

African National Congress

NATIONAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
of the
NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

BROAD GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

PART IIIA

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

OF THE

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

1. PREAMBLE

The South African state is colonial, racist, fascist and capitalist in its nature. It is an outgrowth and a remnant of the epoch of colonialism. Its formation came about as a result of an agreement between British colonialism and the white settler minority in South Africa that this minority would take over from Whitehall the functions of a colonising power. This agreement provided that the indigenous African majority would be excluded from power and would be ruled by the white minority as colonial subjects, denied their right to self-determination. From that time to date, the primary and sharpest contradiction that characterised this formation has been between the forces of national oppression on the one hand, and those of national liberation, on the other. As in other colonial situations, this contradiction cannot be solved by the colonisers themselves reforming the colonial system out of existence or, in this case, by the Pretoria regime "dismantling apartheid". The only way to abolish this contradiction is, through struggle, to destroy the colonial system and, in the South African case, to destroy also the colonial power - the South African state.

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2. OUR GOAL

The strategic goal which the African National Congress pursues is the seizure of political power by the revolutionary forces of our country, led by the ANC, and the forcible transfer of that power from the fascist white minority to the hands of the democratic majority, for the creation of a people's democracy based on the ideals embodied in the Freedom Charter. This strategic goal finds popular expression in the slogan which the broad masses of our people have taken up; Amandla Ngawethu 'Power to the People'.

Seizure of power by the revolutionary forces means and presupposes the all-round defeat of the racist, colonial regime, the dismantling by the victorious people of all political, economic, military, cultural and other structures of colonial and fascist rule, as well as the smashing of the state machinery of fascism and colonialism and the construction of a new one committed to the defence and advancement of the people's cause.

3. OUR TASKS

To fulfil this strategic goal of the forcible transfer of power to the people, the ANC is working to carry out four principal strategic tasks:

- a) The extension and consolidation throughout the country, among all nationalities, classes, strata and groups, of an ANC underground machinery, capable of reaching, directing and leading the majority of the people of South Africa.
- b) the political mobilisation of the masses of the people, especially the black sections, into active mass struggle around local and national issues, whilst continuously educating the people into the realisation that, without a revolutionary transfer of power, no single major problem of South African life can be solved satisfactorily and permanently.
- c) the intensification of the armed struggle, increasingly to assert the growing significance of revolutionary violence, our response

to the violence of fascism, as a permanent feature of our struggle, leading to the recognisable emergence of our people's army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, as the popular spearhead in the struggle to smash the instruments of repression, deprive the enemy of the ability to rule and thus create the conditions for us to seize power.

- d) the international isolation of the Botha-Malan regime, further raising the strength and combativeness of the international solidarity movement and on the basis of our own advances in the struggle within South Africa, our correct strategy and tactics translated into action, and the acceptance of our programme for the creation of a democratic, anti-fascist and non-racial South Africa, to get the majority of the international community to accept our liberation movement as the representative of all the people of our country, and the spearhead in South Africa of the international movement against fascism and war, for freedom, democracy, peace and social progress.

4. THE ANC AS THE VANGUARD

Without the ANC, in contact with and being part of the masses, enjoying their support and confidence and leading them into many-sided actions, our victory is impossible. We therefore work continuously to expand and strengthen the underground structures of the ANC.

It is of decisive importance that at all times the vision of what we are fighting for, the political programme of demands contained in the Freedom Charter should be put in front of the people to ensure that we give no opportunity to the forces of counter-revolution to train our people for a pro-imperialist solution of the South African problem.

The exercise of the function of leadership requires that there should be present within the country recognised leaders of the people who, because they are in touch with the pulse of events and with popular feeling, and are well grounded in our policies, our strategy and tactics, are therefore capable of providing timely and correct leadership.

Without an effective underground political machinery, there are very many practical problems of the revolution that we would not be able to solve.

