

## THE DANGER OF MILITARISM

It does not pay to be clever after the event. We must be aware of the futility of trying to fill a leaking bucket.

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In an earlier article we said that the outcome of any war situation depends primarily on command. To win battles and campaigns, commanders must combine courage with wisdom, and make sure that the direction they give is not at variance with the objective conditions.

In the course of a war, we can expect some disadvantages either through our own errors, through the efforts of the enemy or even through circumstances unforeseen by us or the enemy. Our duty is to anticipate such eventualities and take all the necessary preventive measures.

A commander of average ability goes through a complete process of knowing a situation before he formulates a strategic plan. War is a contest in subjective ability between commanders of opposing armies in their struggle for superiority and initiative in action. Only a careless man or a desperate one will base his strategy on his own wishful thinking, and any plan he hatches can only be unrelated to the task in hand. Therein lies the danger of militarism.

This impresses upon us the imperative necessity for all those who plan and intend to lead wars of liberation to understand clearly and fully, the relation between politics and military affairs. We want to wage revolution in our country in order to rid ourselves and our people of white foreign domination and achieve freedom to decide our future as we wish. The crux of the matter is that we have been stopped, at gun point, from political communication with one another, and must return to the country to carry out our tasks of organisation, gun in hand, to deal with those who stand between us and our people.

It is quite clear that the task of organising and mobilising our people to wage revolution can be effectively carried out from within, and cannot be imposed from outside, the country. The strategy of the enemy is to keep us out of the country by all means, and to make sure that no fighting takes place within the country. Any strategy that panders to the desperate wishes of the enemy in this respect is in direct conflict with the interests of the oppressed people, but of considerable service to the enemy.

We do not think that any liberation movement worth its salt can voluntarily serve the interests of its enemy. But we do know that a faulty political approach can lead a militant organisation into losing sight of the objectives of its struggle and ultimately compel it to make

Military action is a measure which is undertaken to achieve political objectives and is therefore geared to serve a definite political strategy.

When military action is successful, the aim of the war --- a political victory over the enemy --- is achieved. When military action fails, what is the next step?

diplomatic concessions that are contrary to the principles of national liberation and the best interests of its people. This is the end result of a militarist approach to armed revolution.

We have already said that it is essential to anticipate such an outcome by taking the necessary preventive measures. We hold that there must be unanimity of mind to a great degree among those who wish to make revolution, on what constitutes People's War and how it should be waged, as well as the political objectives which form the rallying call of the war of liberation. Guns fired at random achieve a random result. We must therefore aim our arrow at a specific and definite target, and we are sure to hit a bull's eye.

The purpose of military action is to steadily destroy the power structure of the enemy, and systematically build up the political power of the people. No military saviours can achieve this in South Africa. Only the massive action of a united people acting in unison can do this under the guidance of determined political fighters. There can be no other answer to the problem, apart of course, from the voluntary surrender of the enemy, which is quite a difficult proposition to conceive in the present circumstances. We should learn to distinguish the difference between the energy and skill employed in the fruitless act of trying to fill a leaking bucket, and the wisdom attendant upon such an action.

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#### ON THE UNITED FRONT

We find it important to pinpoint our basic proposals on this all-important matter of the United Front of all our fighting people.

We think that the fundamental principle upon which a United Front should be formed is a measure of agreement on what constitutes people's war, and how it should be waged. This helps to determine the rallying call of our war of liberation, and decides who should take part in leading the fighting alliance of the people.

We believe that those who lead the alliance should retain their political independence and military initiative to ensure that the revolution will not be disrupted or led astray by the probable vacillation or betrayal consequent upon political rivalry within the machinery of alliance.

We hold that all schools of thought which are neither willing to capitulate to nor compromise with imperialism in general, and white domination in the domestic scene, can be accommodated within the unified strategy of a People's War, and can share in the systematic building up of the democratic political power of the people, without which armed struggle is purposeless.

We seek neither to make sensational newspaper headlines, to win academic debating points, nor to rake up old political skeletons.

It is needless to state that our political tasks are arduous and urgent, and that the urgency of execution demands a unified liberatory movement