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MILITARY TASKS OF OUR REVOLUTION

**- Speeches by O. R. Tambo, President General of the
African National Congress**

Published for Heroes Day, December 16th, 1979



Comrade Tambo with Comrade Nelson Maudela.

INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains statements made at various times by the President of the African National Congress, Comrade Oliver Tambo. We have published them together because they all deal with one theme namely **THE MILITARY TASKS OF OUR REVOLUTION**.

As you will notice from the salutations, these statements were made in the presence of representatives of countries and organisations which are allied to us in a common struggle for the defeat of the apartheid regime. We reproduce these salutations to show you that progressive mankind stands solidly with us.

Throughout these texts you will find certain recurring themes concerning the tasks of our armed revolutionary forces, the role of the masses in the struggle for their own liberation, our international commitment as an organisation and a people and so on. Our enemy is waging a serious offensive to distort our positions on all these questions. This booklet should help you in the struggle to defeat this offensive by enabling you to explain with even greater clarity the nature and goals of our armed struggle.

As you know, this is the Year of the Spear. It is therefore fitting that in this Introduction we should include the following call issued by Comrade Oliver Tambo on January 8th, the 67th anniversary of the ANC on the Year of the Spear.

CALL TO MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR 1979

One hundred years ago, King Cetshwayo's peoples army spoke to the invading enemy with their spears. At the battle of Isandlwana, it engaged and defeated the pride of the British colonial army – a feat which has gone down in history as one of the most glorious and spectacular achievements in the world struggles to resist foreign domination. Faced with the might of superior arms our heroic warriors knew no fear. They shed rivers of blood to remain a free people in the land which was theirs.

In a war which was deliberately provoked by the enemy, the people's army gave clear notice that a time comes in the life of a people when there is only one way out – the way of challenging oppression by force and violence.

In doing so, they added a glorious page to the long history of our people's heroic resistance to the robbery of the land of their forefathers. Isandlwana has left us with a heritage whose spirit of no surrender, whose spirit of sacrifice and discipline, inspires and guides our whole nation in the battles to come, a heritage which is a challenge to all of us – the ISANDLWANA.

This great battle was one of many battles in the two hundred years during which, in different parts of the country, stretching from the Western Cape to the northern most reaches of the Transvaal, our people, spears in hand, fought war after war in defence of their land, our freedom and for peace. Isandlwana was the highest point in this protracted struggle. It was for the spear of our people, a moment of glory!

Today, one hundred years later, let us salute this great weapon of our people and pay the highest tribute to the brave and gallant men who brought honour to the cause of justice and pride to all opponents of colonial plunder and national oppression.

Because of the central role played by the people's weapon, the spear, the African National Congress has decided to proclaim 1979 as THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR:

It is a year in which our people must, as never before, take up the challenge of the spirit of Isandlwana and other battles fought by our people, in every factory, farm, kraal and home. Let us make 1979 a year in which every man and woman, and all our youth and children will learn the true meaning of the great tradition of Isandlwana and other battles fought by our people in decades and centuries of resistance. **Let us spread the message of defiance and resistance to all forms of racist rule. And let us popularise our cause – the cause of a new South Africa.** Let us spread the spear, which is the symbol of Isandlwana, to every corner of our land.

Finally, on this day we salute our leaders, our brothers and sisters in enemy jails. We salute Solomon Mahlangu. We salute the militants of the African National Congress, the various forces fighting exploitation and oppression in our country – in the cities and in the countryside. We wish you and all our friends a great year – THE YEAR OF THE SPEAR!.

MESSAGE TO THE 1ST CONGRESS OF THE MPLA LUANDA – DECEMBER 1977

Comrade President Agostinho Neto,
Comrades Members of the Presidium of the Congress,
Comrades Militants and Combatants of MPLA,
Comrades and Friends:

We bring to this historic First Congress of the MPLA warmest and most fraternal greetings from the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, from its militants and combatants, from the workers and peasants, the women and the youth; from the entire struggling people of South Africa.

We feel genuinely proud that we are active participants in the making of African history here in Angola at this time.

The heroic anti-colonial struggles of the peoples of Africa for national independence, including, in particular, the armed struggles of the people of Algeria, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique, culminated in the epoch-making collapse of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The earth-shaking victories of FRELIMO and MPLA brought Southern Africa to the crossroads. But the revolutionary experience accumulated during the liberation wars ensured that the people's advance towards social emancipation would not be halted.

Thus it is that as the year 1977 opened with the 3rd Congress of FRELIMO, so it is ending with the 1st Congress of MPLA. Both Congresses are the collective voice of the Mozambican and Angolan peoples, proclaiming the continuation of the revolutionary struggle at a higher plain, more arduous but no less glorious than the earlier struggles. The historic significance of the 1st CONGRESS of MPLA is precisely that, for Southern Africa, like the Frelimo Congress, it blazes a new trail out of the crossroads towards the conquest of a socialist future for the peoples – a future free of exploitation.

Our esteemed Leader, Friend and Comrade-in-arms, President Agostinho Neto, expressed a key and important truth when he said in one of his statements the victory of the Angolan people was "a victory of the peoples advancing towards progress".

This First Congress of MPLA is a victory of the Angolan people. It is also a victory of all the peoples, including the people of South Africa, who are pledged to fight for the creation of new socio-

economic systems which will be characterised by the abolition of exploitation of man by man through ownership of productive wealth by the people themselves; characterised as well by the self-government of the ordinary working people through the institution of popular power, and characterised also by a commitment to strive for a world that has been rid of the parasites that have imposed on all of us fascism, racism and apartheid, deprivation and backwardness, ignorance, superstition and destructive wars.

