

Combination of Forms of Struggle

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(A DISCUSSION OF THE RELATION BETWEEN VIOLENT AND NON-VIOLENT TACTICS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN STRUGGLE).

For centuries our people have laboured at the receiving end of the whiplash of white minority rule. Reacting to this brutal system they have employed varying means of struggle including armed ones (the wars of resistance raged on for more than 250 years). When the African National Congress was launched in 1912 it was resolved to employ only peaceable and non-violent means for the attainment of its popular objectives. Such an approach was dictated by the objective demands of the times - in particular, the belief in the possibility of white opinion bending in favour of non-racialism as a result of political and moral pressure emanating from African organisation, had a decisive influence on the choice of methods of struggle.

For almost half a century, the ANC pursued this non-violent policy despite mounting repression and naked terror unleashed by successive governments of the Union. The banning of the ANC in 1960, against the backdrop of the 'Treason Trial' and the Sharpeville Massacres, marked the closing of a chapter. The government was closing all avenues of peaceful struggle. By word and deed it was resolutely pushing the reluctant masses to the only alternative left; Armed struggle. This unavoidable outcome was forced by the enemy himself. Thus the time had come, as in the words of the 'MK Manifesto', "... when there remain(ed) two choices: Submit or fight". The people chose to fight because the alternative designed to denigrate, humiliate and strangle us.

THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENT STRUGGLE

The political struggle is the main and basic form since it evolves out of the pursuit of settlement of political contradictions. In this context war becomes a concentrated political struggle by other means including violence. "War is a

continuation of politics by other means", Lenin stated. Violence is therefore not a new nor independent method of struggle but is supplementary to and in fact part of the political struggle. "When we talk of revolutionary armed struggle we are talking of political struggle by means which include the use of military force" states the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC. This explains the need for the total subordination of the military struggle to the political struggle. Furthermore, not all political actions are armed actions. In our conditions the armed struggle and the political struggle are basically one and complement one another. This means that the adoption of armed struggle does not mean the rejection of other political methods of struggle, that is strikes, boycotts, protests, etc.

The enemy has to be dispersed and engaged on all fronts; in the battlefields, factories, mines, farms, schools, churches, etc. A fighter against apartheid is not only that one who carries a gun. We do not share the belief that a few brave and death-defying individuals can lead a revolution to victory. Armed actions cannot be victorious without popular mass backing. Insurrectionary conditions will only arise with the intensification of the mass struggle and when the overwhelming majority of the people are committed to armed struggle as the only way to overthrow the apartheid regime.

THE ENTIRE PEOPLE ARE FIGHTERS

The workers, the vanguard force in the national liberation struggle, must intensify their fight against government controlled trade unions, for the establishment of progressive and genuinely working class trade union organisations. They must make effective use of the strike weapon in demanding higher wages, a shorter working day and better working conditions. Strikes will sabotage the production of war material and supplies and cripple the maintenance of the enemy's military forces, render them even more weaker in the face of our armed forces. For co-ordination and growth of the workers' actions from factory and single working place to industrial and national level, the vanguard role of the experienced and time-tested SACTU is vital. On the white farms too, farm labourers must form unions and fight to destroy the inhuman conditions in the white farms. Civic political organisations like the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO) have to be set up in all corners of our country and challenge all moves by the enemy on issues of local and immediate interest like rent increases, mass removals, etc. Student bodies must

continue their boycotts, protests and demonstrations against the apartheid educational system. In the reserves the land-starved peasants must form their own organisations and fight for land. The demand for land must be accompanied by acts of occupation when appropriate. The black middle strata, individually and through their associations, have a vital role to play. They have little prospects of growth under apartheid rule and therefore their future is inseparably linked with that of the people as a whole.

All these are tributaries of the revolutionary mainstream. This makes mass mobilisation not only a matter of tactic but the very cornerstone of our revolution. Our movement must always strive to raise the masses to higher and higher revolutionary involvement by, among other means, giving direction to the existing legal and semi-legal organisations. All chances for legal and semi-legal struggle have to be utilised to the full to heighten the consciousness of the people and raise their will to resist. The role of these organisations is convincingly exposed by the rising militancy of the student movement. But the struggle by all these forces should ultimately cross the boundaries of local and immediate interests and grow into the demand for the transfer of power to the oppressed majority.

It is with this understanding that our liberation alliance headed by the ANC has always called on our people to form mass organisations. Our movement has always called on our people to build and support their illegal organisations, the ANC, SACTU and the SACP. These calls were not just empty calls but were and are still coupled with action despite the risks and dangers our underground workers have to face. Our underground machinery gave assistance, direct and indirect to the best of its capacity to the 1973 strike movement. It was no accident that the ANC slogan "AMANDLA" was a password to differentiate friend from foe during the 1976 student revolt. There's indisputable evidence illustrating that the leaders of the Uprisings always turned to activists of the ANC for advice and leadership. We have and still continue to assist, advise and seek unity of action even with organisations which do not fully agree with our strategy. We congratulate and support them in all their actions directed against the system for we understand all battles against apartheid to be part of the overall war against racist tyranny. These organisations can play a crucial role in the struggle, providing the revolution with yet another important foundation for future battles. The sacrifices made by our movement in the

face of numerous risks and difficulties are yielding positive results. The leading role of the liberation alliance headed by the African National Congress is getting to be recognised and accepted by all forces inside our country.

