

# “The Year of the Youth”

## Statement by Comrade President O.R. Tambo on the 69th Anniversary of the ANC

Comrapatriots and comrades, fellow fighters for the liberation of the Motherland, once more a new year is upon us, and since today is January 8th, we mark also a new anniversary of the African National Congress, the 69th Anniversary. 1980, the initial year of our Decade of Liberation has passed, and with its passing has ushered us into a new time span which will this day next year culminate in the epoch-making 70th Anniversary of the African National Congress.

In our message of January 8 last year, we reviewed some of the challenges that the previous year had posed to us as a people and pointed out some of the main directions that we needed to take if we were to make progress towards our overdue emancipation. The time has come that we address ourselves to the experiences of the year that has just passed so that we are better able to determine what actions we should take to bring closer the realisation of our common aspiration - the restoration of power in the hands of the people and the destruction of the evil and degrading system of apartheid.

### HISTORIC VICTORY

This time last year, we said that victory was within the grasp of the heroic people of Zimbabwe. The historic fact that political power is today so firmly in the hands of the brother people of Zimbabwe, a victory which simultaneously meant the ignominious and well deserved route of the forces of reaction, is not only a tribute but also bears witness to the strength of the movement for national liberation, which is making its own contribution to the triumphant march of the peoples of the world towards a better and happier future. That same movement for national liberation is moving with the fighting people of Namibia to assured victory under the leadership of SWAPO. Once more we can say that the victory that is with-



in the grasp of the people of Namibia, is one which t h i s  
b r o t h e r people share with the progressive forces of the  
world. This victory will also constitute the concrete contri-  
bution of the people of Namibia to our collective advance, in  
one interdependent and world-wide battle fought on many fronts.

Only yesterday the United Nations Conference on Namibia  
opened in Geneva, bringing together for the first time on the  
one hand the authentic representatives of the people of Namibia,  
organised and united in SWAPO and the Pretoria colonial regime  
on the other. As the forces of tyranny had in the end had to  
recognise ZANU and ZAPU in the Patriotic Front as the only  
organisations with whom to negotiate the transition of Zimbabwe  
to independence, so also have these forces been compelled to  
recognise the fact that the same process with regards to Nami-  
bia must be negotiated with SWAPO.

At this critical stage in the struggle of the Namibian  
people, in the name of the African National Congress and the  
patriotic forces of our country, in their entirety, on your  
behalf compatriots, we send our greetings and our pledge of  
solidarity to SWAPO and the people of Namibia as a whole, con-  
vinced that the political and military victories that they  
have scored within Namibia will be duplicated and reinforced  
at the diplomatic table and fully conscious that their victory  
over the coloniser will drastically shorten the road we our-  
selves have to travel to reach the goal of liberation.

## ENEMY SCHEMES COLLAPSE

Despite its repeated and inevitable defeats at the hands  
of the national liberation movement throughout Southern Africa,  
the Pretoria regime continued during the passed year to enter-  
tain hopes of re-establishing its domination over the indepen-  
dent countries of the sub-continent. It has accordingly con-  
tinued to propagate the counter-revolutionary idea of a  
'Constellation of Southern African States', while persisting  
with its policy of aggression against these states.

The anti-colonial resolve of the peoples and governments  
of our region has ensured the defeats of these policies as well.  
Even for the blindly arrogant authors of the scheme of a  
constellation of puppet states it must by now have become abun-  
dantly clear that the constellation they visualised has been  
transformed by the concrete reality of the balance of forces in  
Southern Africa into an ephemeral mirage, a still-born illusion  
which no amount of propaganda will bring to life. In this con-  
nection we would like to take this opportunity to salute the



nine independent states of Southern Africa which have come together in a determined effort to co-ordinate their economic development and to find and implement ways reducing their dependence on apartheid South Africa. This initiative has finally buried the Pretoria regime's illusion that it could use the wealth we have created with our sweat and blood to enslave anew the African peoples beyond our borders.

Similarly the aggression carried out by the racist forces against independent Africa has not brought the apartheid regime the results it sought to achieve. The coup it tried to foment in Zambia was nibbed in the bud. The mercenaries it has deployed in Mozambique, have only served to strengthen the determination of the people of this sister country to defend their hard-won independence. The People's Republic of Angola remains as firm as a rock in its involvement in the battle for the total liberation of Africa and in the struggle for the consolidation of people's power. Despite its teething problems, the young Republic of Zimbabwe has bravely and unequivocally refused to bow down to the terrorist pressures emanating from Pretoria, which have included the training of yet more bandits for military incursions into Zimbabwe. Quiet clearly therefore in the field of foreign relations particularly in the crucial area of Southern Africa, the decade of the 80s has begun inauspiciously for the Botha-Malan regime.

