

Submit or fight!

30 years of Umkhonto we Sizwe



The history of the people's army

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is about the history of our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe. On 16 December 1991, MK will be 30 years old. Together with the mass uprisings of our people, the international campaign to isolate apartheid and underground political work, the armed struggle has forced the apartheid government to talk to the ANC.

The Political Education Section of the ANC made this book so that people can learn and remember the history of MK. We divided this history into three main phases, or time periods. These are:

THE START OF MK

MK FIGHTS ON

MK TODAY

This is a simple division. It aims to show that MK went through different stages, taking forward the armed struggle in different ways. In each stage MK gained more experience and learnt new lessons.

We also tried to write this book in English that is easy to read. Sometimes we had to use words which are not used in every day life. We have put these words on a list on the last page of the book. You can look up the meanings of words that you don't know on this list.

Submit or fight!

30 years of Umkhonto we Sizwe

CONTENTS

30 YEARS OF MK

30 years of a people's army 2

Views of MK leaders on the 30th anniversary

OR Tambo: A guiding light for 30 years 3

We salute Comrade OR Tambo

START OF MK

1961: The birth of the people's army 4

The events leading to the formation of MK

Umkhonto's first Commander 6

An interview with President Mandela

It was just the beginning 10

The Sabotage Campaign by Joe Slovo

The long road home 12

The Wankie Campaign by Chris Hani

MK's Commander looks back 14

An interview with Joe Modise

MK FIGHTS ON

MK alive and fighting! 16

The growth of MK in the 70s and 80s

MK operations 19

Chris Hani talks about operations 20

An interview with the Chief of Staff

MK TODAY

Umkhonto prepares for a future defence force 23

An interview with Joe Modise and Chris Hani

WE SALUTE MK!

Army of the people 27

The people who joined MK

GLOSSARY 28

A list of political and military terms

Look up words you don't know!

30 years of a people's army

MK has brought us closer to victory - MK leaders



President NELSON MANDELA, Commander in Chief of MK

'The formation of MK gave the oppressed people of our country hope of ultimate victory. It raised the prestige of the organisation. Indeed, the emergence of MK was the cutting edge of all pillars of our struggle. The 30th anniversary is the time when we remember with pride the sacrifices of the fearless soldiers of our revolution. Without them we would not have reached our present position of dynamism and militancy.'

JOE MODISE, Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe

'The significance of the 30th anniversary is that we are celebrating this anniversary in South Africa. Today we are here openly and legally. Now this has not come about because of a change of heart on the part of the regime. It is the enormous contribution that MK itself has made to bring about this situation. It is in this light that we celebrate the 30th anniversary.'

