotage these resolutions. The Namibians are organising for armed struggle for their freedom.

We South Africans support them one hundred per cent. We demand that Vorster and his government quit Namibia. We demand independence and self-government

for its people. They are our kinsfolk and brothers; we have the same fight against the same enemy - South African imperialism.

The people of *Zimbabwe* (Rhodesia) are not submitting. The British Government claims that Rhodesia is its colony and that Smith is a rebel. But in practice they have done nothing to put down this phoney 'rebellion'. They talk about sanctions - but everybody knows that South Africa is defying the so-called sanctions and sending the Smith regime everything it needs.

The Zimbabwe people, our brothers and sisters, are not waiting for Britain and the United Nations to free them; they have learnt that the only way to freedom is to fight for it.

The revolution in Zimbabwe has already begun. It probably would have been won already, except for the support of South African arms, troops and policemen.

Our armed guerillas of Umkhonto we Sizwe have already gone through the fires of battle in Zimbabwe. At Wankie and in other battlefields, together with the fighting men of ZAPU they faced the Smith and Vorster forces and inflicted heavy casualties on them. This is a common fight against a common enemy. This is the beginning of a war for the whole of Southern Africa. It will be a long and bitter war. But in the end we shall win. From each battle we gain experience; for each dead African patriot many more will join to take his place.

### **Portuguese Colonies**

White South African storm troopers do not only intervene in Zimbabwe. In *Mozambique* and in *Angola* they are supporting the Portuguese colonialists in their cruel and long war against the people of Angola and Mozambique.

These colonies, together with Guinea-Bissau, are the last areas of direct European rule left in Africa.

Portugal is one of the poorest and smallest countries in Europe. How does it manage to keep on this bitter and costly war to hang on to its colonies?

Mainly because it is supported by the imperialist countries with whom it is associated in NATO (North American Treaty Organisation) - America, West Germany, Britain, France and others. They help the Portuguese fascists with arms and money to try and keep their slave regimes in Africa.

The White Government of the Republic knows that the people's victories over Portuguese colonialism are dangerous to its rule here. They are afraid of free African governments on our borders. They help Portugal with weapons, money and even White soldiers from the Republic.

But in spite of his friends and allies, Caetano, the Portuguese dictator, is losing his colonial wars in Africa.

Thousands of square miles and hundreds of thousands of people have already been liberated in these territories. The liberation movements do not only fight and defeat the Portuguese soldiers, they are already ruling in many regions and provinces where the Portuguese soldiers do not dare to go. In these areas the people are building a new life, they have taken over the land and the government.

The people of these countries, the brave soldiers of their liberation armies, led by the FRELIMO of Mozambique, the MPLA of Angola and the PAIGC of Guinea, are our close allies and comrades-in-arms.

It is our duty to help them as much as we can. Their victories are ours as well.

### **African States**

We are not living in the Africa of the fifties, where the whole map of the continent was painted in different colours to show British, French and other 'possessions' of European countries.

There are now forty independent African states, governed by African Presidents, Prime Ministers, governments and parliaments.

Of course these countries are not all in the same position. Some are big and developing quickly. Many others are small and having been so long misgoverned by foreigners - poor and undeveloped.

Take our neighbours - Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana. For many years these countries were governed by Britain which was not at all interested in developing them, in building modern agriculture and industries to give jobs to the Basotho, Swazi and Batswana. They were more interested in keeping these countries backward so that their men would be forced to work in the South African gold mines, where rich Englishmen have many millions of pounds invested,

Today although they are independent in name, they are dominated by their big, bullying neighbour, the Republic of South Africa, where black men are regarded as inferiors, provided by God to work for the white baas.

But the people of these countries have one thing in common. They hate apartheid - they know it all too well, from first hand experience. They will fight to the last man against incorporation by the Republic. When the people of Lesotho had a chance to vote they turned their backs on Vorster's pal Leabua Jonathan. Sir Seretse Khama, President of Botswana, is building a road to join up with Zambia, so that his country will not be so dependent economically on the Republic. And in

spite of the bullying threats of Vorster, who is trying to stop it, Botswana is going ahead with that road.

When it comes to the showdown we know that the whole population of these countries are on our side. They can never be free or independent while white supremacy rules in Pretoria - and they know it.

## **Up North**

The people of all the independent states of Africa hate apartheid and white domination in South Africa.