Angola's orientation towards the social emancipation of her people has therefore, like Mozambique, brought to the fore, in our region, the confrontation between the liberating theory and practice of socialism and the oppressive, exploitation and anti-human system of capitalism.

This latter social system is of course represented, par-excellence, by racist South Africa itself. Hence today the open and sharp confrontations between People's Angola and Mozambique on the one side and fascist South Africa and colonial Rhodesia on the other.

Given such a juxtaposition of two diametrically opposed social systems within the same region of Southern Africa, conflict and confrontation become inevitable.

But of major importance for us, in understanding the nature of this confrontation, is the fact that the victories of the MPLA and FRELIMO have become a key factor in the politics of the racist regime within its own ranks, and generally inside the boundaries of racist South Africa.

These victories have helped to deepen the general crisis of the apartheid colonial system: they have in the actuality of South African politics helped to strengthen the forces of progress and severely weaken the forces of reaction.

In that fact lies the fundamental reason for the desperate determination of the Vorster regime to destroy these two People's Republics. In that also lies essentially the reason why we of the African National Congress joins voices with Comrade President Neto in saying – the victory of the Angolan people is indeed truly our own as well.

In the very first hours of its existence, people's Angola had to defend itself against the massive military onslaught of a mature but decaying imperialist system. The trials that confronted the MPLA

even before November 11th, 1975, right through to 1976 when the racist oppressor army of the Vorster regime was evicted from Angola, were not a test solely of the valour and military preparedness of FAPLA and the people of Angola.

More significant in the longer term, the attempted military destruction of the People's Republic posed the question on the battlefield – had the time come for the birth of the new liberating social system in Angola?

Or was the balance of forces still such that moribund imperialism, with its oppressive and exploitative system of social relations would continue to hold sway, dictating to the people of Angola what kind of independence they should have?

The results of that contest have now become a matter of proud historical record. Progress triumphed over reaction, thanks to the heroic sacrifices of the people of Angola, supported by their progressive African allies, by Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other socialist countries, and by all peoples advancing towards progress.

What started as a triumphant march by the forces of reaction into the heart of Angola ended up with a deeper crisis for the Vorster regime inside South Africa itself.

The humiliating defeat of Vorster's army was at the same time a defeat for the social system which that army had been created, trained and armed to defend.

The myth of the invincibility of the racist army was destroyed for ever. For the fascist regime of John Vorster, whose ultimate and principal means of survival is naked brute force, this was a stunning blow.

It proved to our own people, as well as to the more far-seeing sections of the oppressor population, including especially the youth, that in the confrontation with the forces of progress, the fascist state is destined inevitably to lose, wherever that confrontation takes place, but above all, and especially, within South Africa itself.

Today the fascist regime is haunted by the spectre that large sections of the white population will, as the struggle intensifies, refuse to be used as cannon-fodder to protect the interests of big capital and fascist domination. Already, thousands of white South Africans have left and are leaving the country. The regime stands in dread fear of

the further narrowing of the social base of the system of apartheid domination. In this context, therefore, the so called landslide victory scored by the Afrikaner Nationalist Party during the recent racist elections in South Africa can only be fragile and temporary.

Terrified at the prospect of the victory of the forces of progress within the country, in the aftermath and as a direct continuation of the popular victory in Angola, the Vorster regime unleashed the bloody terror that is today symbolised by SOWETO.

By this brutal means the enemy thought he would solve that part of his crisis which is characterised by the ready acceptance among our people of the liberating ideas and the revolutionary practice of the MPLA.

The regime also thought that through the ruthless massacre of our people, it would once again re-establish the terrorist military and political authority that the regime's armed forces lost on the battlefields of Angola.

Inevitably, the racist regime has failed dismally to achieve any of these objectives. So entrenched has the spirit of revolution among the people become that the enemy has been compelled to take extreme measures against even those who still preached peaceful transition to democratic rule.

The African National Congress with its allies, is the representative inside apartheid South Africa of the kind of life that the people of Angola and Mozambique are striving to build, the kind of life that all peoples advancing towards progress aim for. Exactly because of this, its authority among the broad masses of our people has risen so high and has proved so indestructible that the enemy himself has had to admit this fact openly and repeatedly.

Instead of submitting to an already disproved invincibility of fascist arms, the best sons and daughters of our people have responded with enthusiasm to our call to them to swell the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe, our own people's army, and to confront the enemy with revolutionary arms now.

The African National Congress therefore continues to find confirmation of the correctness of its positions from the historical experience of the MPLA.

One of these positions is that the victorious revolution cannot be

defended successfully without arms. This condition is imposed on all revolutions by the fact that the forces of reaction never hesitate to attempt to reverse this historical process by force of arms.

In building up our own popular army we aim therefore not only at the overthrow of the fascist regime. We aim also at building up a politically conscious and revolutionary force which will stand in the fore-front in defence of the revolutionary gains, conscious of its popular origin, unwavering in its democratic functions and guided by our revolutionary orientation. We know FAPLA is such a force, and we know that is why FAPLA is invincible.

We of the African National Congress visualise a South Africa in which the people shall govern, in which the wealth of the country shall be restored to the people and where the land shall be shared among those who work it. We aim to establish a society free of the exploitation of man by man.

We fight for a South Africa in which the people shall be guaranteed the right to work, in which it will be the duty of the people's state to ensure that the doors of learning and of culture are open to the working people. We seek to live in peace with our neighbours and the peoples of the world in conditions of equality, mutual respect and equal advantage.

Those who monopolise political power, the land and the wealth of our country today, those who prohibit the distribution of everything that is progressive in literature and the arts, those who launch aggressive wars, will naturally do their best to ensure that we do not realise our goal of translating our liberation into a genuine people's liberation, leading to the radical social transformation of our country.