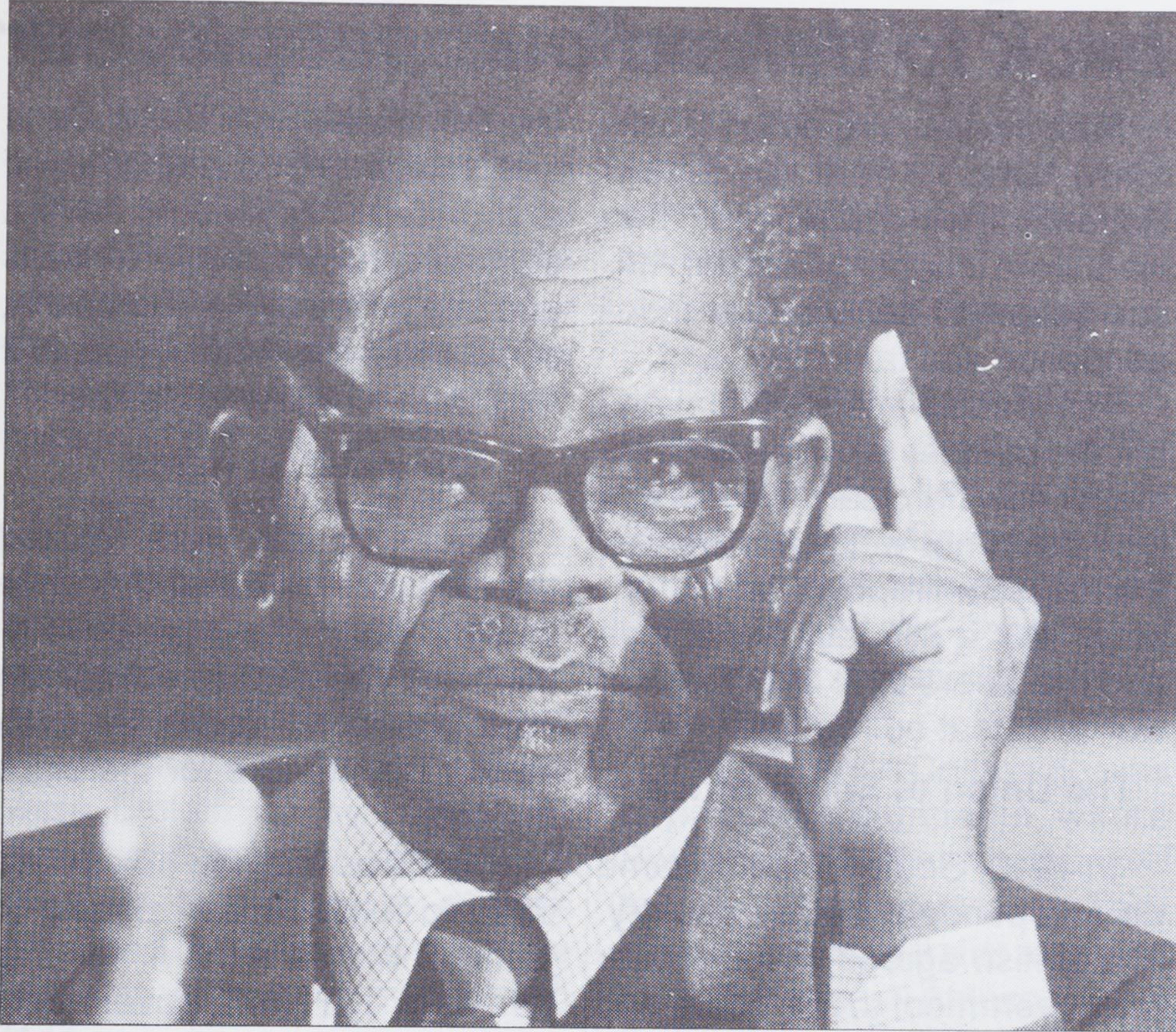
CHRIS HANI, MK Chief of Staff

'The 30th anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe is a significant occasion for our people and our organisation as well as for Umkhonto itself. If one looks back one is bound to see that Umkhonto we Sizwe has grown and developed from humble and small beginnings. It had to convince our people that they could fight against the violence of the state. It had to start from scratch to train people who had been denied military skills ever since they were defeated by the white colonial state. From those beginnings Umkhonto has grown. It has carried out operations inside the country, it has attracted thousands of young South Africans into its ranks and has played an important role in mobilising the people to fight against apartheid.'

After 30 years I think we have got a right as Umkhonto we Sizwe to look back at our history with pride and to tell ourselves that we have really made an important contribution to the struggle for democracy, for unity, non-racialism and non-sexism in South Africa.'



OR Tambo: A guiding light for 30 years



As the President of the ANC, Comrade OR Tambo was the Commander in Chief of Umkhonto for most of thirty years. During this time he attended to not only the training of MK cadres and the carrying out of operations, but also to the needs and well being of cadres. Under his guidance, MK grew from a few hundred recruits to thousands of trained soldiers. He will always be remembered by all MK combatants for his enormous contribution to the armed struggle. At this time of celebrating the 30th anniversary of MK, we also salute Comrade OR for his selfless service to our country and our people's army, MK.

Since May 1990, the ANC has been involved in talks with the government.. In August 1990, the ANC decided to suspend armed actions. This was done to improve the possibilities for a negotiated settlement. But none of the agreements the ANC has signed with the government say that MK must be disbanded. MK will only be disbanded when it has achieved its objective - the creation of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist country. The agreements also do not mean that MK must hand over its weapons. MK will only consider handing over its weapons when an interim government is in place.



The ANC and National Party talks at Groote Schuur in May 1990.

1961: The birth of the

'We will fight back to defend our people, our

Thirty years ago, on December 16 1961, bomb blasts in three cities rocked South Africa. This was the birth of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the army of the oppressed people of South Africa.

Umkhonto was the people's answer to the violence of the government, its police and army. To understand why Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed, we must look back into the history of our country.

Violence made SA

The South African state was created through violence and is still maintained by force. From the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in the year 1652 until the Act of Union in 1910, the Boers and British fought wars against the black people they found living in southern Africa.