The only African state which openly supports or has dealings with the Pretoria clique is that of Dr Banda in Malawi. Everybody knows that this little tinpot dictator is bribed by the Rand millionaires. Even his own people do not agree with him. They know all too well the hardships and ruthlessness of white domination in our country. Hundreds of thousands of them have come and still come to work on the mines - they know what it is like.

Most free African states have taken a firm stand against white minority rule.

Naturally the whole idea and practice of 'white superiority' is deeply offensive to African nations who have, in the past few years, managed to throw off foreign domination and are determined to show their people and the world that Africans can govern themselves far better than any other nations could govern them. Apartheid is intolerable to any self-respecting African patriot.

The people of African states are deeply concerned with the sufferings and indignities of their brothers and sisters in Southern Africa. They long to see the ending of white domination south of the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers. But this is not the only reason why they are greatly concerned with events in our country.

## **A Threat to Africa**

What has independence meant to the countries of Africa? Many people are disappointed because they have not made more rapid progress over the past ten years. It is true that many African states have failed to follow up formal independence by truly breaking free from colonialism. The West European and United States capitalists still have a dominating influence in their economic life - they own their banks, mines, and big businesses.

Many of the better-off sections of the Africans - shopkeepers, big farmers and some members of governments - care little for the lot of the masses on the land. They care only to enrich themselves, and are prepared to become partners with the imperialists in exploiting their fellow-countrymen. Imperialism still has a powerful

footing in most African countries. It uses its influence to hold back progress. It bribes and intrigues and backs up reactionary coups and anti-African elements.

But no African wants to go back to the dark days of colonialism.

The people of these countries have gained their independence after many years of injustice, backwardness and humiliation under foreign rule. They do not wish to lose these things now. They must aim at strengthening their independence, developing the wealth of the country to get higher standards of living, and ensuring that their people enjoy a good education, health and security. Most of them want to march forward to a free, socialist Africa.

The fascist Republic of South Africa and its imperialist allies threaten all these goals. They are against socialism and want to strengthen capitalism. South African imperialism wants to extend its power northwards. They want to lay their hands on the treasures of all Africa, to return the continent to the hell of colonialism, to keep all Africans poor, backward, objects of cheap labour as they are in the Republic itself.

No African state that values its independence can ignore this danger. The Republic has a more highly developed industry (developed largely by African labour!) a bigger and better equipped army, a more powerful state machine than any state South of the Sahara.

Already the Republic is using its big military build-up in the stolen territory, the Caprivi Strip of Namibia, to make bullying threats against Botswana and Zambia. It is using the satellite Banda to make threats and territorial claims against Tanzania and Zambia.

There are many reasons why all African countries should unite. But even if there were no reason, they are urgently called on to unite against the threat of aggression from the South.

The African states are beginning more clearly to recognise this threat. They are calling upon the United Nations to bring in stronger steps to stop the imperialist countries selling arms to South Africa. Many of them have threatened to leave the British Commonwealth if the Conservatives resume the sale of arms to South Africa.

They are right to do so. Each African state has a solemn duty to its people and its neighbours to be on guard against South African penetration and aggression; to build up its security and defences, to give positive and increasing aid to South African freedom fighters.

We South Africans also have a duty. We must build up our own strength and resistance, and prepare for revolution. We must solemnly warn the white fascist government that any step against an African state, whether it be little Lesotho, or Zambia or Tanzania, will not be tolerated by the people of South Africa.

### **The Rest of the World**

It is not only the African states which are deeply concerned with the future of our country. The whole of Asia is concerned.

The ideology and practice of apartheid are an intolerable insult to all dark-skinned persons, whether in Africa, Asia or the Americas. It is intolerable to the great and proud nation of India, 500 million strong, and to the People's Republic of China, with 700 million people, that hundreds of thousands of men and women born and bred in South Africa are deprived of every human right merely because their forefathers came from their countries.

Apartheid is an outrage to the labour, democratic and Christian principles in Western Europe and North America. Even though their governments and their rich capitalist investors find it profitable to do business with apartheid and help Vorster with money and weapons, the masses of ordinary working people in these countries do not agree with these practices.

That is why, one by one, white South African teams are being thrown out of every international sporting contest, whether it is the Olympic Games or a cricket tour of England.

