

# POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL TASKS

-Lerato Morena

For revolution to triumph it is not sufficient to have in existence a core of professional fighters for freedom, organised in a vanguard political union. This fundamental truth of revolution ever hovers above our heads warning us of possible pitfalls in case we tend to overlook revolutionary procedure.

Finding ourselves at the hub of epoch-making events, we young South African revolutionaries have no choice but to get down to serious study of revolutionary perspectives with the view of smooth implementation if we are to elevate our national fight to majestic heights. We are thus confronted with immense yet lofty political and organisational tasks, the importance of coping with which becomes a mirror of unwavering determination. Our premise in the pursuit of coping up with the tasks must therefore be political clarity, militant organisation and unfailing vigilance.

The Year of Unity in action falls upon us when our agenda for revolution more than ever calls for more than mere rhetoric or a display of great propagandistic fervour. It finds us at a time when the immediate political demands of our revolution stand challengingly like a tilled field ready to be sown! We are therefore to hasten with our seedbag, with the speed and skill of seasoned sowers.

## IMMEDIATE TASK

The fact of our immediate tactical goal of UNITED ACTION is beyond question. But we need to proceed on a carefully plotted path in order not to lose sight of the central object of this year's campaign.

Our major immediate task is organisation - the organisation of a militant mass base with emphasis on active unity, readiness to sacrifice and the need to shoulder responsibility. This should indeed be our main area of emphasis if we are to succeed.

The dynamics of this indispensable process already have a firm political basis in the Freedom Charter - "the basic political statement to which all genuine patriots adhere! With such a basis our task is greatly facilitated - in fact the unity of the immense majority on the imperative of struggle

against apartheid reaction is in this way manifest. What remains therefore is the need to actively strive for militant and positive action.

Our appropriate slogan should therefore be to fight for the immediate political and economic demands of the people.

## THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

Let us build a powerful Trade Union Movement! This should be our battle-cry beckoning the millions of our workers to the battlelines. The workers' daily fight for bread must practically be elevated to the level of key issue of the people's daily battles since it is the fight for bread that runs central to the objectives of our revolutionary programme. "Forward to Freedom! - the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC" stresses this most amply; "Our drive towards national liberation is therefore in a very real way bound up with economic emancipation. We have suffered more than just national humiliation. Our people are deprived of their due in the country's wealth; their skills have been suppressed and poverty and starvation has been their life experience. The correction of these centuries-old economic injustices lies at the very core of our national aspirations."

What we need therefore is adequate revolutionary organisation of the trade union movement of our country, headed by the ever resilient SACTU. Hence the imperative of strengthening SACTU. It therefore becomes the duty of the entire patriotic forces of our country; of the ANC and MK, of the SACP, of our progressive intelligentsia and our youth and students, to do all within our abilities to strengthen SACTU - the indispensable weapon in the economic struggle of our exploited working class - and see to its firm establishment as the co-ordinating centre of union organisation and industrial battles throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. More than ever before the demand for building upon SACTU's victorious half-a-century history is reverberating.

SACTU has done much to arouse the workers and to educate them to their role - to lead them to an understanding that the future lies in their hands. To all who possess common sense, and particularly in this great Year of Unity in Action, the task of building effective workers' unions sticks out as a collective responsibility of our liberatory forces. We are therefore called upon to take up the instructive message of the great leader of the international working class and the Great October Socialist Revolution, V.I. Lenin:

"Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the Trade Unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be impossible of achievement, if they did not unite all who have attained at least this elementary degree of understanding, if they were not very broad organisations."

## MASS ACTION AND REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

"The masses of the peasants, workers and youth, beleaguered for a long time by the enemy's military occupation, have to be activated in a multitude of ways not only to ensure a growing stream of recruits for the fighting units but to harass the enemy politically so that his forces are dispersed and therefore weakened. This calls for the exercise of all-round political leadership". (Forward to Freedom - Strategy and Tactics of the ANC).

In this Year of Unity in Action when we aim to build a powerful popular offensive we need to properly prepare our combat formations - both in the political and military sense - in a revolutionary way. We are not in anyway suggesting that the approach of our liberation movement has not been revolutionary, on the contrary, the movement has been at pains to stress that revolutionary organisation is a matter of acute importance. The very history of our fight provides ample evidence of such an approach: The ANC from its inception has always understood and revered the masses of the oppressed as the mainstay of our fighting energy and no political, tactical or strategic decision has ever been taken by the organisation without an appreciation of the feeling and attitudes of the people. From the opposition to the Draft S.A. Act, the deputations and petitions during Congress' formative years, through the surging militancy of the 30's, the Programme of Action, the 'roaring fifties' and the adoption of the Freedom Charter, the masses have always been the barometer.