First the San (so-called Bushmen) and Khoi (so-called Hottentots) were wiped out. Then wars were fought against the African people to destroy their independence and take their land.

The people resisted bravely, but the contest was unequal. No matter how heroically they fought they could not win a war against the massive firepower of the enemy. But it still took the British and the Boers over 200 years of war to defeat our people.

The Union of South Africa

In 1910, South Africa became an independent settler country. The British agreed to hand over the government to the Boers and British people who had settled in South Africa. One of the reasons for this was so that the different Boer and British governments in

the Transvaal, Free State, Cape and Natal would be strengthened and united. They would have a common policy towards Africans and one united military force that could crush the African people if they tried to resist white rule.

No political rights

African people were refused the political rights that the white settlers had. The new government soon set about creating new laws that would make life even harder than before for the black majority.

Pass laws and new taxes were used to force African people to work for whites in the mines and farms. In 1913, the government passed a law called the Land Act. The Land Act forced people off their land to live in crowded bantustans.



The Sharpeville Massacre in 1960. Police killed 69 peaceful anti-pass demonstrators

people's army

future and our freedom'

The African people immediately began to resist the Act of Union and the Land Act. They tried different peaceful methods of protest to appeal to the rest of the world for assistance. It was this resistance that led to the formation of the ANC in 1912.

Appeals fell on deaf ears

But the appeals of the ANC and the people's leaders fell on deaf ears. The poverty and hardship of the African people got worse. Strikes by African workers were broken up by police violence and leaders imprisoned. One of the biggest strikes smashed by police was the huge strike by African mineworkers in 1946.

In 1948 the NP came to power. They ruled the country by dividing all South Africa's people into dif-

ferent groups. They created apartheid laws to keep black people divided, poor and oppressed.

The Defiance Campaign

The policies of the NP were rejected by the people. In the 1950s the ANC and the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Congress and the Congress of Democrats, organised a Defiance Campaign.

The Defiance Campaign was a peaceful campaign where South Africans of all races united to defy some unjust laws. They used busses and trains reserved for other races. Africans burnt their passes and offered themselves up for arrest.

The Sharpeville Massacre

The government responded by using violence. This reached a high point in 1960 at Sharpeville. Police opened fire on anti-pass demonstrators, and killed 69 people. The ANC and PAC were banned. The peaceful efforts of the people were drowned in blood.

The violence against the majority of South Africans and the banning of peaceful organisations led, in 1961, to the formation of the people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe. It was an army established in the first place, in self-defence.