## NEW ADVANCES

The current year will undoubtedly see new advances made in our region, especially with regards to the issue of Namibia. Indeed as a result of the genuine independence of Namibia, the racist South African soldiers will no longer lose their lives on the Namibian battlefield.

Botha and Malan can only draw cold comfort from such a development, because it will also mean that the Pretoria regime will then become the last and only relic of 500 years of the colonial occupation of the mother continent, a relic soon to be swept away by the people of Africa. If this was the position of the colonial apartheid regime and its external political positions during 1980, what of its positions inside South Africa? Without question, we witness the development which is of crucial importance to the future of our country.

During this past year, the Botha regime has through its own actions conceded the bankruptcy and futility of the brutal policy of apartheid. To put this in other words, the



Year of the Charter marked a collapse of the political strategy of the apartheid regime. You will remember the statement made by Botha that the independence of Zimbabwe under the leadership of our brother and comrade-in-arms, Robert Mugabe, has altered the strategic position of South Africa. As you recall, Botha called for a multiracial conference to discuss the future of South Africa, in the end no conference took place. Why? Because Botha, Malan, Koornhof and others in the general staff of the racist headquarters, soon enough realised that the genuine representatives of the patriotic forces of our country would not attend such an apartheid public relations exercise. This meant that such a conference far from reinforcing the positions of the apartheid regime would expose to the world the utter isolation and unacceptability of this regime. It was therefore decided to allow the idea of a conference to die, killed by the benign neglect of those who have floated the idea in the first instance.

## REVEALING WORDS

P.W. Botha had had to swallow his words and his pride, but in making the call when he did, Botha considered the point that the future of our country could no longer be decided exclusively by the ruling fascist and racist National Party nor indeed by the white minority population of South Africa. Botha let slip the same notion when he told his Party's Transvaal Congress that to pretend that there were no black people in South Africa might in his words, be "a lovely thought", but it was not true. These were revealing words, because they signify that the illusion cultivated by white supremacy for three centuries that the blacks in South Africa were either foreigners or non-persons, had become dangerous to white supremacy. Of course, none of the enemy statements and proposals represented a change of heart, what they signalled was that our strength as an oppressed and fighting people had reached dimensions which gave the enemy increasing cause for concern over his chances of survival.

## YEAR OF THE CHARTER

During the Year of the Charter, the apartheid regime was to witness fresh evidence of the rise of the oppressed millions and the succession of defeats for its apartheid strategy. As is well-known, the enemy set out to constitute what it calls a 'President's Council', in the hope that it would attract to



this advisory council popular leaders of the so-called Coloured and Indian people. In the event, not a single patriot agreed to serve on this party, even the so-called official opposition, the Progressive Federal Party, refused to be drawn into this meaningless venture. In the end what do we have? A council composed of white appointees of the fascist party and a coterie of black stooges. The overwhelming majority of whom are not even known to the communities whose aspirations they are supposed to represent. In brief, Botha's 'President's Council' was a stillborn as were his scheme to turn Zimbabwe into a client state and as moribund as his plan for a 'Constellation of Southern Africa'. What Botha has created is at best the President's circus.

Another of his schemes that suffered a similar fate was a proposed 'black council' which was meant to group together the so-called non-independent bantustans and representatives of the urban African communities. This attempt to resurrect the old toy telephone, the dead and unlamented native representative council, was abandoned by the regime as a doomed venture, having been dismissed out of hand in the open contempt by the entire black population. Botha, Malan and Koornhof had had to retreat to their lairs to lick their wounds and to cook up more hair-brained schemes which will similarly perish in the face of our determination to secure for ourselves genuine liberation.

## DUMMY INSTITUTIONS

The fate of the so-called Coloured Persons Representative Council', the CRC, is a matter of common knowledge in this country and abroad. This enemy-imposed institution was destroyed by the Labour Party, expressing the people's mass rejection of the institution and in the process winning a victory of strategic importance for our liberation struggle. In a bid to replace the CRC, the apartheid regime took measures to introduce what is called the Coloured Persons Council, a mass denunciation of this CPC by the people as being yet another dummy institution compelled Botha to abandon its establishment.