That is why next year, 1971, has been set aside by the United Nations General Assembly as a year of protest against racialism everywhere - with the spotlight on apartheid South Africa, the worst example of the lot.

That is why in Britain, France and many other countries a storm of protest is gathering against the supply of arms to Vorster, against emigration of skilled white workers to the Republic to take the bread out of the mouths of our dark skinned workers who are fully capable of being trained to do these jobs.

While we are considering this question, we must also turn our attention to the world Communist movement, and to the hundreds of millions of people - one third of the human race - who live in countries governed by Communist Parties.

### **What About Communism?**

The Nationalist Party and its government is most afraid of Communism. They have passed all sorts of laws to 'stop' the ideas of Communism being known and to punish those who uphold these ideas.

They say that Communism is a very bad thing and a danger to the country.

The very fact that these things are said by Vorster and his government makes it hard for any sensible person to believe them. For these men are notorious and habitual liars. They tell the world that apartheid is a good thing, that the "Bantu" are very happy here, that South Africa is a democratic country. Everybody knows this is all lies. How can apartheid be good, when it leads to untold suffering and humiliation for all dark-skinned people? How can Africans be "happy" when their land is stolen, when they are confined to menial and dangerous jobs at starvation wages, when they have no vote or say in the laws of the land? Why should we believe these liars when they say that Communism is bad? Rather we would think that if Communism is bad for Vorster and his racialist government and his bullying police thugs, it must be good for us!

Let us look at the facts.

We know that very many of the South African Communists are in prison today, not for committing any crimes but because they spoke out and stood up for the rights of the people, against pass laws and Bantu education, for land, votes and freedom for all.

We know that Soviet Russia and other countries governed by Communists have always demanded the rights of Africans, condemned apartheid, and in deeds as well as words supported and armed our freedom fighters.

In Britain, France, America and all over the world it is the Communists who are the-strongest supporters of the Anti-apartheid movements, fighting for boycotts of the Nationalist government and all-white sports teams, opposing the sale of arms and other forms of support for white domination in South Africa, Namibia (South West Africa) and Rhodesia.

The Communists everywhere fight against apartheid and every other sort of racialist ideas .and practices because the basic ideas of Marx and Lenin are so hated and feared by the white racialists of Southern Africa. That is why, in every part of the world from Vietnam in the East to Cuba in the Americas, from Egypt to South Africa, the Communists are the foremost in opposing imperialism and colonialism.

### **The Socialist Way of Life**

The Communists are the foremost fighters for a new way of life - socialism. The way we live now is called capitalism. The workers are at the mercy of a few rich men who own the mines, the factories, the land and other means of production. The bosses make them work as much as possible for as little money as possible. In most countries the workers (in South Africa this does not of course apply to

Africans) are allowed to form trade unions which help to get better pay and conditions. But even then, the higher wages are quickly swallowed up by higher prices!

The bosses get rich out of the labour of the workers. This is what we call exploitation. Their profits are really unpaid labour; because the amount we get in wages only covers a small part of the time we work.

The only way to stop this state of semi-slavery is to put an end to private ownership of the means of production. No man should own the factories, mines, banks and so on. They should belong to everybody. That is what we mean by socialism.

This idea is easy for Africans, in particular, to understand. For generations the main means of production in Africa - the land - was not owned privately. The land did not belong to the Chief: it belonged to the people as a whole.

Marx, Engels, Lenin and other great men saw that it was not only terribly unjust but also wasteful and harmful to allow a handful of rich parasites to run the business of the country. They pointed out that they did not only run the businesses, but also because of their power and the money they were able to run the state as well, and to decide big questions that should be decided by the people: questions of peace or war; questions of making the laws under which people have to live.

Today it has been proved, in the Soviet Union and many other European countries, in China and other Asian countries, in Cuba, an American country, that the ideas of Marx and Lenin are not only just and human, but also that socialism works better than capitalism. Today one human being out of every three lives in a socialist society where there are no extremes of poverty and wealth, where there is no unemployment or illiteracy, where every boy and girl has an equal chance to get a good education and enter any trade, profession or occupation.

Socialism is good for the people - the workers and poor people on the land; for the teachers and other professional people; for nearly everybody. But of course it is very bad for the rich who want to live in idleness on other people's work. They will lose their power and their privileges, and have to work for their living like everyone else. That is why they hate socialism, and its foremost advocates, the Communists. That is why they tell lies about these things. As they own the newspapers and the radio stations and other means of information, they can spread their lies widely, and many people believe them. But you cannot deceive the people forever.