December 16, 1961 was the

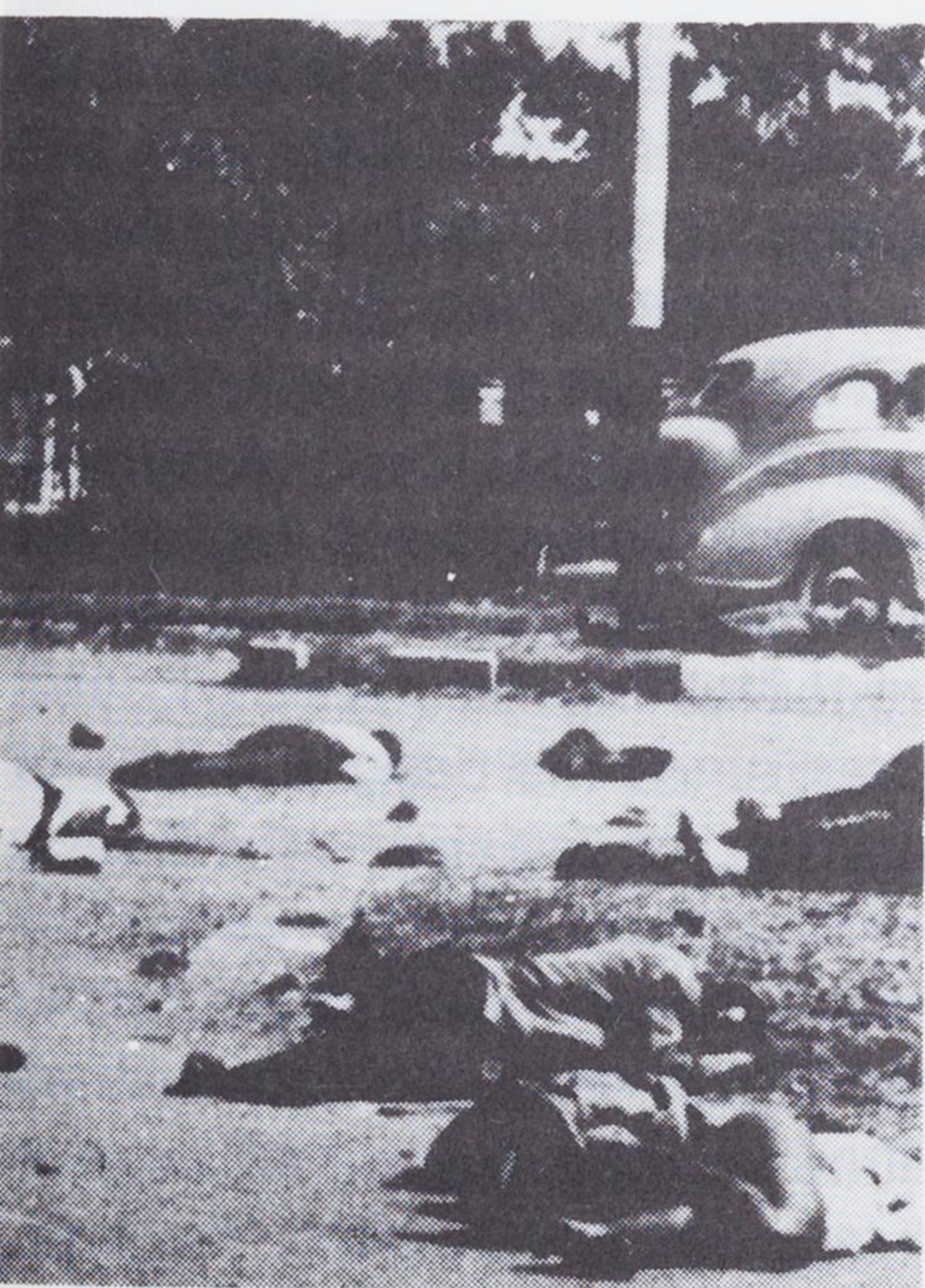


first time since the Bambatha Rebellion in 1906 that patriots had taken up arms as an organised force. MK explained their reasons in the MK Manifesto:

MK's Manifesto

'It is... well known that the main national liberation organisations in this country have consistently followed a policy of non-violence. They have conducted themselves peaceably at all times, regardless of Government attacks... They have done so because the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people's patience is not endless:

'The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom.' ■



Umkhonto's first Commander

ANC President Nelson Mandela was the first Commander in Chief of MK. He was one of the first ANC members to get military training. He talks about the beginning of Umkhonto.

Comrade President, you were the first Commander of MK. Tell us how the ANC came to the decision to begin the armed struggle.

It was not easy for people involved in non-violent struggles to begin to use violence. There was a long argument in the ANC where two different views were put forward.

The first was that non-violence was the main policy of the ANC and that only a national conference could change this policy. It was argued that the NEC did not have the power to change this policy. They argued that we could still use non-violent methods of struggle. It was strongly pointed out that the regime had always tried to cause a bloodbath but that our non-violent approach had stopped them from doing this. Violence would allow them to achieve this aim at last, and defeat the struggle.

The opposite view agreed that it was still possible to take non-violent action, but only in a very small way. But we felt that non-violence on its own could never

advance the struggle. Non-violence needed to be backed up with violent forms of action.

We also said that many loyal members of the ANC were themselves saying we should use violence. Some began forming or joining underground organisations, but without any skills or resources. We pointed out that this situation could only be guided if the ANC took the lead.

It was the second argument that in the end, won the day.

How did the ANC go about establishing MK?

When we established MK we made a mistake which has often been repeated in our movement. Instead of getting new and less well known activists we recruited the tried and tested members of the ANC. We ignored the fact that these comrades were known to the SAP. They would immediately be suspected as soon as violent acts began.

Also the recruitment into MK of experienced activists weakened the ANC. We tried to correct this mistake but it was a costly error.



The first targets were hit on 16 December 1961. Can you tell us the significance of this day?

The operations on 16 December 1961 opened a new chapter in our struggle. It was a turning point in the people's search for freedom. It was a dream come true! Nothing like this had been seen since the days of the wars against the British and the Boers.