The Indian section of the Black population had been informed that during 1980, there will be elections to the enemy created institution, the South African Indian Council. Knowing that such an exercise would in fact result in the destruction of the South African Indian Council through its mass rejection by the people, the Botha regime decided not to have this elec-



tions after all. Any hope of ever being able to breath life into the inert carcass of the South African Indian Council vanished when the very stooges who had accepted to serve on it no longer able to withstand popular pressure themselves demanded the dissolution of the SAIC. The cumulative effect of this aggressive mass opposition to dummy councils was a collapse of a grandiose scheme the apartheid regime had thought up, namely the much trumpeted 'Three-tier Parliament'. The fate of this infamous plan is to take the subject of deathening silence on the part of the regime.

## CONSTITUTIONAL SCHEME

In July, the apartheid state President, Marais Viljoen, made bold to suggest that 1980 should be known as the year of the constitution. That rather incongruous proposal was met with stony silence by the rest of the racist ruling clique, who were by that time aware of the wholesale collapse of all constitutional schemes the regime had tried to formulate. In any case, 1980 was already known by the people of South Africa as the Year of the Charter. The Freedom Charter which defines the basis of a true constitution for South Africa. This clique also knew that the central purpose of this constitutional schemes had failed with the collapse of each one of the convoy of councils it had lined up. That central purpose had been the preparations of the elements of what in the politics of Southern Africa has come to be known as an internal settlement. As Z i m b a b w e and Namibia have demonstrated, this so-called internal settlement, is in fact no settlement at all. It is but an arrangement to consolidate the collusion between the colonial regime and its p u p p e t s for the perpetuation of white minority rule.

Marais Viljoen had expected that during 1980, the component parts of such an oppressive scheme would have been prepared and ready for presentation to us and to the people of the world as a settlement of the South African problem. What he and his fellow racists failed to understand was that the mass commitment to genuine liberation permits no settlement which falls short to the transfer of power to the people of South Africa.

## MILITARISTS

The failure of these apartheid schemes points to the people's refusal to be ruled. It reflects their determination to terminate their colonial status. It is a great step for-



ward to a new and democratic South Africa. Botha knows that there is nothing left in his bag of apartheid separate development tricks that can so much reduce the rejection of the regime by the majority or save it from ultimate destruction by the rising people.

In the result, having exhausted all these political options such as they are, Botha has had to fall back on the only option now left to him, which is direct and open military rule. Hence, 1980 saw the appointment of Magnus Malan into the apartheid cabinet as racist Defence Minister. And the deployment of military personnel into other leading state committees including the all important national Security Council. It is this development which we must serve notice that far from being a somewhat kind hearted reformer of apartheid, Botha for all his torrent of words remains a racist and fascist tyrant, for he is committed to the survival of the apartheid system, the permanance of white minority rule at all costs.

## FREEDOM CHARTER

It will be recalled that this day last year, we said that it was a task of all patriotic and democratic forces of our country to observe the 25th Anniversary of the great Freedom Charter in a fitting manner. Their militant resistance to the internal settlement scheme was an act in observance of this great anniversary. A reaffirmation of our pledge to fight together in unison and on all fronts for the realisation of a government of the people. We can all be justly proud of this spirit of dedication to our noble and invincible cause.

As at no time since the Treason Trial of the 50s, the Freedom Charter last year took the centre of the stage as a document of reference in the raging debate generated by our advancing liberation struggle over the crucial issue of a future South Africa and a viable alternative to the apartheid system. We would like to commend the patriots who made certain that during the Year of the Charter, the Freedom Charter was available in large numbers to the people. We salute all comrades and friends in the broad movement for national liberation who ensured that the Charter was once more discussed and its correctness reaffirmed by the masses of the people. In this connection the launching of the "Free Mandela Campaign" was enormously timely and appropriate.

The interests of our common future as the South African people, demand the immediate release from prison of the nation-



al leaders and political activists who are where they are because they loved their country and their people and willing to die for both. As the "Sunday Post" explained, the people demanded the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners because they wanted to place their country, South Africa, under the authority of a truly popular government without any accompanying bloodshed. In their support of this campaign, the people of South Africa spoke with a unity rallying note and strikingly non-racial. The international community is equally unanimous in making the same demand, but not uncharacteristically, the apartheid regime's response to this demand shows suicidal insensitivity. Nevertheless, the campaign must be continued.

## ENEMY CONTRADICTIONS

Last year on January the 8th, we said because of our victories during the decade of the 70s, the enemy was trying to regroup and strengthen his forces in preparation for an intensified counter-offensive. This as we have seen, he tried to do and he failed. That failure has deepened the political crisis which is greeping the apartheid regime. Intense conflicts are raging within the ruling Party, great doubts have infected the white population as a whole as to the ability of the ruling clique to guarantee the security of this population.

Malan and his fellow generals have had to quell localised mutinies that have broken out within their racist army. Young Afrikaners at the University of Stellenbosch, the training centre of many racist leaders, have directly confronted fascist Prime Minister, P.W. Botha, with the demand for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, and completely rejected his programme of reforms. This deepening crisis of the apartheid regime has reached levels that it has, not because P.W. Botha, Malan, Koornhof and others are less competent than their predecessors, but because our level of struggle has during the Year of the Charter attained new heights and greater effectiveness.

## MASS STRUGGLE

Dear compatriots, last year again on January 8th, we issued a call for mass struggles everywhere and around all issues that both agitate us and are reflected in the Freedom Charter. Your response was magnificent, you did indeed confront the enemy on all fronts. The enemy himself admits that during the Year of the Charter which SACTU has also proclaimed



the Year of the Worker, the strike movement among the black workers for higher pay and better working conditions, for recognition of our unions and the reinstatement of sacked workers drew in at least four times more workers than in the year 1979: Mighty struggles have raged around the issue of rent increases, highlighted by the militant and united rent strike at Zwile, in Port Elizabeth, and the anti-rent increase demonstrations and the stay-at-home in Soweto. Once more the youth abandoned their classrooms in continuation of the struggle for an equal, non-racial, free and compulsory system of education. The apartheid regime tried to defeat the schools boycott by resorting to its tried method of violent repression and the killing of our people in cold blood. When the campaign of terror failed to achieve its objective, the enemy decided to close down nearly one hundred schools.

The people in the countryside were not dormant either during the Year of the Charter. The Batlokwa in the north of the country continued with their heroic struggle against removals from their ancestral lands. In the south, the overwhelming majority of the residents of the Ciskei region told the Quail Commission fiercely and unequivocally that not only are they against the so-called independence of the Ciskei, but they are also in favour of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

After a lull of many years, the struggle resumed in the Orange Free State and continues. An important additional feature to all this campaigns was the growth of the level of unity in action amongst the fighting contingents. The necessity for all of us to build on this achievement cannot be over-emphasised. When striking workers, boycotting students, bus boycotters and others all come together to reinforce one another, when there is solidarity through action, then we can confidently say that we are using our united mass strength properly and effectively.

## **MK STRIKES**

In this connection the attack by a unit of Umkhonto we Sizwe on the enemy's railway communications which was timed to reinforce the Soweto campaign against rent increases was highly commendable. Even more so, were the heroic and daring armed operations carried by Umkhonto we Sizwe during the Year of the Charter and the Year of the Worker. Once more our combatants reaffirmed in action that they remain true to the tradition of combat established by our forefathers at Isandlwana and else-



where. Silverton, Booyens, SASOL and Chiawelo will go down in the history of our struggle as glorious forerunners of the people's war that has already started.

A vitally important feature of these actions is that they were an integral part of a militant country-wide struggle by the people fighting on all fronts. They had to raise the level of the overall struggle and heighten it. In addition against the background of industrial strikes, school boycotts, the arrest of church leaders and numerous forms of resistance against the notorious apartheid regime, the armed actions by Umkhonto we Sizwe gave a new dimension to the solidarity of the people of the world with the oppressed, the exploited, the democratic and fighting people of South Africa. We congratulate our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe. But, if in 1980 our struggle developed into a multi-pronged and effective onslaught upon the racist regime and its structures, we were far less successful, in fact we failed on what must be regarded as a major front, the bantustan front.

## SMASH ENEMY CREATIONS

In observing the 67th Anniversary of the ANC in 1979, the Year of the Spear, we called for a determined assault on the artificial political, economic and racist barriers which go under the term apartheid or separate development. We invited all true patriots to join in this effort. Last year, launching the Year of the Charter, we renewed our call to all opponents of racial arrogance, domination and white supremacy to unleash this determined mass assault. The reality we face however is that the so-called community councils continue to exist. Not a single of the bantustans has been destroyed as a result of mass pressure.

