

## DAY OF THE HEROIC GUERRILLA

- Conny Dlingea

When the killer forces of the military dictator Barrientos of Bolivia, murdered Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, over ten years ago, they thought they were annihilating this stalwart revolutionary from the surface of the earth. They thought they were killing not only Che, but the noble ideals of freedom which inspired him to devote his whole life and energy to fighting the evil of exploitation, his deeply human ideals of hating injustice, of struggling for the liberation of not only the oppressed and exploited in Latin America, but the oppressed masses throughout the world.

It has been well documented that the enemy troops captured Che alive. He did not die in the exchange of bullets with the enemy. He fought, using his versatile knowledge of guerrilla warfare until he was wounded. They captured him in this state. But because they feared him even in captivity and wounded, they murdered Che in cold blood.

Che refused to die. He did not die. In death he remained to be the martyr of the oppressed. His ideas of liberation, his militant spirit of not only hating oppression and injustice, but of doing something about it, lives on. Che's stature became even greater than during his lifetime. Today, thanks to Che's activity as a guerrilla fighter, we celebrate the International Day of the Heroic Guerrilla.

The significance of this day lies not only in paying tribute to Che Guevara. This day is of major importance to us, the Youth and People of South Africa. This day is significant to the African National Congress of South Africa, the liberation movement of the struggling people of our country. This day is of special importance to the militants of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the striking force of the people of South Africa, led by the ANC.

This day is important because we have reached a stage in the fight for the liberation of our country from racist oppression, where we are engaging the enemy in armed struggle. Our movement

has stated now and again that armed struggle, guerrilla warfare, is the only way left to rid our country of the obnoxious, oppressive system of white domination, for the seizure of power for the liberation of the Blackman.

The liberation movement of our country, as the struggle intensifies, is already producing heroes. The very nature of our struggle, its protractedness and complexity, its profound human character, will not only produce heroes, but demands and requires heroism of our youth in Umkhonto we Sizwe.

MK militants, tested in the hard conditions of oppression at home, schooled, led and guided by the ANC, will continue - should continue - to show that steadfastness, that resolve, that courage, that militancy which characterised Che Guevara, which characterise our own heroes like Solomon Mahlangu - that of fighting for the noble cause of our people, that of confronting the enemy in the battlefield to the last, of knowing fully the nature of our struggle. The question of liberating our country should inspire us so that fighting against the enemy should not only be a task, but a life obligation, our very reason for being, our way of life.

In pursuing the ideals of the liberation of our people we should be able to say, like the leader of our movement, the co-founder of Umkhonto we Sizwe, Nelson Mandela, when facing the racists during the Rivonia Trial: "...the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live in harmony and with equal opportunities, is the ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die".

Comrade President Oliver Tambo said of our youth. Instead of submitting to the already disproved invincibility of the fascist army, the best sons and daughters of our people have responded to our call to swell the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe, our people's army, the military wing of the ANC, and to confront the enemy with revolutionary arms now.

This is possible because the armed struggle, armed activities of our guerrilla fighters, are profoundly political. It is waged in pursuit of

very clear political aims and aspirations. It is led by a political organisation, led by a leadership tested in the political battles of our country. It is so because of the support and political understanding of our people, the resourceful base of our liberation struggle.

During the Day of the Heroic Guerrilla we pay homage to the Mahlangus, Mfundisis, Pashas, Molokwane of Dobsonville. We pay respect to our MK comrades who fell during the Wankie battles. We pay tribute to those sons and daughters of our people like Mdluli, Looksmart Solwandle, Mini, Kayinga, Salojee, Mkhaba and others who have died in the struggle, who were done to death by the enemy police.

We pay tribute to Che the internationalist, personifying the militant guerrilla fighters who have fallen in Vietnam, in Angola, in Mozambique, in Guinea Bissau, in Palestine, in Western Sahara, in Namibia, in Zimbabwe and everywhere, where the best sons and daughters of humanity have fallen in pursuit of the noble ideals of liberating mankind from oppression, exploitation and injustice.

We pay tribute to the outstanding leader of the Angolan revolution, Comrade Agostinho Neto, who led his people victoriously through the armed struggle to the declaration of independence in 1975, through the trying days of national reconstruction and the interventionist war of the imperialists, racists and their puppets.

In marking the Day of the Heroic Guerrilla, we rededicate ourselves once more never to rest or falter until our country has been liberated from racist oppression, white domination and super exploitation. It is only in this way that we can pay just tribute to Che Guevara, to our fallen heroes and to the heroes throughout the world who have sacrificed for the liberation of mankind from oppression, exploitation and social injustice.

ETERNAL GLORY TO PEOPLE'S HEROES.

WE SERVE THEIR CAUSE, AN INDESTRUCTABLE CAUSE!

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES!