

# "We Congratulate Our People..."

## Comrade President O.R. Tambo on the Outcome of the anti- republic day Campaign

"... We started this year with a session of the racist Parliament which characteristically excluded any sort of participation by the majority of the people of South Africa, particularly the Blacks. Towards the end of the session, to be precise on the 29th of January (I think the 28th) a general election was announced. The following day by way of preparing the ground for the unity of the racist forces in our country, the regime sent a commando across the borders of our country into Mozambique, there to massacre members of the African National Congress. They were being sacrificed in order to ensure that the racists supported the regime. Then came the election campaign in which the majority - the Blacks, were onlookers. The issues discussed in the election were about the future of our country, our future. A general election took place at the end of April and then started the month of the celebrations. In all this, up to the end of April, we were treated as if we did not exist. But then we were expected to celebrate that very non-existence. This is why at the beginning of the year in our annual message to the people of South Africa, we declared: There was nothing to celebrate and that we should boycott the celebrations.



*Comrade President O.R. Tambo*

"To celebrate twenty years of the republic was to add an injury to the insult of which we have been a continuing victim. The celebrations were meant to glorify and triumph over 20 years which witnessed an escalation of oppression, exploitation and repression in our country. Colonial domination which was worsening by the day at a time when everywhere else in Africa countries were becoming independent. The celebrations were to glorify and gloat over the twenty years in which the Apartheid system has killed hundreds of thousands of Black children, massacred hundreds and shattered thousands of families. Twenty years of inferior education for the majority of the people. 20 years of forcible uprooting of whole communities, of families and individuals from their rightful homes and dumping them somewhere away from the public as if they were so much refuse. 20 years of arrests, detentions, torture, imprisonment and assassinations and of massacres perpetrated not only within South Africa but in the entire region of Southern Africa. Twenty years of repression, murder and massacre in Namibia. 20 years of Apartheid in all its naked inhumanity. Twenty years of unrelenting misery and suffering at the hands of a racist minority regime. This was a theme of the celebrations. And with this sordid record of Apartheid rule not only was there nothing to celebrate. The celebrations were themselves an act of provocation, a highly reckless exercise of power by a racist minority unwanted, rejected and hated by the majority in South Africa, by the people of Africa and the vast majority of the peoples of the world. The very least we could have done as a people was to boycott the celebrations. Those who called for this - for the boycott - the organisations which supported the boycott, the individuals, the entire people were doing the very least that was expected of a self-respecting people in the face of an act of provocation. And so there was a boycott.

### UNITED OPPOSITION

"At no time in the past 20 years have the majority of the people of our country so effectively acted out their united opposition to the Apartheid racist regime. Seldom has the polarisation between the racist minority and the mass of the people been more strikingly dramatised. Any mandate, which racist Prime Minister Botha may claim to have obtained from an electorate in April this year, has been completely annulled by the unanimous voice of the voteless supported by white patriots and true democrats who have firmly, loudly and demonstrably declared: 'No to the white minority racist republic!'

The nation-wide boycott has been the authentic voice of South Africa, clearly distinguishable from that of racists and colonialists together with their spies and puppets.

"The African National Congress does not claim any exclusive responsibility for the success of the boycott. We are united in demanding a new South Africa. What we have needed and sought was an occasion for acting together in unity. That occasion and opportunity came when the fascists called for the celebration of their republic. We all seized upon that opportunity. The youth and workers, the churches and the women, in urban and rural areas, leading personalities in our country, various political, youth and students, civic, religious and cultural organisations, all took up the great theme; there is nothing to celebrate!

"For our part we congratulate you all. We congratulate our people, we congratulate the leaders, the organisers, the campaigners and other fighters for a just, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The African National Congress sought to contribute to the effort at united action. To encourage, to give effect to a united action including action by way of a nation-wide stay-at-home for three days. A call which was commensurate with the monstrosity of the crime that is being perpetrated against us. For it is not just the day, the 31st of May that is at issue. It is our life, our country, past, present and future. We have to act boldly. We have to sacrifice in a big way if we are to deserve the victory that awaits us. The armed units of the African National Congress, 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.

"We call upon all our people, all our patriots to support, to defend, to protect and to fight with the Spear. The People's Spear, the Nation's Spear. The struggle must continue and continues.

### **UNITY IN ACTION**

"The end of May 1981 is of course not an end of the struggle to win power for the majority of all South Africans, but the end of May should mark the end of desperate unco-ordinated mass action. We are united, let us stay united and use that unity in joint actions and mutual support. Our march to

the goal of freedom consists of victories and enemy reprisals. These reprisals have become more vicious and desperate, the closer we approach our goal. Today the workers are on strike - let us support them. Some big firms (and I may say at their peril) are getting into the habit of dismissing workers who demand justice - let us defend the workers. Leaders of trade unions, of students' organisations and other activists of our struggle are being detained, prosecuted or otherwise victimised - let us defend them, let us demand their release.

"We have had the Matola Massacre of this year (January this year). The enemy is planning more reprisals inside and outside South Africa. We must stand firm and march on. Victory awaits us beyond the massacres and assassinations. The notorious Sellous Scouts are now being recruited into the South African army, but will be dressed in a uniform of a Bantustan. They will perpetrate unspeakable atrocities and blame them on the African National Congress and the liberation movement. They have done that in Zimbabwe. Let us be vigilant and refuse to be deceived or cowed. The appearance of the Sellous Scouts on our soil means that our struggle is gathering a momentum that will soon put South Africa - the last colonial stronghold, among the liberated countries of Africa.

"We are in June - the month of our children. June the 1st is observed throughout the world as the International Children's Day. For us in South Africa, June the 1st focuses our attention on June 16th and after. Many of the survivors of the Massacre of Soweto in 1976 and the butchery that followed in other parts of our country, are bearing arms today. They are in the country, they are fighting. In doing so they are not only ensuring our liberation, but are paying the only fitting tribute to fallen heroes. They are continuing the struggle until victory is won. Let us therefore observe the month of June in struggle and in united struggle and if our struggle means hunger, loss of jobs, torture, imprisonment, wounds and death, that is but the price all lovers of freedom, all fighters for liberation have had to pay for their freedom and their liberation. We have consistently as a people demonstrated our determination to pay the price of freedom, whatever it is.

"That is why the enemy is becoming deperate. Therefore, the struggle must continue and continues."

**MAATLA KE A RONA!**