Indeed the arch collaborator, Sebe, is bent on pursuing his treachery by dragging the unwilling people of the Ciskei to bantustan 'independence', having worked with Pretoria's Minister of Information to stage-manage what purported to be a referendum. Within each one of these bantustans, and in all of them without exception the life of the people has worsened. The Matanzimas, the Sebes, Mphephus and others have continued to carry out instructions of their masters to police these vast deserted camps of corruption, unemployment, landlessness, hunger and starvation. We have failed, although we have it in our power to smash these institutions of oppression. But this situation cannot be allowed to continue. We therefore yet



again call for resolute action against the bantustan and bantu councils, whatever are their new names.

## PATRIOTIC PATH

Last year in our address to the nation, we sought to define a path of honour for those who, as we said, while working within a separate development institution, defend their role as being one of patriotic participation and not a betrayal calculated to condemn our people to permanent domination. We offered a path of honour to such among our people as claimed to be patriots working within the enemy institutions, with the sole object of destroying them or transforming them into instruments of struggle, weapons in the hands of the fighting masses. And yet what has happened? There is no evidence anywhere that any of these bantustans and councils have become or are becoming useless or dangerous to the enemy. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of those who have been very vocal in proclaiming their patriotism, it is a sharp rebuke genuine patriots serving within the separate development institutions that so many white South Africans are beginning to see it as their patriotic duty to abolish the Apartheid system and dismiss its perpetrators.

The one redeeming development in this situation of continuing fail has been the great victory won by our Coloured and Indian compatriots who have successfully attacked and destroyed the enemy's creations. Given that the vast majority of our people stand in deadly opposition to the separate development programme, especially responsibility falls on the masses of the African people - the worst victims of separate development, to play their historic role by being their own liberators.

The Bantustans and community councils stand between us and a government of the people. They must be attacked from within and from without.

## FASCIST REPUBLIC

On May 31st this year, the racist regime will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the fascist republic imposed on us in 1961, in the face of our determined opposition under the leadership of Comrade Nelson Mandela. Undoubtedly, the oppressor regime will try to embroil us in activities organised to mark this occasion. But racist republic day cannot by any stretch of imagination be a day for the oppressed, for the black people of South Africa or for any democrat. Like



the racist constitution of the Union of South Africa, the constitution which created the so-called republic was the exclusive work of whites only for whites only. We have our national days and our anniversaries; January 8, March 5, March 21, June 16, June 26, August 9, December 16. We can have nothing to do with May 31.

We refused to recognise the legitimacy of the apartheid republic in 1961. We have much less reason to recognise it today when the burning demand is for a people's government. Indeed to reinforce this demand we need to initiate a campaign against Republic Day. Over the years, many of our people, fellow fighters for the liberation of the Motherland have been demanding the calling of a national convention to draw up a democratic constitution for our country. As we all remember this call was first made by the All-in African Conference which met in Pietermaritzburg on the 25th and 26th of March, 1961, attended by 1,500 delegates from town and country representing 145 religious, social, cultural, sporting and political bodies, and called to discuss amongst other things the intended proclamation of the fascist republic in our country on May 31 that year, in circumstances which presumed our non-existence. The conference decided to demand a sovereign national convention representative of all South Africans to draw up a new non-racial and democratic constitution for our country. The racist regime ignored the demand. Consequently the people embarked on mass struggle commencing with the wide-spread national stay-at-home at the end of May through to the commencement of armed struggle for the seizure of power. It will be noted therefore that the call for the national convention was essentially a call to action.

Secondly, once the apartheid regime refused to summon the convention, then the demand for a national convention became inextricably bound up with the demand for the destruction of the regime itself. The national convention we are talking about therefore, is one which would be a democratic forum vested with sovereign powers. It would bring together the leaders and representatives of the people of South Africa and would produce a blue-print of the kind of South Africa that would meet the aspirations of the majority. Such a convention can only come about as a consequent and result of struggle, bitter struggle.