As revolutionaries it is our duty to deny these counter-revolutionary forces the possibility of victory. Part of that denial consists in our ensuring that no elements of the enemy's fascist state machinery, including his armed forces, remain as organised units within the new society.

Angola and Mozambique have today ensured that. We also shall have to take the same path. In our view this is as true of Angola and Mozambique today as it will be true of Namibia and Zimbabwe tomorrow.

No element of the South African fascist state can be expected to defend or administer a SWAPO victory in Namibia. Equally, no

element of the Rhodesian colonial state can be expected to defend or administer a Patriotic Front victory in Zimbabwe.

For that reason, as in Angola and Mozambique, we support the demand for an unconditional transfer of power to SWAPO of NAMIBIA and to the ZIMBABWE PATRIOTIC FRONT. The collective revolutionary experience of the peoples of Southern Africa teaches us that where the enemy refuses to accede to this demand, then its realisation has to be fought for.

The imperialist proposals concerning Namibia and Zimbabwe are once again an attempt to ensure that the genuinely revolutionary forces of these countries are denied the possibility to bring about authentic people's liberation, to deny them the possibility of undertaking a radical transformation of their societies.

The MPLA, the organiser, the leader, the vanguard of the movement of the people of Angola for national and social emancipation, was itself confronted with similar imperialist attempts, and it successfully foiled them.

But, to reach the point in the history of the Angolan struggle when it became possible to hold this First Congress, MPLA has had to fight for its very life against formidable enemies from within and from without. Imperialist reaction well understood that in order to defeat the Angolan revolution, it had to pierce the heart of that revolution. It had to smother its fountain-head. Precisely, it had to destroy the MPLA.

The history of the MPLA therefore constitutes almost an encyclopaedia of the strategy and tactics of the counter-revolution against the revolutionary forces of Southern Africa.

We have seen attempts to cut the MPLA off from contact with the masses of the people of Angola. We have seen also attempts to drive wedges within the MPLA, to foment internal strife and discord through the exploitation of tribal differences, the use of racism, the encouragement of a rabid, chauvinistic nationalism, the fertilisation of blind personal ambition and the vilification of the best representatives of the Angolan people.

We have seen the instigation of extreme leftist elements who, while posing as the true defenders of the interests of the people within the MPLA, were in fact involved in plots to starve the people into a state of disaffection and rebellion against the people's own fundamental interests.

We have seen attempts to encourage an anti-popular spirit of militarism among the armed cadres in an effort to denigrate the political leadership and political persuasion, and put on a pedestal the force of arms.

Imperialism and its multi-national corporations also worked hard to set up alternative third forces which would pose as liberation movements while remaining in the pay of exactly the forces against whom they would claim to be waging "liberation wars". We have seen imperialist attempts to balkanise and dismember Angola itself. We have seen open assassination of leaders and activists.

We have seen the forces of counter-revolution try to create animosity between the MPLA and its most tested and natural allies, to detach it from these allies, especially from the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republic of Cuba. Thus would the MPLA find itself weakened and isolated and therefore ready prey to imperialist attempts to liquidate it.

We have seen all this, and much more. But we have also seen the MPLA emerge from this enduring crisis triumphant – stronger than ever before. Such a record of victories is a great tribute to the revolutionary maturity of the MPLA, of Comrade Agostinho Neto personally; it is a tribute to the veterans of two gruelling liberation wars, many of them present here today; it is a tribute to all those other heroes who have sacrificed their lives for the victory of the Angolan revolution and to ensure that once that victory was won, it was not lost again.

To see the MPLA as a target of imperialist attacks from 1956 to 1977, is to gain an idea of the experience of the ANC during the same period. In December 1956, the entire leadership of the organisation opposing the racist regime, led by the ANC, was arrested and brought to trial on charges of attempting to overthrow the racist state. More than 150 leaders faced death sentences. This enemy act consolidated the unity of the revolutionary movement as never before.

In December 1961, like the MPLA in February of that year, we decided to embark on armed struggle and formed Umkhonto we Sizwe.

From then on, MPLA and ANC have shared victories and setbacks, we have shared heroes and martyrs: we have marched arm-in-arm,

