

# Sharpeville 21 March 1960

In 1960 the ANC and PAC started new campaigns against the hated pass system. On the morning of 21 March 5 000 people gathered at the Sharpeville police station near Johannesburg to start the PAC campaign. They had come to hand in their passes to the police and asked to be arrested. The people were angry, but peaceful and quiet.

Suddenly the police opened fire without warning. The first hail of bullets struck home. Everybody scattered, running from the police. More bullets were pumped into people. 69 people lay dead. 180 were wounded.

In Langa the police also shot at a peaceful crowd and killed two people.

All over the country people were angry about these killings. There were mass stayaways and protests. In Cape Town over 30 000 people marched from Langa to Parliament. 60 000 workers from Langa and

Nyanga went on strike for nearly 3 weeks.

But on 30 March the government struck back. A state of emergency was declared. 11 000 people were detained and 18 000 were arrested for defying the pass laws.

On 8 April 1960 the ANC and PAC were banned. The government was determined to stop all peaceful protest by the ANC.

The ANC decided that it can never listen to the government and give up the struggle for freedom. Their only choice was to go underground and continue the fight. In 1961 Umkhonto we Sizwe (the Spear of the Nation) was formed to take up armed struggle.

Today it is clear that the government cannot ban the ANC from the hearts of the people. The ANC is still recognized as the most popular political organisation in our country.



## SHARPEVILLE DAY IS OURS

# REMEMBER MARCH 21

21 March was the day when the apartheid police gunned down 69 of our people at Sharpeville.

21 March is the day when we remember the thousands of our people that have been massacred:

- \* 171 in Bulhoek (Transkei) in 1921
- \* 115 in the Bondelswarts rebellion (Namibia) in 1921
- \* 11 on May Day in 1950
- \* 69 in Sharpeville in 1960
- \* 575 in the 1976 Soweto uprising
- \* 10 in Queenstown in 1985
- \* 13 in Mamelodi in 1985
- \* 18 in Crossroads in 1985
- \* 25 in Uitenhage in 1985

In the uprisings of 1984-85 hundreds more of our people have been killed. We demand March 21 as a Public Holiday to remember our fallen heroes.

March 21 is not only a day on which we mourn. It is

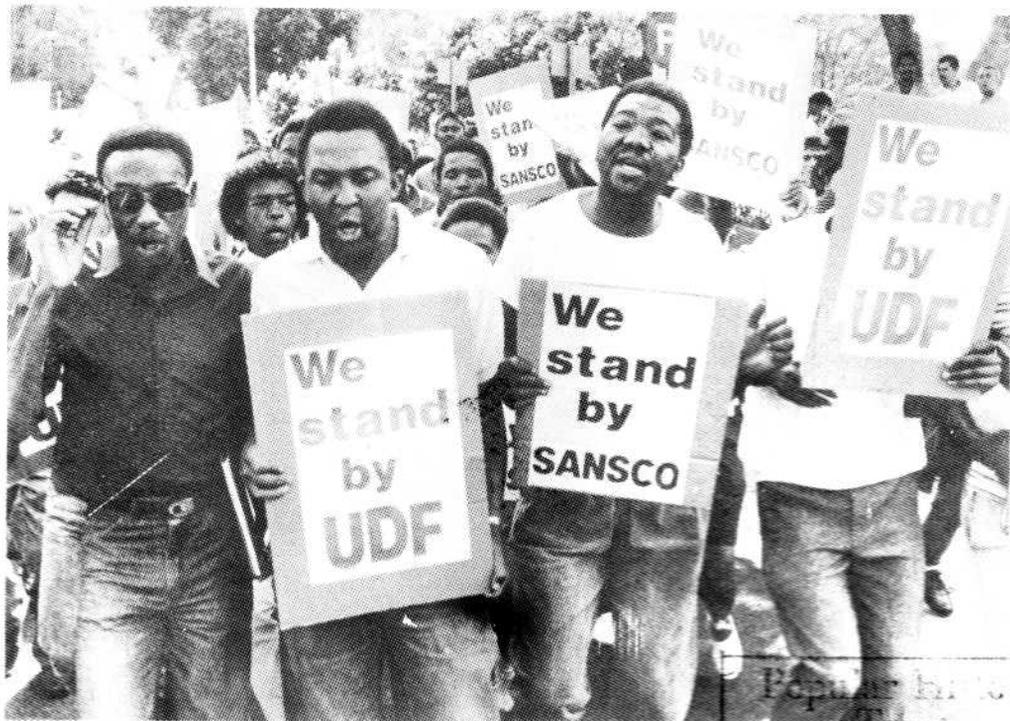
also a day of protest and action.

Today Botha is still trying to crush us with his emergencies. Thousands of our people are in jail and our meetings are banned. Despite all this, more and more people are joining our march to freedom.

Now Botha is even more desperate. He is trying to restrict our organisations and our leaders like Govan Mbeki, Archie Gumedi, Albertina Sisulu and Zoli Malindi.

But we did not submit in 1960 and we will not submit now. We will continue to fight against this evil apartheid system.

March 21 will be a Day of Protest. Let us unite in our factories, schools and in our communities. Let us show Botha that we reject his emergencies and restrictions.



## MARCH 21

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# A Day of Protest