## UNITY

Our unity is and will always be one of the principal fountains of strength in our march to victory. The high level



of unity generated by the struggle waged last year itself became a mighty weapon in our hands. We need further to expand on this basis to ensure that we actually act together as one people with one destiny. For this reason the proliferation of centres in the democratic trade union movement should be a matter of serious concern to all of us. Equally worrying is the fact that we have waged the continuing struggle for a democratic system of education as different contingents, separated one from another for geographic or other reasons. In particular, we have not yet succeeded to bring together in common and simultaneous action all the black students, teachers and parents. By large we left the red meat workers to fight their battles alone when we did not respond sufficiently to their appeal for a nation-wide boycott of red meat, in solidarity with them. We have allowed the Ndebele people to fall victim to Mangope's machinations in the same way as we have not come to the aid of our brave Batlokwa people.

To remedy this national failure, we should adopt as our battle-cry, the motto of our Trade Union movement and of SACTU; "AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL".

The kind of unity we must seek therefore is unity in action, unity for common action against the common enemy, unity for victorious struggle. As we prepare for the observance of the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the ANC next year, a proud moment for the people of South Africa, we must give organisational priority to the issue of unity. The unity of the African people who constitute the principal motive force of our revolution must develop to firmly embrace all blacks and all democrats and aim to engage all the forces for democracy, freedom and anti-racism in the struggle against white minority colonial domination.

## **JOINT RESPONSIBILITY**

On the other hand, South Africa does belong to all who live in it, black and white. Today this country is an outcast amongst the nations. It is the scene of a heinous crime against humanity perpetrated by the racist regime in the name of the white South Africans. The number of people the regime sends to the gallows each year is higher than all the hangings in all the countries of the world put together. More than 700,000 blacks are arrested for petty offences each year - nearly 2,000 daily. Thousands are pushed through the law courts as political offenders, among them hundreds of black children. The regime is notorious throughout Southern Africa



# SA ATTACKS



Children slaughtered in South African attacks on Angola

for its massacres and other atrocities, bombings, subversion harassment and racial hatred. The important point we are emphasising is that the regime's authority for these crimes derives from the white section of the South African population. We, the daily victims of this crime, have dedicated ourselves to the task of turning South Africa into an African country amongst African countries, a nation amongst the world nations ruled by a government which derives its authority from the majority of its people and living in peace and harmony with its neighbours. Employing every conceivable means at our disposal, we shall achieve this goal. We shall surely bleed in the process, but we shall bleed together, black and white, oppressed and oppressor alike. Even at this late hour therefore, we say to the whites of our country that they have a joint responsibility with the rest of the population of South Africa to take our country out of the ruins of the colonial era and place it in the 1980s as an African country sharing the aspirations of the people of Southern Africa and not seek-



ing to thwart the realisation of those aspirations by terrorising the people of this region.

History is not waiting for the whites of South Africa to realise the folly of their ways and to turn away from the suicidal path on which they are set. South Africa will be liberated as Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe were, despite any fortresses the majority of white South Africa may conceivably but quite erroneously believe to be impregnable.

## ANNIVERSARIES

The year 1980 was a historic year, so is 1981. It is the year when we shall be observing very important days. First of these which falls on June 16, is the 5th Anniversary of the heroic Soweto Uprisings, the second which falls on December 16, is the 20th Anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe. What is common to these anniversaries is that they focus on the role of the youth of our country. In observance of these anniversaries we need to accomplish a number of tasks. We need to ensure that the millions of our youth inside the country, students, working youth, the youth in the rural areas, young women, young Christians, these millions must be mobilised into the appropriate organisational formations for the intensification of the mass struggle. The youth must be drawn in even greater numbers into the African National Congress and Umkhonto we Sizwe inside the country and outside the country, to become part of the disciplined vanguard forces of our revolution. Those young people, both black and white who have been and are being drawn into the enemy forces of repression, the army and police, must realise that to dedicate their young lives to a lost and hopeless cause is to refuse to contribute in bringing into being a country which they can truly call theirs, a country in which they can mature & pass away in peace and happiness. We call on these to guarantee their future by coming over to the side of freedom, equality and democracy.