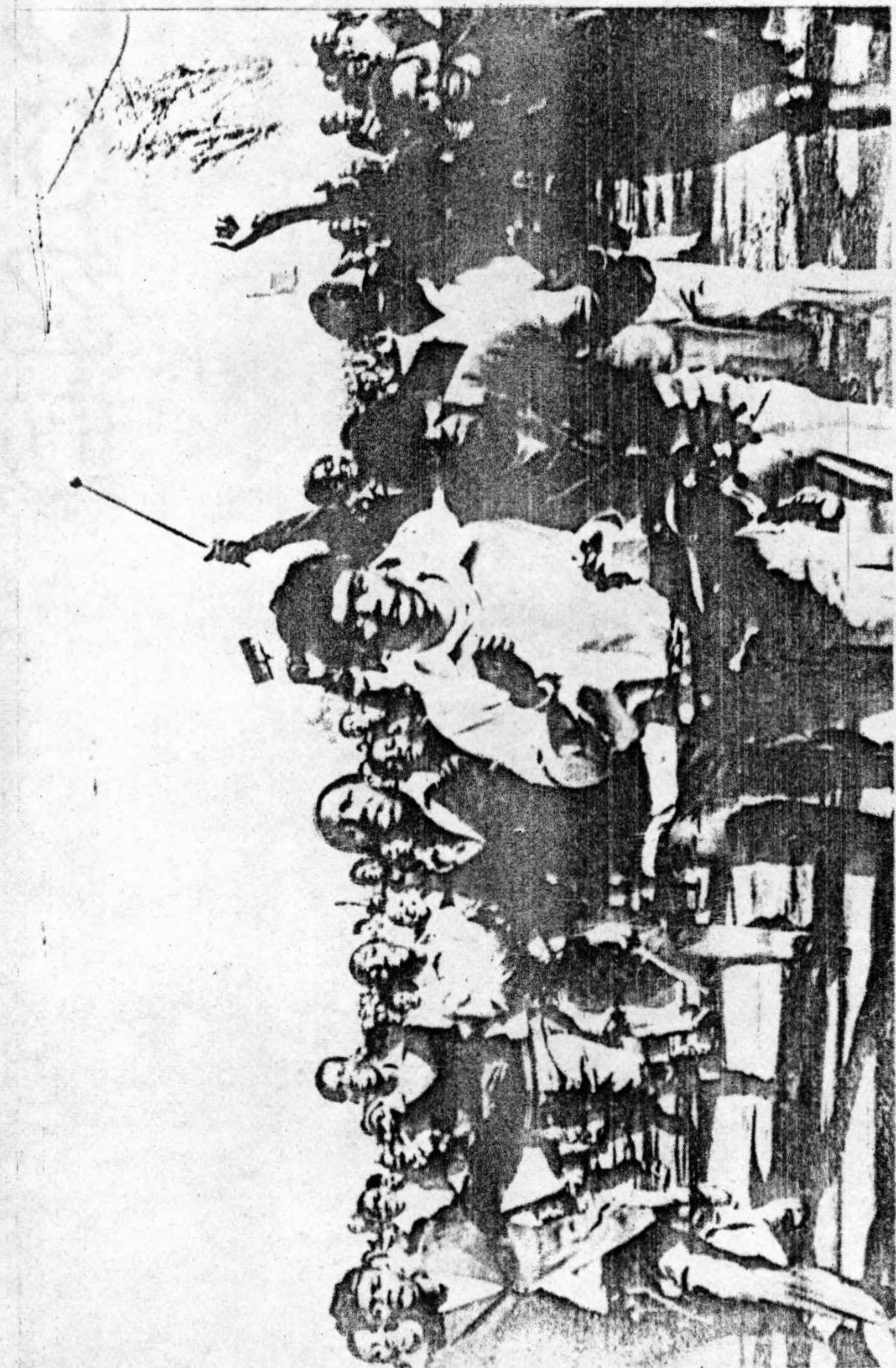
and no imperialist wedge will ever be allowed to interpose itself between the Angolan people and the mass of the South African people. And as with the Angolan experience, the victory of the South African revolution depends on the continuation of the ANC as the organiser, the leader, the vanguard of the movement for national and social emancipation in South Africa.

The South African fascist regime declared the ANC illegal more than 17 years ago, it committed Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Dennis Goldberg, Harry Gwala and other national leaders to terms of life imprisonment. It embarked on a wide range of tactics aimed at destroying the ANC. These have included attempts to strangle our revolution by isolating our movement from its allies, especially the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The regime has now embarked on a policy of consistent assassination of the leading cadres of our revolution. But all this has served only to heighten the determination of the people and deepen the political crisis of the racist regime, bringing ever nearer the day when these imprisoned leaders of the people will be free to assume their rightful place among the creators of a revolutionary democratic South Africa, arm-in-arm with the builders of the new social order in Africa and in the rest of the progressive world.

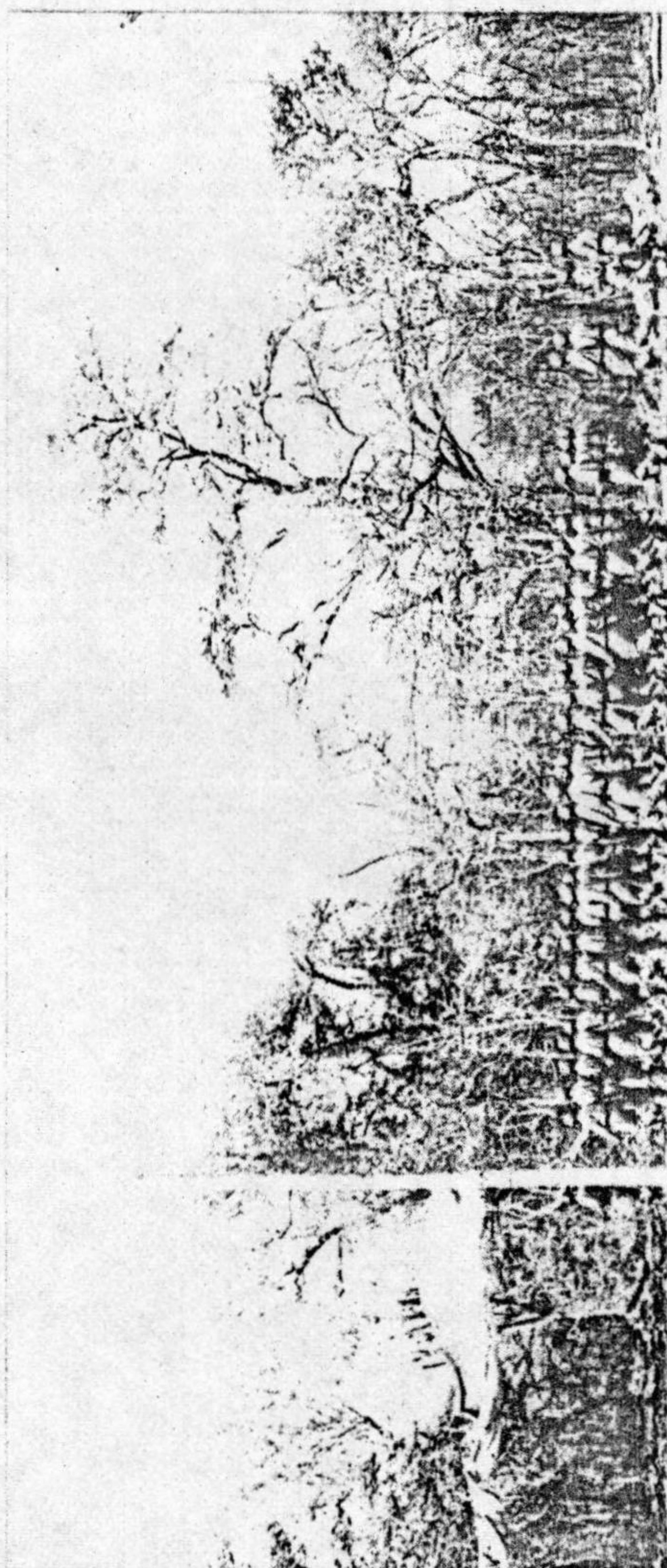
We are in unison with the MPLA when we say that the masses of our people – the workers, peasants, revolutionary youth and intelligentsia, as a conscious and organised force, constitute the political army of our revolution, without whom, and against whom, victory is impossible.