ARMED & UNARMED MEANS

Military operations of any scale are conceivable only in a politically favourable atmosphere provided by mass popular struggles. By mass popular struggle we do not mean that the masses are onlookers struggling peacefully whilst a group of professional armed men are engaged in a war. A people's war means that the masses are brought to the understanding that they are Umkhonto we Sizwe and vice-versa. The masses engage the enemy with all means at their disposal. Comrade Thabo Mbeki, a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC pointed out: "It is a struggle of the masses of the people and the masses of the people today can only engage with the only thing they've got in their hands, the strike weapon... Tomorrow those masses of the people will have guns in their hands and they will use both guns and the strike until that fascist regime is destroyed." This means that under the guidance and leadership of the ANC and our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, we must do more than demand, we must apply revolutionary violence in the noble cause to uproot white minority rule.

To bring this about it is necessary to complement our people's mass struggle with organised attacks of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Such attacks inject confidence in the masses by demonstrating the capability of the revolutionary forces to successfully engage the enemy on his own ground. Furthermore they inject a feeling of security in the masses. The masses of our people get to realise that Umkhonto we Sizwe is there to defend them against all repression, be it police, army, administration offices or employers.

The explosions which rocked two motor car plants in Durban, Parcs for Peugeot and McCarthy Leyland, are, in the words of Comrade President O.R. Tambo: "... going to teach the employers that it is impolite to sack workers who go on strike." The relation of our attacks to issues most affecting the people will show the people the relation between their everyday mass struggle and armed struggle and how the former can grow into a nation-wide armed struggle.

The Anti-Republic Day campaign, the most organised and national campaign in the past two decades, was accompanied by a series of attacks on government installations like the Durban south power sub-station, the rail link near Cettendale in the

north-eastern Transvaal and many more. Commenting on the role of these actions by our armed units Comrade President O.R. Tambo said:

"The armed units of the ANC, members of Umkhonto we Sizwe - the Spear of the Nation - sharpened and gave a cutting edge to the people's protests at the celebrations. Umkhonto added a qualitative element to the massive dimensions of the boycott. The Spear of the Nation is the Spear of the People, it is as strong as the people and it will relentlessly pursue the goal of liberation through the people and as an integral part of the people."

But the complementary role is not one-sided. Mass action must also complement the actions of our People's Army. The violent clashes between the workers at SASOL 2 and 3 and police, two weeks after the heroic attack on the plants by the combatants of our People's Army, is an example to be followed by all our people.

Let us also point out that the combination of the two methods does not mean a mechanical combination on a 50:50 ratio. We have seen victorious armed struggles without intensive military battles in the past. The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia is one. This means that the revolutionary forces, in combining the two methods of struggle always seek ways that serve the demands of the situation best. (N.B. Emphasis is yet on a powerful, if not superior people's army, for in the final analysis "no revolution is worth anything if it cannot defend itself.") There's also a need to constantly guard against over-emphasis of either of the two methods of struggle at the expense of the other. If emphasis is on legal unarmed actions, the masses, unable to defend themselves when the enemy unleashes his terror, will inevitably be gripped by fear and once again a 'lull' will be the result. Emphasis on armed struggle smacks of militarism and may lead to the separation of armed people's struggle from its political context.

THE WAY FORWARD

Our movement, the ANC, has shown its capability to lead the South African revolution to its victorious end. Skilful combination of armed and unarmed struggle, a line pursued by our movement with so much adherence, has yielded positive and inspiring results. The popularity of our movement inside the

country is growing daily. Even some circles in the enemy ranks are stating openly that there can be no solution to the South African problem without the ANC.

The prospects of a new South Africa are brighter than never before. We have the basis for elevating the revolutionary struggle higher and higher. Our task is to make these positive developments irreversible, even with our blood if needs be. Heightened mass actions coupled up with intensive military operations will lead to mature insurrectionary conditions, a prelude to a victorious revolution.

THE RACISTS WILL FAIL!

- MBEKO STOPFILE

The liberation process in Angola was followed by the South African beer-fascists with utter bitterness and distaste. Consequently the attainment of independence by this heroic country in 1975, after many hazardous and bitter years of bloodshed of an anti-colonial war, was received with great anger by the apartheid rulers. Allied to this was a satanic resolve to actively engage in a campaign to upset the revolutionary transformation of the country. Even before the proclamation of independence on the 11th November of 1975, racist South Africa aided by thousands of mercenaries invaded Angola on the side of Angolan separatist bandit groupings - UNITA and FNLA. The consequent course of events, characterised as they were by much bloodletting and carnage has been much publicised. It was during this period of a serious threat against the independence of the Angolan masses, a period of intense crisis and war, that the real allies of the oppressed peoples assisted the heroic Angolan people to thwart the reactionary designs of imperialism by repelling the invaders with heavy losses.

Since this time the racists, have employed all sorts of ruses, pretexts and slander, seeking to justify their unprovoked and dastardly raids into the southern regions of the People's Republic of Angola. This most bellicose campaign against the peace, independence and integrity of the young republic has since been pursued with unbridled persistence.