## YOUTH

The youth already in the ranks of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe must use the occasion of these two anniversaries to improve their level of competence in all fields in which they are involved whether political, military, academic or adminstry. They must seek to raise their level of political understanding and their discipline to become better cadres for the victory of the people's cause. They must use their enormous talent and



creative intelligence to formulate and propose new initiatives for the advancement of the struggle, and actively participate in the solution of all problems facing the revolution. The youth at Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, which must develop into a prototype of the new school that we will construct in a liberated South Africa, must carry out their responsibilities in a manner befitting the pioneering role in which history has thrust them. The children at the Charlotte Maxeke creche, must be brought up to play their role as the new men and women that a free South Africa will need. It is our hope that the international democratic youth and student movement will also use the occasion of these anniversaries to strengthen links of comradeship and solidarity with the embattled youth and students of our country, and take new initiatives to intensify the campaign for the total isolation of the apartheid regime.

We are confident that our youth will accomplish the tasks we have assigned them. It has taken many generations of selfless struggle to reach a point where we can say victory is truly in sight as we do today. History has imposed an obligation on the youth of today to occupy the forward trenches in the final onslaught on the bastions of racism, apartheid and colonialism. As the late "Malome" Moses Kotane said in 1968 in a statement to the youth of South Africa and I quote him:

"At this hour of destiny, your country and your people need you. The future of South Africa is yours and it will be what you make of it".

That is what he said. On the other hand a people, a country, a movement that does not value its youth, does not deserve its future.

## EAR OF THE YOUTH

The youth of our country especially in recent times, have already won international recognition as dedicated and gallant fighters in the leading ranks of our revolutionary struggle. Their contribution is already manifest in the changed and changing fortunes of apartheid rule within South Africa. They are already playing their part in giving shape to the South Africa of the future. Already they have produced an impressive galaxy of young heroes such as Basil February, who fell valiantly in Zimbabwe in 1967 after killing 15 enemy soldiers; Hector Petersen, the first martyr of the Soweto Uprisings; Solomon Mahlangu, whose name still strikes fear in the hearts of our enemies; the "Silverton Three", Thami Makhubo, Samele Madela



and Fanie Mafoko. There are hundreds of other young martyrs. There are the thousands, among them many whites who have confronted and continue to confront the enemy on a wide range of many fronts. Hundreds have been tortured, tried in the racist courts and imprisoned but they persist in the struggle. To honour our youth, to salute their heroism and their dedication to the revolution, to provide them with better possibilities to accomplish their tasks for the year, the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress has decided to dedicate this year to our youth. I therefore declare 1981 **THE YEAR OF THE YOUTH**. Let us all join together to achieve its objectives. We further charge the African National Congress, Umkhonto we Sizwe and all other patriotic and democratic formations of our country with the task of doing their best to assist in the accomplishment of these missions.

## **TASKS AND SALUTATIONS**

As we begin a new year on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of the African National Congress, we charge the youth with the work of carrying out the tasks we have already mentioned. We urge the workers to reach out to organise the unorganised, to bring about the unity of the democratic trade union movement and to intensify the struggle for a just wage and for freedom. We urge all the black people to smash the institutions of separate development including the community councils and the local management committees, and to thwart the attempts to revive the South African Indian Council. We call on all the women to build on the advances they have made during the Year of the Charter, to strengthen their organisation, to draw the millions of our women folk into the struggle and in the year of the 25th Anniversary of the famous Women's March on Pretoria, steadfastly to follow the example set by the leader and heroine, Lilian Ngoyi. We call on all black professionals; teachers and lecturers, journalists, medical practitioners and nurses, lawyers, social workers, office workers and others, to resist and thwart the attempts of the enemy to turn them into a collaborationist middle class and to stand firmly with the majority of the people for liberation. We call on our people in the countryside to unite themselves into popular organisations and join in the fight against the balkanisation and fragmentation of our country and people. The churches, mosques, religious organisations and Christians and Moslems at large should further enhance the dynamic role they have begun to play in moving the Christian and Moslem masses of our coun-



try into the forefront of the battle for a free and humane society. Workers in the field of culture and sport are urged to make greater use of their skill and talent to promote the people's cause. To honour our heroes and heroines, to inspire all of us into great feats of revolutionary daring and sacrifice, the black business community has a duty among other things to help by providing financial and material means, without which no struggle can be conducted.