In their name, and in the name of our armed combatants united in Umkhonto we Sizwe, the African National Congress renews its pledge to continue the struggle, to fight with arms until our strategic objectives of seizure of power is achieved. The people of South Africa, led by the ANC and its allies, will not betray the victory of the Angolan people, led by MPLA.

The ANC places on record its profound appreciation of the consistent all-round support given by the MPLA with a willingness which fully confirms the fact that MPLA, the Government and people of Angola, regard as their own the revolutionary struggles of peoples for national and social liberation. In giving this support,



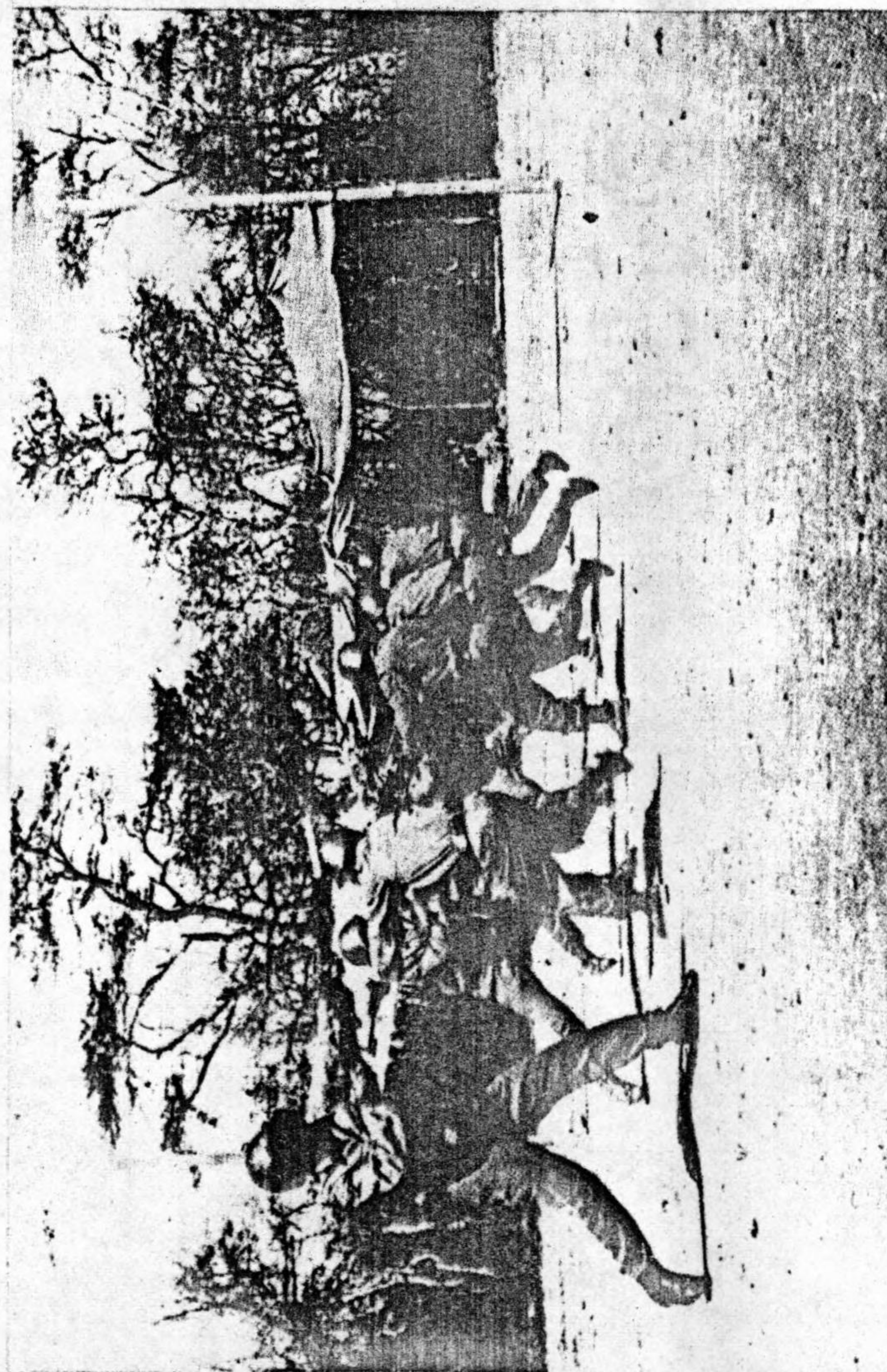
“Let us popularise our cause – the cause of a new South Africa.” Soweto, June 1976.