Look at South Africa today.

If you would believe the newspapers and the radio you would think that we live in a very rich and happy land.

But we who live in it know that it is a land of suffering and starvation. It can only be ruled by force and terror. It is a land where there are more prisoners in jail per head of the population than any other. More than half of all the people who were executed in the world last year were killed in our country. Yet ours is only a small fraction of the world population. That is your 'happy South Africa'.

### **Prosperity - for Whom?**

The fascist government and its friends abroad talk about the "wave of prosperity" in South Africa. Prosperity - for whom?

Certainly it is true that more goods are being produced in this country than ever before. Some people are getting very rich. Fortunes are being made.

The big businessmen, financiers, mine owners and farmers have accumulated great wealth. So have the foreign firms which have invested in this country.

Even the white workers have benefitted from the boom. They have been given a monopoly of skilled jobs, and they use this monopoly to hold out for higher wages.

But the masses of non-whites, above all the Africans, have not benefitted at all from the so-called "prosperity". In many ways their position has steadily got worse and worse. Prices have gone higher and higher, but not wages.

Look at the gold mines. It has been worked out that taking the fall in the value of money (that is, the steady rise of prices) an African miner gets *less* today than he did fifty years ago, in 1911!

The gap between the wages of white workers and those of Africans is getting bigger and bigger. On West Driefontein, the biggest mine in the country, each white miner averaged R4250 a year; each African R280 - just about one-eighteenth. Taking the country as a whole African income averages R140 per year; whites R2,100 - fifteen times as much.

Africans in the big towns are relatively better off than those in the dorps, the platteland and the reserves. Yet even in Johannesburg the City Council is forced to admit that nearly 70 per cent of African families are living below the official 'breadline' of R53.02 per month.

In other words in the middle of all this so-called "prosperity" our people are starving. It is not prosperity at all. It is merely that more and more profit is being squeezed out of cheap non-white labour.

How can the African workers improve their wages?

We are not allowed to form legal trade unions. The Government has openly said it is out to smash the African trade union movement and bannings and restrictions have forced the SA Congress of Trade Unions - the best trade union movement this country ever had - for the time being to stop organising openly. For every trade union organiser or official is immediately banned or deported.

All strikes are illegal, and we have seen how when the Durban dockers bravely went on strike to get an increase on their miserable pay, thousands of them were deported out of the town.

Still they did strike. And certainly the workers, even under these conditions of illegality, must and will find ways and means to unite and organise to enforce their demands.

More and more Africans have come into urban and factory job over the past ten years; today they are the big majority of workers in every industry. They outnumber whites in industry by six to one.

Without African labour the work of the country will come to a stop. That is a weapon which the African worker can and must use to get better pay and conditions of work.

We demand the right to form trade unions openly, like worker everywhere else. Until we win that right we shall organise secretly, because we know that any worker who organises openly will be victimised by the bosses and the police. We shall form committees working at first in a few factories and then spreading to cover whole industries and the whole country. If we all unite together there is nothing the bosses or the government can do to stop us.

But above all, African workers must realise that we shall never get decent conditions until we do away with the white monopolies of votes, of jobs, of power. A government elected by whites will never give us skilled jobs, decent wages and trade unions rights and recognition. There is only one way, in the end, to win these things: by *revolution*: by fighting for a free South Africa, without colour bars jobs, land, votes and equality of rights and opportunities.

The aim of the workers, eventually, is socialism. The mines, factories banks, land and big business must be in the hands of the people. They must be owned and run by a state in which the majority - the working people of town and country - hold power.

Today, the main task of the working class is to abolish the white monopoly of power, to carry out the national democratic revolution for the liberation of African and other oppressed people.

The workers are not alone in this fight. This revolution serves the interests of all oppressed people, those on the farms and in the reserves, the Africans, the Indians, the Coloured people and even progressive sections among the whites. It fights under the banner of the united front - represented by the African National Congress and its allies, which is supported by the workers' Party - the Communist Party.

But our workers have a special and most important part to play in this fight. They are those who own nothing except their labour power. They have no interest at all in keeping things as they are. Their conditions of work have taught them the lessons of working-together, of discipline and organisation. The whole country - its goods and transport, its daily life - depends on the workers. It is up to them to play a special role in our revolution, to be ever to the fore, the most active and clear-sighted, in helping the people to organise, to resist, to fight back and to win freedom.

