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AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ( SOUTH AFRICA )  
P.O. Box 1791, Lusaka, Zambia.

Circular to all Units and Members

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DIRECTIVE ON THE  
100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF ISANDLWANA

On January 21/22, 1879 scores of thousands of spears converged on the 'mighty' British Army at Isandlwana, and wiped it out in a victory that stunned the world. It was the triumph of the people's spear over the sophistication of modern armour.

For more than 200 years, with spears in hand and in different parts of our country, our people had fought courageous battles against foreign invasion and in defence of their land and country; for freedom, independence and peace.

For the spear of the people, Isandlwana was the moment of greatest glory, and today, 100 years later, we salute this great weapon of our people and pay highest tribute to the gallant warriors who brought honour to the cause of justice, and pride to all opponents of colonial aggression and national oppression.

Throughout our country and throughout this year, the people will be celebrating and observing the 100th Anniversary of the battle and the victory of Isandlwana.

Because of the central role played by the people's weapon, the spear, in the countrywide struggles that culminated in that historic victory, the African National Congress has decided to proclaim the year 1979 as: THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR.

To ensure that our activities do justice to the great historic significance and the inspiring example of Isandlwana, the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress has established the "Isandlwana Centenary Commission" ( I.C.C.), which is charged with the following tasks:

1. The Commission will initiate and supervise activities in South Africa and internationally, aimed at commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Isandlwana, the activities to commence on January 21/22, 1979, and continue for the rest of the year.
2. To popularise and give maximum publicity to this historic event, closely linking up the Isandlwana victory:-



- (a) with the numerous battles fought by the African people during the wars of resistance against foreign invasion and colonialism in South Africa in the period before 1879;
  - (b) with the resistance struggles from 1879 to date; and
  - (c) with similar battles fought and won in the struggles of other peoples against colonialism and imperialist aggression.
3. The Commission will pay special attention to ensuring that the Battle of Isandlwana is not treated or projected as an isolated event of significance to our Zulu-speaking people only, but should be commemorated throughout the country as a victory won by our entire people in the course of more than 200 years of a countrywide resistance struggle against foreign invaders.
4. In pursuance of the above, the Commission will:-
- (a) organise seminars, concerts, competitions and other cultural events;
  - (b) produce booklets, leaflets, posters, stickers, badges, medals, Isandlwana shirts and other publicity material;
  - (c) encourage our historians, research workers, writers, poets (modern and traditional), play-wrights, musicians, painters, sculptors and other artists to produce works dedicated to the heroes of our protracted struggle;
  - (d) encourage our school children and the youth to make drawings and sketches of the spear, to make carvings of it out of wood, bone, stone, ivory or other material, as a tribute to the glory of Isandlwana and a monument to THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR; and where appropriate;
  - (e) arrange for the award of prizes for outstanding talent.
5. In carrying out its tasks the Commission will endeavour to engage the services of all South African patriots of whatever colour, creed or political persuasion, so as to impart to the YEAR OF THE SPEAR a truly national character consonant with our cherished goal of "one country, one people, one government."
6. Like-wise, the Commission will seek the collaboration and support of our friends and allies in Africa and internationally.
7. The Commission will prepare and submit its preliminary plan of work, with statistics of expenditure to the Office of the President by not later than January 18; but the work of the Commission must commence forthwith.
8. In addition to periodic reports submitted during the course of the year, the I.C.C. will at the end of the year prepare a printed report on its work to be released on January 8, 1980.



9. The I.C.C. will have its headquarters in Lusaka, with committees in South Africa and externally.
10. Comrade Pallo Z. Jordan has been appointed as chairman of the I.C.C. The rest of the members of the Commission, who include Dollar Brand, will be announced in due course.
11. It is suggested that the designation of the year 1979 as "THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR" should feature in our publicity as well as in all correspondence within the movement and without.
12. Equally, the SPEAR should appear on all our documents, for example, our letter-heads.
13. The I.C.C. has instructions to work in closest co-operation with the Department of Information ( D.I.P.), and publicity around the theme of the SPEAR should receive our fullest attention and find its way into our many languages at home and in many languages of the outside world.
14. For once, ANC badges, calendars, diaries, vests, shirts, women's dresses, handbags, ballpoint pens, etc. all bearing the Spear and its meaning for our struggle, should be found everywhere during the course of this year.
15. In this kind of effort we can bring into activity, under the guidance of the ANC, a wide variety of people and organisations, at present mere spectators, or remotely interested but uninvolved.

Sgd:

*Alfred Nzo*  
ALFRED NZO  
Secretary-General

January 5, 1979.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
(SOUTH AFRICA)