"You are the soldiers of our revolution. You are political soldiers." Umkhonto we Sizwe militants.



Solomon Mahlangu, hero of the Revolution – murdered 6th April, 1979.



"We aim to establish a society free of the exploitation of man by man." People's soldiers in training.

Angola is being faithful to the highest aspirations of Africa, to the basic policy of the OAU, to the principle of proletarian internationalism.

In this context, we wish to mention the support, the co-operation and the facilities given us by the countries of the Frontline, including Swaziland and Lesotho.

We wish to acknowledge also the support and assistance we receive from our mutual friends, the countries of the socialist community, especially the Soviet Union, the GDR and Cuba; from Algeria and other member countries of the OAU; from countries in Western Europe, notably Sweden, as well as progressive movements throughout the world.

The ANC re-iterates from this rostrum of the 1st Congress of the MPLA, its unswerving support for the Patriotic Front, SWAPO, the PLO, Freltin, Polisario and all other revolutionary forces fighting for progressive change.

On behalf of the masses of the people of our country, we wish this First Congress all success. We have no doubt that its results will be a lasting contribution to the revolutionary process towards the establishment and consolidation of a new progressive order, not only for the people of Africa, but also for all mankind.

VIVA O MPLA – PARTIDO DE VANGUARD DA CLASSE OPERARIA!

VIVA O PRIMEIRO CONGRESSO DO MPLA!

VIVA O CAMARADA PRESIDENTE AGOSTINHO NETO!

ABAIXO O COLONIALISMO E RACISMO!

ABAIXO OS BANTUSTANOS!

A LUTA CONTINUA!!

A VITÓRIA É CERTA!!

**SPEECH AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE
MONCADA DETACHMENT OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE.
ANGOLA – December 1978**

Comrade General of the Cuban Army,
Comrades Members of the Central Committee of the Communist
Party of Cuba,
Comrades Commanders of FAPLA Leaders of the MPLA – Party
of Labour,
Comrades Members of our People's Army, Umkhonto We Sizwe,

We are assembled on these grounds here today to present to this detachment of Umkhonto We Sizwe a name and an award to strengthen these gallant sons and daughters of our people, and to proclaim the accomplishment of a task assigned to our comrades as part of their mission in the struggle of the people of South Africa against racism, apartheid, colonial domination, class exploitation, facism, neo-colonialism and imperialism.

It is a task which was assigned by history itself to MPLA – Party of Labour, to the Communist Party of Cuba, and to the ANC. Cadres of the ANC, of Umkhonto We Sizwe, have completed their course, taken under guidance and instruction by members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, on ground made available by the Angolan Government and under the security of the People's Armed Forces for the liberation of Angola. We congratulate our Cuban comrades, our Angolan comrades and our comrades, the militants of the ANC on the accomplishments of this joint task. The character of the forces we are confronting in South Africa shows that our enemy is a universal enemy, the enemy of Angola and Cuba; the enemy of all Africa, the enemy of mankind. Our struggle in South Africa constitutes one of the main focal points and battlefronts in the world-wide offensive for the overthrow of reaction and the creation of a new world order, which accords with man's love of justice, freedom and dignity; which fulfils man's spiritual, political, economic, social and cultural aspirations.

Like the Cuban people, the Angolan people have for decades and centuries, borne the heavy and composite yoke of racism, colonialism and unbridled exploitation. They have victoriously waged revolutionary wars against the forces of neo-colonialism and fascism and in the face of furious and relentless harassment by imperialism

and some of its new and unbelievable recruits. Both peoples are now making great strides and advances in socialist construction, in the building of a new society, free of the vices, the criminal, social system and inhumanity which imperialism has sought and seeks to impose everywhere in the world.

The people of South Africa led by the ANC are honoured to be involved so intimately with the heroic and revolutionary Angolan and Cuban people. This day, this occasion, is itself an eloquent expression of their commitment to the principles of internationalism which is the motive power behind the sense of unity and identity which brings the world progressive and anti-imperialist forces, headed by the socialist community, into active involvement and supportive participation in the struggles for national liberation and social emancipation, and in the defence of people's victories against counter-revolution and imperialist manoeuvres.

We pay glorious tribute to the great leaders of the Angolan and Cuban revolutions, particularly Comrade Agostinho Neto, world-famous revolutionary, steeled and tested in two successive wars of liberation, President of the MPLA – Partido de Trabalho and of the People's Republic of Angola and Comrade Fidel Castro, Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Cuba, idol of the progressive youth, workers and anti-fascist fighters the world over.

Viva Agostinho Neto!

Viva Fidel Castro!

The 4th of February, the 11th of November and the 27th of March in Africa, and in Latin-America the 26th of July and the 1st of January – these are dates that are recorded indelibly in the diary of the world revolutionary movement, and stay fresh and invigorating in the minds of those still fighting reaction with arms in hand, as in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Palestine, Western Sahara, East Timor and South Africa.

And yet these historic dates might well have been lost to history but for the internationalist support of the world Socialist community and especially the mighty Soviet Union, as well as the encouragement, solidarity and various forms of assistance that come from

revolutionary and progressive peoples, movements and countries in Africa, Latin America, Western Europe and other parts of the world.

In a revolutionary struggle, every successful action, every triumphant performance, every victory is always the beginning of the next step forward, a step more difficult than the last, because the advance of the revolution drives the enemy into more desperate counter-offensives and last-ditch positions, from which he fights with every weapon within his reach. Today marks such a beginning, particularly for the militants of Umkhonto We Sizwe, graduating today.