For instance, the successful infiltration of cadres and war materials into the country is almost entirely conditional or dependent on the existence of the well-organised underground machinery inside the country, capable of receiving, transporting, hiding and utilising such men and equipment in conditions of secrecy. This also holds true for all propaganda materials, except that relayed by radio from outside.

The ANC was formed to unite and lead to freedom the African people. In time, however, this task has expanded. Today, the ANC is faced with the task of organising and leading all the oppressed people together, African, Coloured and Indian and to win over to its banner all democratic-minded whites. To accomplish this mission, the ANC has in its arsenal the Freedom Charter which was born in struggle, emanating from the people themselves. Today the Freedom Charter constitutes our principal platform in the political and ideological struggle for the allegiance of the masses.

5. THE MASSES AS THE POLITICAL ARMY AND COMBAT FORCE OF THE REVOLUTION.

It remains one of the fundamental truths of our struggle that victory cannot be won without the active and conscious participation of the masses of the oppressed people themselves. Therefore we continuously seek ways and means of drawing the people into active struggle against the Botha-Malan regime. The main tactical slogan put forward to the people is: 'Confront the Enemy on all Fronts'. The enemy must find himself confronted with struggle throughout the country, involving all the oppressed and democratic masses, carried out in different forms - strikes, boycotts, mass meetings, prayer meeting, demonstrations, etc.

Such a programme of work is impossible to carry out unless we take advantage of all legal and semi-legal opportunities. Therefore we

encourage the formation of legal organisations, conduct legal agitation, and in many ways try to reach the greatest numbers of our people in the shortest possible time.

This work covers the formation of powerful and progressive trade unions, taking into account the central leading role of the working class in our struggle. This work also covers the peasants and agricultural workers, women, youth and student, teachers and other professionals, religious people etc. It should also be borne in mind that all organisations which adopt anti-apartheid positions and strive for a democratic South Africa belong, properly speaking to the broad front for national liberation.

In order to be effective in our political and ideological offensive against the enemy, to educate the masses in the revolutionary politics of the ANC continuously, we strive to be extremely active and efficient in the field of propaganda and information.

No group of revolutionaries however gallant, disciplined and self-sacrificing, can overthrow the fascist regime, without the support and active participation of the people.

In addition and of key importance, the perspective of a people's war is one of the people armed.

The development of our armed struggle must progress towards the situation of a war fought by the entire people, gradually expanding the activity of the masses as the political army of the revolution to encompass, also, their role as the military combat force of the revolution. Thus the armed struggle, in which partial and general mass uprisings will play a vital role, must involve the whole people.

6. UMKHONTO WE SIZWE - THE MILITARY COMBAT FORCE OF THE REVOLUTION

In pursuit of our strategic goal of the forcible capture of power, the ANC works continuously to step up its programme of training as many cadres as possible in as many fields as the different stages of our struggle demand.

Whatever training is possible inside has to be carried out carefully. Simultaneously, we have to infiltrate as many trained cadres and as much material as possible to facilitate this programme.

It is proper at this stage to point out that we are not preparing an army of invasion. The units that train outside do not themselves constitute an army. Rather, they are the nucleus, the organisers, the trainers and leaders of the growing popular army of which they are part.

The nature of our terrain, the strength and mobility of the enemy forces, the nature and organisation of the state machinery and the general level of development of South Africa, including the communication system, do not give us the possibility to operate with classical guerrilla formations at the beginning of our armed offensive.

The People's Army will therefore rely on the support and active participation of the people's revolutionary organisation and of the patriotic and politically conscious masses and their loyalty to the revolution.

In our work we are guided by the slogan: 'Wherever the masses are, political bases and revolutionary organisations must be set up'. By relying on these political bases, we will be able to solve the question of military bases.

We also work to create underground units of various categories throughout the country.

While working for the establishment and activation of our visualised national network of trained and armed combat groups, we are simultaneously working to solve the very many related problems of supplies transport, communications, secrecy, etc.

