

# I SPEAK MY MIND

## On the Year of the Youth

BARNEY MOTLAPA

It is an undeniable fact that the youth have an important role to play in the overall struggle against Apartheid, Racism and Imperialism. But it is very important to understand and accept that the leading force of our revolution is the working-class. Let us not confuse the importance of our role with the leading force in this struggle because a failure to understand and accept this will lead us to wrong and dangerous conclusions whereby we may find ourselves fighting side by side with the reactionary circles and not fighting against imperialism and reaction.

The African National Congress has declared 1981 the Year of the Youth after a thorough analysis of the tasks that lie ahead in this year and of course having greater expectations and hopes from us that we will fulfil whatever task in whatever field, promptly and excellently.

What then are our tasks and responsibilities? Our struggle is waged on many fronts, using both our pens and guns. One of these battlefronts is the struggle to win the minds and hearts of our people, to inspire them with our revolutionary ideas which become a "magnetic force when they capture the masses." We need to improve our structures and perfect them, to create new ones where none exist. This is possible if we all contribute to this - contribute by subordinating our personal interests to the interests of the revolution. Contribute by listening to those that have been tried and tested during the course of time, contribute by listening to our leaders so that the ANC remains a vanguard which subordinates the interests of its members to the common cause - a revolutionary vanguard which fights against any form of factionalism and creation of cliques & groupings; a vanguard which completely eradicates laziness, irresponsibility and misbehaviour - in short a people's movement.

The success of this year, 1981 depends on us. So let us pledge ourselves in this Year of the Youth to rededicate ourselves to the cause, to redouble our efforts and make this year a success. Let us pledge to avenge those that fell in the battlefield and fight for the release of Comrade Nelson

Mandela, our leaders and other political prisoners languishing in the fascist dungeons.

## **NOSIZWE GWAQAZA**

When the National Executive Committee of our people's organisation, the African National Congress declared 1981 the Year of the Youth, we the fighting youth of South Africa in Umkhonto we Sizwe, beamed with joy. Not only is this year dedicated to the youth of our country who are in exile (both students and soldiers) but also to all our militant youth who are inside the country, black and white (democrats).

Therefore, since 1981 is also the 5th Anniversary of the June 16 Uprisings and the 20th Anniversary of the formation of our People's Army, it goes without saying that it is also the year in which we are to intensify the armed struggle.

Our working youth should use their lethal punch (labour power) against the exploiting class. They should strike for better working conditions, demand equal pay for equal work and also demand the right to form their own trade unions. It is the task of the youth to demonstrate that they (working youth) together with our toiling parents are the decisive class that is going to crush exploitation in our country and implement the people's beloved and delicious honey, the Freedom Charter.

The schooling youth of our country should demonstrate and show Botha and his henchmen that they want a universal and equal education system for all. The purpose of education should not be to enslave them and make them feel inferior to their white counter-parts, as is the case with Bantu Education.

We of the ANC and its allies should arm our youth inside the country with politics and military weapons for the overthrow of the Pretoria fascist Nationalists. We should explain the eighth clause of the Freedom Charter to them - that by opening the doors of learning and of culture, the African National Congress shall strive to:

"... discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life ... Education shall be free, compulsory and equal for all children... The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished."

Finally, our youth in the so-called independent homelands should reject and defy all apartheid laws imposed upon

them by the Union Buildings' murderers. They should give no recognition to the pseudo-independence of Transkei, Vendaland, Bophuthatswana and the forth-coming Ciskei 'independence'. They must fight the fraudulent independence by refusing to collaborate and by popularising our popular demands as enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

## **JAMES MAKHULU**

Since the heroic nation-wide upsurges of 1976, our youth have openly said: "NO!" to the oppressor. I will never forget their stirring song "We will never be killed by boers, we are still young" which inspired thousands in their courageous marches during the June 16 Uprisings. The seething spirit of our young people has never been daunted ever since.

The achieved unity between the youth of our country both inside and outside can be ascribed to the African National Congress' revolutionary line, our people's fervent patriotism and their determination to fight and establish a free and democratic South Africa based upon the Freedom Charter. It is precisely for this reason that the leadership in the National Executive Committee decided to declare 1981 as the Year of the Youth. Personally I realise that never before has the youth of our country been called to the fore-front of our revolutionary armed struggle to avail themselves as now.

The youth this year is faced with difficult tasks and decisions. It needs to revive the June 16 spirit which eliminated fear. Already we have examples which serve as a source of inspiration to us as we continue with the cause for which so many people have been murdered. Solomon Mahlangu, from our midst, who kept his morale and convictions intact till he was murdered and James Mange, who did the same till he was saved from the hangman's noose by the pressure which our people and the international community exerted by demanding his unconditional release. Today three militants of Umkhonto we Sizwe are condemned to death by the racist court of Pretoria. We must fight for the release of Comrades Johnson Lubisi, Naphtalie Manana and Petrus Mashigo - who have been sentenced to death for opposing Apartheid.

The call to our youth this year is that they should mobilise all their strength and energies. We should make our enemy bleed. The youth should teach the racists to recognise a black man as a human being. History calls upon our youth to commemorate in the most fitting way the 20th Anniversary of our People's Army and the 5th Anniversary of the June 16 Upheavals.