

OBITUARY

Dr. Thamsanqa Blessing Fihlela (alias Hugo Nkabinde) lost his life in an accident in Angola, a few days after his 30th birthday. He died on duty, selflessly serving our heroic people's army Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Thamsanqa was born in Durban. Comrades recall that he became politically aware at a relatively early age, and was involved in many of the student struggles of the time, which culminated in the



1976 student uprisings. He schooled at KwaDlangezwa High School.

Overcoming all obstacles created by the apartheid system and its deplorable Bantu Education, he completed his matric and enrolled at Wentworth Medical School. During his second year he was detained for seven months, spending most of it in solitary confinement. After his release he left the country,

joined the ANC and was sent to the Soviet Union to further his studies.

Upon qualifying as a doctor he returned to Africa and did his year's internship in Tanzania, where he made many friends. He then volunteered to join and serve in our army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, rejecting all the comforts of practicing elsewhere. One thing which was very clear to him is that there is an important task to be undertaken by our doctors in the army - that of ensuring that the army is as healthy as possible so as to fight better the war of liberation.

Because of his cheerful character and the sympathy and care he displayed to all in his hands, Dr Hugo became very popular with the comrades. He used to exercise patience with the injured and sick comrades, offering them the best of his skills. A doctor of outstanding ability, he demanded high standards of himself and others he worked with.

He missed no opportunity to pass his skills on and develop other comrades in the Health Department. He used to motivate all around him, urging comrades to accomplish tasks today rather than tomorrow. "Let's push on the struggle by a few more metres, comrades", he would say when carrying out an assignment. He was also impatient with outmoded and conservative ideas, and reluctance to change.

The struggle has been deprived of an outstanding son of our people. We have lost a dear comrade and friend.

Hamba kahle comrade Doc. Rest assured we will pick up your fallen spear and continue the struggle until final victory.