Today, when we are poised to strike the final highroad to victory we have to perfect our organisation of the people and revolutionary leadership. Our history proves beyond any shadow of doubt that our people are capable of displaying enormous fighting vigour and self-sacrifice in manifestations and in confrontations with the fascist police and army, are capable - are in fact - the determinant of the manner and rate of the unfolding of our war.

But to lead the masses in active struggle requires certain

qualities and important considerations. Primarily, the ability to consistently pursue the concrete demands being advanced by the masses, and with your tactics be seen to have prospects of success. In other words, the ability to appeal to the hearts and minds of the people is of great import. Once this has been achieved, then we shall continuously see what seems to some to be a characteristically spontaneous movement of the masses begin to produce a growing body of militant patriots and unflinching revolutionaries.

In our case the post-Soweto - June 16 developments greatly substantiate the point we are making. Replying to racist propaganda and distortions as to the role of the ANC during the risings - that the "ANC agitators took the schoolchildren out into the streets" and "played upon the spontaneous element in the events" - the ANC pointed out that the Congress "...will always be with the people as their reliable vanguard..." Since then the ANC's presence inside the country has grown from strength to strength and with it the growing popularity of its policies programme and tactics. The armed actions of our MK "giving a cutting edge" to the rising political ferment brought about by the vital link provided by our ANC, have magnified in scope and sophistication. These are the heights we have conquered this far. We are now to build upon these successes.

## ORGANISATION OF THE RURAL MASSES

"In South Africa the day-to-day struggle of the black peasants and aspirant peasants is inseparable from their struggle as a subject people. Even localised struggles invariably assume a political form connected with their status as members of a subject group" (Slovo, S.A. - No Middle Road)

In the spirit of the year's campaign special attention needs to be given to the organisation of our rural masses. Recent developments inside South Africa point to the emphasis the boer-fascists place on the further bamboozling of our rural poor by such abominable schemes as 'Homeland Independence'. Throughout the history of our struggle the rural people have demonstrated their revolutionary potential through firm and active opposition to the Bantustanisation process. But the fact remains that they have been forcibly dragged into these pig-sty reserves.

Our rural poor, condemned by the oppressor to live in the most arid corners of South Africa under the most horrid and unbearable conditions, are a restive lot. Agitation is high, they see their stakes in a united and independent South Africa

and not in pseudo-states under Pretoria's vassals. By all means they seem quite ripe for revolutionary activation since anger against oppressive rule alone can never be a criterion for advance. What we need therefore is the harnessing of this anger into fighting energy.

The almost complete boycott of the Ciskei 'independence' celebrations is a pointer to the lengths to which our rural population can go in pursuit of their aspiration to conquer a future of hope. It seems like the spectre of the 'Peasant Revolts' of the late fifties is once again haunting the racists. And we cannot afford to miss the opportunity of fanning up the apparent turmoil into a revolutionary storm.

The rural situation calls for our speedy injection of the revolutionary factor using as our springboard "...the basic provisions of our programme - the Freedom Charter. This, together with our general understanding of our revolutionary theory, provides us with the strategic framework for the concrete elaboration and implementation of policy in a continuously changing situation. It must be combined with a more intense programme of research, examination and analysis of the conditions of the different strata of our people (in particular those on the land), their local grievances, hopes and aspirations, so that the flow from theory to application - when the situation makes application possible will be unhampered." (Forward to Freedom - Strategy and Tactics of the ANC)

The successes of the Year of the Youth have elevated our struggle to a high summit from where our glittering prize in the not-so-distant horizon is easily discernible. We are to reach out and claim it, yet the ascend is still precarious and it calls for a skilful exercise of tactics.

It has been the commitment of this article - directed particularly to our youth - to make an effort at provoking discussion of the issues raised herein, for the edification of all of us. The article shall have achieved its object if its counsel be received with positive criticism since it lays no claim to faultless theoretical profundity on revolutionary perspectives. But it is hoped that it will serve as a guide to properly directed propagandistic, agitational and revolutionary work in this, the Year of Unity in Action. As in the words of L.I. Brezhnev, we the revolutionary youth in the ranks of the ANC and the MK remain firm in the belief that, "There is nothing more futile than propaganda that has no target, that is divorced from the interests of the audience, from the needs of this day."