Closest to the workers or the towns are the masses in the countryside

### **On the Land**

Africans living and working on the land - whether as agricultural labourers on white-owned farms, or in the so-called "homelands" - have the hardest and most miserable lot of any people in this country.

From 1948 to 1968 mealie production on "white farms" went up from 30 to 100 million bags. Of course all this work was done by Africans - you hardly see a white man on the farms these days. But the absentee farmer took all the profits, and the pay of the labourer remained as miserable as ever.

What about the reserves? (Bantu homelands, as the Government like to call them, though everyone knows the Africans' homeland is the whole of Africa!)

Here maize and corn production have actually gone down, as a result of overcrowding and lack of land. The people and their cattle as well are literally starving.

What about the jobs the Government promised the people if they accepted their lying Bantu Authorities plan? There are no jobs.

There is no "self-government". The Transkei "Parliament" is just a bad joke. Everyone knows that Matanzima can do nothing without the permission of the Bantu Affairs department. He is just a rubber-stamp for the white Government in

Pretoria. The government wants to ensure that the Chiefs are no longer the mouthpieces and leaders of their people. It wants to make them just BAD officials with black skins - working for "boy's" wages.

What are the people on the platteland going to do about it?

They know today, from bitter experience, that they will get nothing from the white man's Parliament by begging and praying.

The only way is to unite and fight back for land and freedom.

The first step is organisation. On the white farms and in the "Bantustans" the farm workers must begin to form labourers' unions and other organisations. They must demand better pay and food, more land, more rights.

Of course we know that police spies, informers and stooges are to be found everywhere. That is why the formation of organisations must be careful and skilful.

But what is sure is that once militant organisation begins, the people will respond. They will find their own ways of uniting in each area. What is important is to break the silence of the past ten years. Government terror succeeded for a time in stifling the people's protests. Emergency laws, victimisation and bannings of all known and tried leaders gagged the people. The Government was able to boast that everything is quiet; the people are very happy and contented. But they are not happy or contented. The 1970's are going to show they are angry and militant; ready for revolution.

### **Unity for Freedom**

For very many years the ruling class in South Africa tried hard to divide the forces of the oppressed people of South Africa. They tried to get the Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa, Tswana and other African groups fighting among themselves. They tried to set Africans against Indians and Coloured people.

This policy was defeated, especially during the forties and fifties by the African National Congress, which first of all united all Africans and then formed an alliance with the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, the progressive whites of the Congress of Democrats, and with the non-racial Congress of Trade Unions - a united front against the common enemy: apartheid and white minority rule.

The answer of the police state was to answer reason with force. They banned the ANC and the COD, and they persecuted the other organisations of the Alliance by banning and silencing each of their leaders until these bodies were temporarily silenced.

But what they could not do by force or in any other way was to destroy the spirit of unity in the common struggle which had been built up in so many years of hard work and sacrifice.

The *Coloured* people have refused to follow those stooge leaders who tell them they are merely an appendage of the dominant white group. They are a national group of their own, with strong ties with the oppressed African majority, the leading force of the coming South African revolution for complete democracy and national liberation for all South Africans. Most Coloured voters boycotted last year's elections for the phoney Coloured Representative Council; most of those who did vote rejected the pro-apartheid stooges. The Coloured people, especially the workers and trade unionists and the revolutionary intellectuals, will find new ways to build organisation and unity, to revive the CPC spirit, and to form close links with their fellow oppressed non-whites, African and Indian.

The *Indian* people are being hit ever harder by the monstrous Group Areas Act. As a result of this law, Indians have more and more come into the ranks of the working class, and the unemployed. In spite of massive police intimidation, the time has arrived when a new upsurge of militancy is showing itself among the Indian community, whose best elements are reaching out to take up the torch lit by Dr Dadoo and Dr Naicker and others, the torch of militancy and unity with the African masses in the common struggle for freedom.

The *women* of our country, especially those subjected to the double burden of oppression as Africans and as women, have always been prominent in the great national liberation struggles in our country. Today, with the extension of passes to African women, and the terrible difficulties of feeding their families at such high prices and on such low incomes, the need for womenfolk to be active and organised is greater than ever before. That is why women must enrol as equals and comrades in our fight for a truly free South Africa.