Such organisational work is being accompanied by the escalation of armed actions to weaken and cripple the enemy and to prepare for the next phase of armed struggle.

Through our actions we should aim to disperse the enemy forces, geographically and functionally.

7. SEIZURE OF POWER - THE FINAL PHASE

The Seizure of power by the people will be realised as the culmination of a protracted war of liberation, fought through a combination of political and military means and concluding in a general offensive in which we will bring to bear our accumulated military and political strength to defeat the enemy and effect a revolutionary transfer of power to the people.

BROAD GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSIONS

PART III B

1. Introduction

The Presidential Message to the People of South Africa of January 8th, 1984 contains many directives which, together, constitute our tactical response to the situation that faced and in many important respects, still faces our movement. Below, we detail these tasks since they represent an important part of the perspectives we have faced and will still face in the immediate future.

2. Defend our gains

- a) It is our duty to defend the Freedom Charter, the strategic and tactical line of our movement, as well as the ANC and its armed wing Umkhonto We Sizwe;
- b) It is also our task to defend the mass democratic movement, as well as individual patriots and democrats;
- c) We must also defend the gains we have scored in the international struggle and encourage the international solidarity movement not to retreat from already established anti-apartheid positions;

3. Achieve new victories

- a) By further popularising among our people the Freedom Charter and the strategic and tactical line of our movement as well as further increasing the organised strength and popularity of the ANC and MK;
- b) By further encouraging the growth and strengthening of the mass democratic movement, promoting the creation of these where none exist and working for united action among all these on the basis of the positions of the democratic movement in general;
- c) By encouraging the formation of one democratic trade union federation, the organisation of the unorganised and the unemployed and ensure that the working class and the working people in general are conscious of and play their role as the vanguard social force of the national democratic revolution;

- d) By encouraging the formation of mass democratic organisations in the countryside and the activation of the rural masses into struggle around the question of ~~land and removals~~;
- e) By encouraging the greatest possible involvement of the religious community in the democratic struggle and mobilise this community especially around the call: "Act now in defence of justice, peace and life";
- f) By promoting the development of a democratic movement among cultural workers and sportspeople and to increase the use of culture as a weapon in our struggle;
- g) By orienting the revolutionary masses and activating them to reduce the capacity of the apartheid regime to govern our country by destroying the organs of government and resisting enemy attempts to implement its programmes and rendering the institutions of the regime unworkable;
- h) By encouraging the "Coloured" and Indian people to refuse to be absorbed into the apartheid constitutional structures;
- i) By encouraging those sections among the white community who harbour anti-apartheid sentiments to abandon the illusion of "parliamentary politics" and to activate them into the mass democratic struggle;
- j) By encouraging white, Coloured and Indian youth to refuse to serve in the racist army and working for the widest possible mobilisation against conscription into the apartheid army;
- k) By mobilising the black Youth against joining the SADF, Bantustan armies and police forces;
- l) By encouraging the further activation of women into the mass democratic struggle, the formation of democratic women's organisations, united action among these organisations and the formation of a nation-wide democratic women's federation, and by encouraging the struggle for the liberation of women as an integral part of the victory of the national democratic revolution;
- m) By working to encourage the democratic movement to further shift its posture from the defensive to the offensive, and to educate

activists and the masses in the politics of revolutionary change;

- n) By encouraging the further growth of the Southern African movement of solidarity with the ANC and SWAPO, projecting the position that our region shares one destiny, and by activating the people of South Africa to demonstrate their solidarity with the rest of the peoples of our region, concentrating especially on the aggressive policies of the apartheid regime;
- o) By encouraging the further growth of the world movement of solidarity with the ANC, SWAPO and our region as a whole, further intensifying the campaign for the isolation of apartheid South Africa, educating our own people to understand the anti-imperialist nature of our struggle and mobilising them to act in solidarity with other struggling peoples in favour of nuclear disarmament, national independence, social progress and world peace.