The geo-political and military terrain ahead of us in Southern Africa is perhaps becoming increasingly studded with military aggressions against sovereign African States; massacres of children, black civilians and even missionaries accused of collaborating with the liberation forces; the incidence of bomb explosions and assassinations of opponents of the fascist and racist imperialist-backed regimes is rising.

As at no time in its infamous history, the Robben Island prison now holds within its fascist walls revolutionaries ranging in age from 65 to 13. Grandfathers and grandchildren fight from a common trench; national leaders of world fame have been joined in revolutionary struggle by the youngest fighters ever. The criminal regime has become even more beastly more savage, more inhuman. The much-vaunted representatives of Western and so-called christian civilisation have long been unmasked as a barbarous bunch of bandits, whose foremost and proudest pre-occupation at present is to terrorise Southern Africa with massacres, murders, assassinations and brutal torture. All this represents the suicidal failure of the fascists to appreciate that it is precisely these crimes which made revolutionary struggle and victory unavoidable, so that there can be peace for the peoples.

Today there are more imperialist powers running around Southern Africa than at any time in the history of the anti-colonial struggle in Africa. The glorious victories of FRELIMO, MPLA and the PAIGC against Portuguese colonialism were the beginning of the next step forward, more difficult because those very victories put imperialism on the defensive, and the imperialists are busy day and night, arming and financing their agents, Vorster and Smith, recruiting mercenaries and Zionists to reinforce the racist crimes, bribing puppets and stooges, and rewarding traitors and sell-outs. Nor is

imperialism confining its operations to Southern Africa. It has unleashed a diplomatic and economic offensive in Africa aimed at isolating the national liberation forces spearheading the revolutionary struggle in Southern Africa.

This explains the impudent clamour against the presence of Soviet and Cuban personnel in independent and sovereign African States. The "human rights" slogan thought up by the same ones who have thought up the neutron bomb is a tactic to lift the international pressure on the inhuman apartheid regime and divert attention to a lonely and insignificant trial of an individual in the Soviet Union away from the criminal regime where countless political trials are barely public and largely farcical, where hundreds are sentenced to years of detention without trial, tortured most of the way, small children included; where hundreds have vanished from the face of the earth, murdered by uniformed thugs who were duly congratulated for their crimes. How often have the fascist South African Commissioners of Police and the Ministers of so-called Justice missed the opportunity of paying glowing tribute to their police force?

Imperialism is fishing for recruits among the non-aligned countries which, at the Conference in Belgrade, took firm and militant anti-imperialist positions. The struggle is on, as much in the city streets and mountain slopes of South Africa, as in every region of the globe. It is this struggle which you militants of the ANC, soldiers of Umkhonto We Sizwe, have now been equipped for. Though you will direct your newly acquired military and political knowledge and skills against the immediate enemy on our motherland, by so doing you will also be joining forces in solidarity with our allies and comrades-in-arms, fighting as detachments of the anti-imperialist front in other sections and theatres of struggle.

We charge you, whether fighting, or working or living through any given situation, as individuals, as units or other operational formations, to be, and become a new and effective force, a decisive reinforcement in the national, regional and international forces of the revolutionary struggle. Umkhonto We Sizwe, the ANC and all its allies, our fighting youth, workers and the masses in general must feel your weight. The enemy must know you from bitter experience.

You completed your course at the end of the month of July, 1978.

It is during that month that our people in South Africa and the progressive world observed the 60th anniversary of Nelson Mandela, a world-famous revolutionary. It is in this month of July that the great and historic 11th World Festival of Youth and Students was held, in which we were represented by a contingent of some 100 of our own youth and students who acquitted themselves most creditably. But how did this great event come to be held in Havana, the capital of Socialist Cuba, a country, a people that radiates peace and friendship, uncompromisingly anti-imperialist and completely free of imperialist domination, exploitation and racism, internationalist and internationally popular to a degree that is giving US imperialism splitting headaches?

It all started with the Assault on the Moncada Barracks, on July 26th, 1953, with Fidel Castro in command. The Moncada heroes and martyrs reversing a host of setbacks, one after another, finally hoisted the triumphant flag of victory with the collapse of the Batista regime on January 1st, 1959.

It is Moncada which in the critical months from October 1975 to March 1976, made available to the heroic Angolan people led by the MPLA and to the revolutionary struggle especially in Southern Africa, an internationalist contingent from revolutionary Cuba.

It is Moncada which has become a dynamic and effective component of the world revolutionary struggle, helping in the conquest of a continuing succession of victories by progressive mankind.

The Moncada attack was itself a creature of earlier revolutionary struggles dating back to Cespedes in 1868, to Jose Marti, Gomez, Antonio Maceo and others in the 19th century, and a long list of dedicated patriots during the period of the neo-colonisation of Cuba.

We were present as honoured guests at the 25th Anniversary of Moncada held in Santiago de Cuba on July 26th, this year, in the company of many Cuban revolutionaries who witnessed the attack or took part in it.

From Santiago, from the 25th anniversary of Moncada, I have brought you, as a special donation to this detachment, Comrade Fidel's historic speech, a monument to Moncada, Granma, the Sierra Maestra and the Cuban revolution. Study the speech and do research on it. Apply its rich substance to our situation and our struggle.

Secondly, after some consultation, again from Cuba, from the 25th Anniversary and the 11th World Festival, we bring this detachment its own name – *The Moncada Detachment* of Umkhonto We Sizwe.