The 16 December was a deliberate choice. It was, as you know, the day on which the Voortrekkers attacked and defeated Dingane. It is a day which they celebrate. But there is a history to 16 December, because before this

START OF MK

**Nelson
Mandela
in
1956**



**Nelson
Mandela
today,
Presi-
dent
of the
ANC**

major battle, Dingane attacked the Voortrekkers and killed most of the group that had visited his kraal. Wrong reasons are often given about why he did this. But we know, from the records that are left in our legends, that the Boers who visited Dingane on that day had planned to betray him. They visited his kraal apparently on a peaceful mission but at night they were seen taking careful note of the Royal Kraal in order to attack it later. It was for that reason that Dingane attacked and killed them.

We take pride in the fact that Dingane was able to match the

Voortrekkers and to discover their evil plans.

How did MK pick its first targets?

The regime's installations were targeted - Native Affairs Buildings, police stations and post offices were bombed in Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Strict instructions were given to bombers to avoid any action which might cause loss of life and damage to private property. By doing this we wanted to show that the people could hit back. That they were not intimidated by the NP's violence; that

they would strike back.

In 1961, how did you see the armed struggle developing?

Well, right from the beginning we aimed to develop MK not only into a guerilla army but into a people's army able to take on the enemy. But we were realistic. We realised that it would take a long time to do this.

We thought it was possible to defeat the government. We had many more people, a just cause and great support for our struggle both in South Africa and the rest of the world. We thought we would

Continued on page 8

START OF MK

Continued from page 7

be able to build a big military force. But we realised that this would not be achieved overnight.

It is often said that Umkhonto we Sizwe is fighting for justice and peace. What is meant by this?

On 16 December 1961 when we announced the start of MK we issued a Manifesto in which we

made it clear that this was done in self defence, to enable the masses of people to counter the blows of the enemy. We said that even at that 11th hour we were prepared to have discussions with the government to resolve the problems facing the country. Throughout the last 30 years Comrade Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC and other leaders of the movement stressed many times that the organisation was ready to lay down arms and to talk peace with the government.

MK cadres were also trained not only to shoot, but also to understand the reasons for the revolution - which is to bring security and happiness to South Africans of all races.

How did the regime respond to the formation of MK?

The regime never expected such a reaction. When MK emerged in the midst of explod-

ing bombs in three distant cities, the regime lost nerve. Vorster, then Minister of Justice, passed repressive legislation for detention without trial.

Many activists were imprisoned, killed or maimed in detention, banned or forced into exile. Terror and harassment became the order of the day.

When you look back today, do you think that decision made in 1961 to begin the armed struggle was correct?