Our special salutations this Year of the Youth must go specially to the combatants who laid down their lives heroically at Silverton and Chiawelo and to the three Comrades, Ncimbithi Lubisi, Tshepo Mashigo and Naphtalie Manana, over whose heads dangles the hangman's noose. We pledge to stand by these combatants at all times. Special salutations must also go to all the comrades who are in prison. Thanks are due to them, for the stirring message of struggle they have sent out in the name of Comrade Nelson Mandela which was able to reach all of us during the Year of the Charter. We greet also those who are detained, banned and banished, including the most recent victims of fascist tyranny, the leaders of Media Workers' Association of South Africa (MWASA). We pay homage to the families which have lost their loved ones during the cause of the struggle this past year. We salute the new Isithwalandwe-Seapara-nkwe, Govan Mbeki, who was elevated to this rank on June 26 in the Year of the Charter. We also take this opportunity to bow our heads in respectful memory of the late Bishop Reeves, who was also elevated to the rank of Isithwalandwe-Seapara-nkwe, on June 26 in the Year of the Charter.

## FRATERNAL ALLIES AND FRIENDS

We sent special greetings to the heroic people of Zimbabwe whose victory during the Year of the Charter, brought our own liberation that much near. Similarly we reiterate our pledge of solidarity and comradeship to the people of Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO. Their victory is certain. We greet all the friends and supporters of our struggle throughout the world; PLO, POLISARIO, FRETELIN and other liberation movements, the peoples of Africa, the socialist countries, the Asian and Latin American countries, the Scandinavian peoples and governments who share with us the common burden of struggle for liberty and the progressive peoples and governments of the West, with whom during this past year the bonds of cooperation amongst ourselves grew stronger. It is our wish that in



the new year we should further advance our level of cooperation.

As we prepare to observe the 5th Anniversary of the Soweto Uprisings, the 20th Anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe and our Year of the Youth, we turn our minds on the countries and brother peoples of Southern Africa, who have kept their borders, their houses and lands as well as their hearts open to our youth during these past twenty years. We salute them with abounding warmth today specially recalling what they have suffered and knowing what they have yet to suffer before the complete collapse of the apartheid system in South Africa. We greet all our people at home and abroad, we salute the militants of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe and as we said last year all the other fighting patriotic forces of our country on whom the burden rests to organise and lead our people in the intense battles that lie ahead. We wish you all and all our friends and fellow combatants in Southern Africa and throughout the world a great year and continued forward march to liberation.

## COUNT-DOWN

Finally today we begin the count-down through 52 weeks to January 8th, 1982, the 70th Anniversary of the ANC. As we observe that national and international occasion next year, what progress shall we have made in uniting the majority of the people and the liberation forces against the apartheid colonial regime? What mighty blows will Umkhonto we Sizwe have delivered against the enemy? How far shall our struggle have advanced towards the goal of liberation? How far shall we by our own struggle have advanced the progress of peoples fighting against fascism, racism, colonialism and imperialism in other parts of the world? What concrete support shall we have given to SWAPO and the Namibian people? What shall we have done about the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners? In particular, what shall the ANC show for its 70 years of continued struggle for unity and liberation?

The answers to all these questions and more lie in the battlefield immediately ahead of us. Let us go forth and find them. But we must be under no illusions, the forces of international reaction have been regrouping determined to retrieve some of their losses. We face a very hard year of struggle. We shall need one another and all our allies and friends the world over. We shall need to fight for unity and



**fight in unity for victory. The struggle must continue at all costs! Victory is inevitable!**

**FORWARD TO A PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT!**

**LONG LIVE THE YEAR OF THE YOUTH!**

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# **HEROES OF OUR REVOLUTION**

**- TNT Explosion**

It was on January 25, a year ago, when three of our patriots Wilfred Madela, Fanie Mafoko and Humphrey Makhubu took an eleventh hour decision of sieging a bank and demanded the release of Comrade Nelson Mandela, our leaders and other political prisoners and thus sparked off the present "Release Mandela Campaign" launched by "Post" during the beginning of February 1980. This month, in this **Year of the Youth**, in this Decade of Liberation, our oppressed and exploited people are marking the first anniversary of the heroic deeds performed by the Silverton Trio.

The three youths of Isandlwana were forced by the prevailing conditions of an encirclement by the enemy and rather than surrender to the already sinking boat of apartheid, they decided to hold hostages and politicise their captives and tell them about what the African National Congress is fighting for. Besides demanding the release of Comrade Mandela, the three patriots made other political demands which the Pretoria boers tried to suppress at all costs. Even the racist Commissioner of Police, General Mike Geldenhuys, was forced to admit that: "They are the South Africans who left the country in the vicinity of 1977... in any case, I don't want to say anything that will advertise the cause of the ANC", (Rand Daily Mail 28/1/80).