Thirdly, from Comrade Fidel Castro himself, we bring you greetings. He asked us many questions about you and the rest of our armed militants and fighting people. This is a message from a devoted revolutionary and internationalist of outstanding stature. We entrust you as the Moncada Detachment with the task of conveying these greetings to all our people by your personal conduct, dedication, quality of performance, and unyielding determination.

BE LOYAL TO THE REVOLUTION!

NEVER BETRAY YOUR COMRADES, YOUR MOVEMENT,
YOUR PEOPLE!

NEVER BETRAY THE REVOLUTION!

MATLA!

EXCERPTS FROM SPEECH AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE JUNE 16TH. DETACHMENT OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE. ANGOLA – 1978

This Detachment is the first to graduate in Angola as part of our people's army, the real people of South Africa, following the expulsion from this land of the racists and colonialists. This Detachment has a history behind it. It was born in the flame of the Soweto uprisings, the uprisings in Pretoria, Cape Town and everywhere in the country. The majority of the members of this Detachment are the children of the working class in South Africa. The Detachment, members of which were part of an event that in its own right shook the world, this Detachment resting on the foundation of the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the 21st Anniversary of the Cuban Army, the Third Congress of Frelimo and the First Congress of MPLA.

This Detachment, graduating whilst the war is on should have a great name. In the name of the African National Congress, National Executive Committee, the Revolutionary Council and the command of Umkhonto we Sizwe we name this Detachment – embracing not only the combatants who are here, but also those who

have been called to duty, who have been given assignments, and those who even have laid down their lives, and three of them have, those who should have been here but have been prevented by various circumstances from being here, all these are members of what we shall from now on call – the *June 16th Detachment*!

In the name of your fallen comrades, in the name of the martyrs of revolution, in the name of all revolutionaries and fighters who have laid down their lives for the victory of our people, you will honour your name, pursue the struggle for the attainment of the goals set out in the Freedom Charter for National Liberation for the seizure of political and economic power by the broad masses of our people, support the struggles of other people for national liberation and social progress and regard every assignment given you as your sector in the revolutionary front.

Not all of you will be assigned to fight in the country at the same time. Our struggle is world wide, our tasks are spread the world over but we shall concentrate our major force in the country. We shall not allow the enemy any freedom of action or movement if we can help it. We shall build our movement, we shall strengthen and consolidate our friendships with our supporters and comrades in arms; we shall fight everywhere and wherever duty calls us to fight. You who must confront the racist enemy in our country, remember that the target of attack is the enemy's armed forces, the enemy's industrial base, his lines of communications, enemy personnel committed to the defence of fascist rule, of racist rule and the colonial system. You will attack the enemy's morale and his will to fight. Your attack must be such that in the process you win the support and the allegiance of the population of our country.

Comrades, you will remember that our society is divided along racial lines. We must not allow the enemy to determine the character of our struggle, to define for us what forces to exclude from the revolutionary front fighting for a new social order in the country. Our struggle shall not proceed along racial lines. The most oppressed, the most exploited targets of the world's most extreme racism, these, especially the oppressed and brutally exploited working class, these are the rock, the foundation and the leading force around which unity in struggle is already growing and which we must strengthen and consolidate and which will grow, drawing into its swelling ranks

workers, peasants, youth, intelligentsia from every sector of the South African population. It is not enough that the guerrilla attacks the enemy. It is necessary that he does so in a manner that wins for him the approval of the masses and identifies them with the attack. Thus, we attack to destroy the enemy or what belongs to him but at the same time to build the forces of the revolution.

Just as we cannot advance our struggle by ignoring the working masses in the cities and farms and the peasants in the rural areas, we as a movement, however powerful, cannot ignore the world's movement of solidarity which is an indispensable ally against imperialism and its agents. Some of you, perhaps a few, may be assigned tasks in this area of struggle. Few, because we must regulate our offensive. The size of our operational units and detachments must be tuned in to the conditions that obtain, lest we are the losers and the enemy is the victor.

Further comrades, accept these as a guide in your life as a soldier of our people, to learn always to fight, always to build, create, produce always.

Comrades, members of the June 16th Detachment, you are the soldiers of our revolution. You are political soldiers. It is important to remember you are political soldiers, members of Umkhonto we Sizwe the armed wing of our liberation movement led by the ANC. As Political Soldiers, you will be expected like others before you, like us who stand here, to dedicate your entire life to the struggle for the liberation of our motherland; for the liberation of our people; for a new social order in our country; for the overthrow of colonial domination in our land. The struggle has already exposed you to hardships and sacrifices. It will continue to do so. You will face up to any hardships and make any sacrifice the revolution demands of you. If need be, you will sacrifice your very life – will you comrades? [Shouts: Yes, Comrade President.]

To ensure a speedy victory of our revolution you will work and fight for the unity of our people and will defend that unity against a thousand factionalists. You will defend it against today's enemy agents and self-seekers posing as revolutionaries, and we have many. In the same spirit as soldiers of the people, you have a duty to defend and strengthen the unity of the liberation forces of the detachments of Umkhonto we Sizwe and the ANC and its allies.

Our movement comrades, from the earliest days of 1912 has always been internationalist in its outlook, in its action, so will every soldier of the movement. From each soldier, the movement expects, and demands, revolutionary discipline. By your personal conduct, in your unit, in the streets, wherever you are, you will honour your Detachment, honour the martyrs of Soweto and other places in our countries, honour Umkhonto we Sizwe and our movement, honour our people.

GLORY TO THE JUNE 16TH DETACHMENT OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE!



Marcelino dos Santos of FRELIMO, and Comrade Tambo greet Fidel Castro in Havana.
 "Our struggle in South Africa constitutes one of the main ... battlefronts in the world-wide offensive for the overthrow of reaction and the creation of a new world order which accords with man's love of justice, freedom and dignity."

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