The *youth* and *students* have shown time and again, especially in the past few years, that they are worthy sons and daughters of the great traditions of our people. Even in the bush colleges, those glorified prisons, under the shadow of bans and expulsions, students have raised the banner of national liberation and freedom, and many white students in the English-speaking universities have had the courage and democratic spirit to demonstrate for the rights of the oppressed majority. We may look with confidence to the youth, the builders of the new, free South Africa, to uphold the aims of our national democratic revolution, enshrined in the Freedom Charter, and to sacrifice and fight, if need be, to die, for the cause of liberation.

### **The African National Congress**

The greatest organisation of the South African democratic revolution is the African National Congress, undisputed leader of the African majority of our population.

From 1912 until 1960, when it was banned by the Nationalist Party government, the ANC openly organised the African people to unite and struggle for their rights. Thousands of ANC members have been arrested, some murdered, many tortured and banned. Many of its famous leaders like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Govan Mbeki are serving life and other long jail sentences, others like Oliver Tambo, I. B. Marks and Moses Kotane have been sent into exile to continue the work from outside the country.

Verwoerd and Vorster hoped that the banning would be the end of the ANC. They boasted the ANC was dead. But every year has seen new trials of ANC leaders. Every year has seen fresh ANC demonstrations, leaflets spread among the people and other forms of activity.

The spirit and the policy of the ANC are known and loved by our people. Its Programme, the Freedom Charter remains the programme of all freedom-loving South Africans. The black-green-gold of Congress, our Congress national anthem Nkosi Sikalel' iAfrika these are things which our people have not forgotten and will never forget.

Although it is banned and illegal, the ANC remains the core and the heart of the liberation movement in South Africa; all over our country Congress people are patiently, though necessarily at this stage secretly working to bring nearer the day of liberation from tyranny.

### **Fighting with Arms**

Everyone knows that patiently for many years the Congress movement tried by peaceful demonstrations, protests and strikes to bring about a change for the better in the lot of the people. They failed for one reason only: every request, every protest was met by the white government with force and violence, by more severe oppression, until in the end, throwing even the pretence of democracy and legality overboard, they banned the ANC and relied entirely on brute force to subject the masses.

Faced with this situation, the liberation movement decided that a force of the oppressed people should be built up to meet violence with violence, a force able to lead the masses in armed struggle for their freedom. That force was named: Umkhonto we Sizwe. It announced its birth with planned acts of sabotage in many centres on Dingane's Day: December 16, 1961.

Plans were made to recruit dedicated young men and send them out of the country for military training. For the first time since the days of the old impis, the Africans of South Africa have a military force at their disposal, armed not with assegais but modern automatic firearms.

Already in alliance with the guerilla fighters of the Zimbabwe African People's Union, the freedom fighters of Umkhonto have met the enemy in the field. They fought with great courage and skill inflicting heavy casualties on the Smith and Vorster forces.

To build up, train, equip and maintain such a force was a great achievement, carried out under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions.

Of course we have suffered our casualties as well. Brave young sons of Africa fell in the field under enemy attack. At home, thousands have been captured, imprisoned for life like Mandela, or killed like Mini and many another.

But we know that there can be no war without sacrifices and victims. We have resolved to die in battle rather than submit to slavery. That is why the people have started this war of liberation, from which there will be no stepping back. And because we are ready for anything, no matter how long it takes or how heavy the cost, we shall win our freedom .

Let us make no mistake. The present bosses of South Africa are ruthless, greedy and violent. They have shown that they will not give up their evil teachings and practices of racialism by pleas and protests, either from the people of this country, or by the whole world. There is only one language they understand: force. And we shall not force them to accept freedom and democracy until we can prove that we are stronger, better organised and better fighters than they are.

Yes, we have hundreds of millions of friends, all over the world. They are ready to support and help us get rid of white minority rule.

But before they can help us, and in order to enable them to help us, we must first of all learn and begin to FIGHT FOR OURSELVES! No one will come from outside. For twenty years now the United Nations have been passing strong resolutions against apartheid and racialism. The fascist government of the Nationalist Party ignores all of these resolutions; today in 1970 our oppression is harsher than ever before.

### **People's War**

All the oppressed people long for freedom. But some doubt whether it can be won in our lifetime.

