



Editorial Comment

THE LEGACY OF SHARPEVILLE

The Sharpeville Massacre and the subsequent banning of our organisation, the African National Congress, are two events of great importance in the history of the Black man's struggle. In the main it is the two events that made clear to all that without arms in hand our fight for a new South Africa fashioned along the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter, the only viable alternative to apartheid tyranny, would end up being just a pipe-dream, or, at best, would take us centuries to realise. Hence the formation of our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, as the reply to the unending terror and violence of the arbitrary apartheid state.

The ensuing years have indeed been difficult, years of gruelling, bitter and hard fighting, of advances and setbacks, but always years of victory. Today, 23 years after Sharpevil-

le, we still and with added stubbornness are steadfastly raising our fists against the clouds, demanding freedom not only in our lifetime, but NOW. The masses of the oppressed of our land in all their formations are up in arms, mobilising all their strength to put the apartheid system to a speedy end. The Anti-republic and Anti-SAIC Campaigns, to mention only two, are unforgettable episodes in this arduous march and are shining examples of the resolve of our people to spare no quarter in the struggle against racist tyranny. SASOL, Voortrekkerhoogte, Komatipoort, Koeberg and Pietermaritzburg, to mention but a few, bear witness of the glaring presence of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the army of our oppressed, as the unfailing spearhead of these popular mass upsurges.

The despotic rulers of our land are not folding their arms marvelling at the cloud of revolution gathering over the laager. Sharpeville - which was in no way the first massacre of unarmed Africans, nor the first of its kind in scope and everything - was not the last. There has been the Soweto June 16, Matola and Maseru Massacres; and more will follow as our goal becomes more clearer and much nearer. It is precisely the certainty of their inevitable overthrow that make the racists frenzied, sending them running amok.

Countrymen and fellow-combatants, this year the enemy is visibly digging in. Despite our growing rejection of the 'Presidential Council', the racist regime has not as yet abandoned its plans but is daily seeking new ways and means of dividing the Black oppressed, as evidenced in the so-called new deal for urban Blacks.

Coupled with this are also frantic efforts to silence all voices of principled opposition. The Detainees' Parents' Support Committee (DPSC) is being accused of being a support group of the ANC because of its unflinching opposition to detention without trial and torture of detainees. Add to this the establishment of an Eloff commission of inquiry into the affairs of the South African Council of Churches.

We need not be reminded as to what follows the findings of such commissions. Cillie, Wiehahn, Steyn, Rieker, etc., are as vivid in our memory.

These are open and desperate efforts to disarm us by silencing all organisations through which our voices of protest against the status quo are heard. We must not allow the racists to succeed.

In the face of this brutal onslaught by the enemy we need to heed with revolutionary haste to the call of the National Executive Committee on January 8 to:

- " * organise the people into strong mass democratic organisations;
- * organise all revolutionaries into underground units of the ANC;
- * organise all combatants into units of Umkhonto we Sizwe;
- * organise all democratic forces into one front for national liberation."

The decision of the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Congress (TASC) to revive the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the call for the formation of the United Democratic Front to fight against the so-called President's Council's constitutional proposals are giant steps in the right direction. We must all extend the call to the formation of a National Front for Liberation, rallying around the Freedom Charter and uniting in action all forces opposed to apartheid rule. United in action, the surest and speediest way to victory, let us all trample over the fascists' heads and march forward to liberation.