They look around them and they see that all the power, all the money, all the weapons are in the hands of whites. Our respected leaders, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Bram Fischer, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi and many others are in prison. Others have been sent out by their organisations to work in exile. The ANC and the Communist Party are underground, and meetings, demonstrations,

people's newspapers have been stopped for many years. Spies and informers help the police trap anyone who dares to protest or speak of freedom.

How can we, a people without arms, subjected to terror by day and by night, hope to fight back and win?

Yes. It is true the enemy is powerful. They have the armoured cars and the tanks, the planes and the command of the roads and the railways.

But there is a way to fight; to beat the enemy. It is the way of people's war.

The Vorster government jails, tortures, exiles and murders our leaders not because it is strong and confident, but because in reality it is weak and afraid. It is afraid of the people over whom it unjustly rules, who form the great majority of South Africans.

We are stronger than the Government because the liberation movement commands the support of the great majority of the people, while it is supported only by the white minority which is not fighting for rights or freedoms but only greed and privilege. The moment they see they are on the losing side they will desert the fascists.

One by one the advantages of the enemy will be overcome.

We have no weapons?

We shall take weapons from the enemy and make our own weapons: petrol bombs, hand grenades, the simple weapons of the freedom fighter.

We have only a handful of trained men at our disposal?

Those few will train thousands. Our skills in the art of war will improve with experience.

We shall not aim to meet his troops head on, that is not the way of the freedom fighter. We shall meet them by the methods of guerilla war: Hit and run.

We shall hit him by surprise, when he least expects it. When he looks for us we shall not be there.

In such a huge country as South Africa, our men will be hard to find. By the time his planes arrive to bomb the guerilla fighters, they will have melted into the countryside. They will have merged into the people, to whom they belong and of whom they are a part.

For the guerilla wears no uniform. His strength is that of the people. Always and everywhere, our freedom fighters are among the masses, voicing their demands and defending them against the enemy, his soldiers and police.

Nothing the enemy does is secret, for everywhere the people are watching him and reporting his movements to the guerillas.

This is not a war that is fought on the battlefields only. It is fought in the factories and on the land.

As the clashes grow in number and size, the workers will refuse to work for the oppressor. They will strike and sabotage his production of weapons and supplies. The people of the countryside will become more militant and courageous. They will take themselves the land for which they hunger, and arm their own freedom fighters to defend it.

The roads will be bombed and the railways destroyed; by the people in the surrounding areas.

As the enemy's lines are extended, his strength will be sapped.

Already white South African troops are being sent to Zimbabwe, to Mozambique, to Angola. They are patrolling our long borders.

The higher rises the tide of struggle the more they will be dispersed; the more our superiority of numbers will assert itself.

This is how it has happened in other areas of people's war: Vietnam, in Algeria, in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea.

Time and space and numbers are on our side. Justice and the outside world are on our side.

The difficulty is only one: to start.

That is the task that now faces the working people and patriots of South Africa.

### **The Communist Party Calls on You**

Dear Comrades and fellow-South Africans, you who have read this message

You know the Communist Party and its record.

It was founded in July 1921, fifty years ago.

For fifty years our Party has never feared to fight in the front ranks against colour bars and oppression, for better wages, land, a new life of freedom for the people. Hundreds of our best comrades, from Johannes Nkosi to Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada and Bram Fischer have given their lives and liberty for the cause of the people.

This Party can never be killed by the enemy.

Today at this critical time, the Communist Party calls on you. It calls on all South Africans who love their country and who love freedom. We call upon the workers and the people in the countryside. We call upon the African people, the Coloured people, the Indians and the democratic elements among the whites.

Let us build up our people's organisations, in town and country, in factories, mines and villages.

Let us unite for the fight to end the shame and suffering of white minority rule: headed by the Nazi Nationalist Party.

Let us resolve that the beginning of the seventies will put an end to white South Africa and mark the beginning of People's South Africa advancing towards socialism.

The armed groups of Umkhonto we Sizwe are ready to enter the fight. But they cannot fight alone.

The people must act!

They must build and support their illegal organisations. the ANC: the trade unions and the Communist Party.

They must act militantly for higher wages, land and freedom.

They must arouse the spirit of resistance and defiance.

They must arm themselves.

The war of national liberation is on and we must fight it to the finish.

Victory or death!

*(The African Communist, No. 43, Second Quarter 1970)*