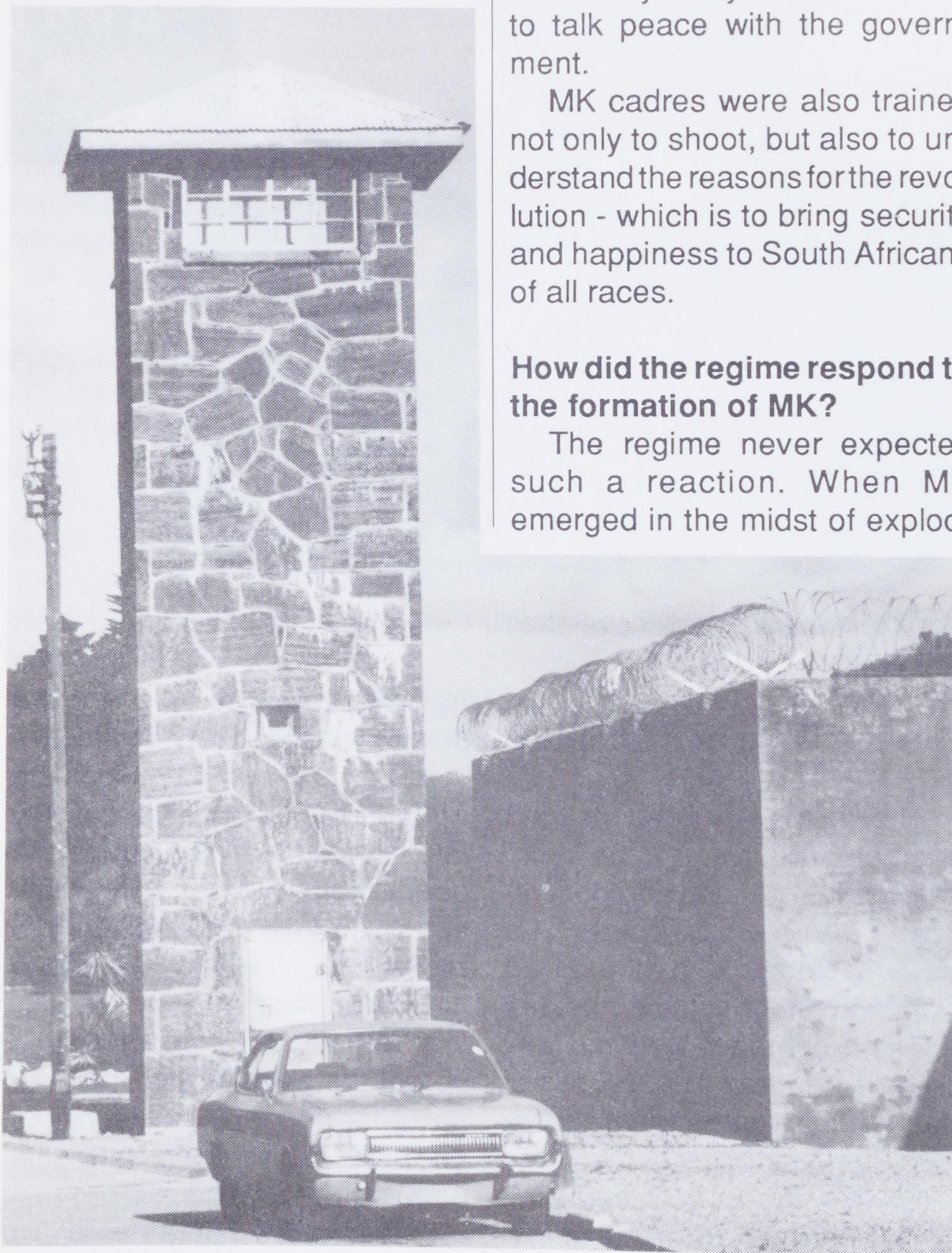
There were certainly times when our decision was strongly challenged by those comrades who had argued that we had resorted to violence without thinking through it clearly. This happened whenever political activities died down and it appeared that the movement had been crushed.

But like many of our comrades I never doubted the correctness of our decision. Comrade OR Tambo and exiled leadership rose to our expectations and fulfilled their tasks magnificently.

Veterans like Barney Ngakane, Martin Ramokgadi, Helen Joseph, Lilian Ngoyi and many others inside the country kept the fires burning. Many young people of the calibre of Steve Biko, Tiro, Terror Lekota, Diliza Mji put up an excellent performance. The operations of MK put the organisation in the frontline of struggle.

Comrade President, what was your most memorable experience in MK?

Well it's very difficult to say



Robben Island, where Mandela spent most of 27 years in prison.

START OF MK

because in those days one really did not make a note of his experiences. But the longest minute I ever experienced was on a day in 1961 when I stopped at a robot. Colonel Spengler who was the head of the Security Branch on the Witwatersrand pulled up next to me. I broke out in a cold sweat because I thought that was the end of my freedom. But fortunately he was not suspicious. He just looked ahead and when the robot changed he drove off. But I had been terribly frightened because I was sure I would be arrested.

And then on one occasion I had to attend a meeting in Fordsburg. I was in hiding and disguised myself as an ordinary worker, in an overall, old shoes and with my beard unkept. Comrade Molvi Cachalia, who was a very respected leader, asked a family to accommodate me for that night because we wanted to

select our own time for travelling. And this lady on being approached by Molvi Cachalia was very co-operative and agreed that I should sleep there that night.

So at the appointed time I drove up to the house, knocked and the lady came to the door and asked: "Yes, what do you want?" I said "Well, I think I am expected, Molvi Cachalia came here to ask if I could sleep here". She looked at me from the head downwards and said "Go away, I have no place for you!" And that was the end of the matter, you see!

In your time on the Island, how did you feel when operations like Sasol, Voortrekkerhoogte and Koeberg were carried out?

We were very excited! These were the strongholds of the enemy and were heavily guarded. Through these acts MK showed that our men had reached a standard of performance which

alarmed the regime. They convinced us that the struggle was advancing that we would come out of prison as a result of our own power and initiative. MK had grown into a people's army. The daring escape from the police cells in the sixties and those from Pretoria Prison revealed a high standard of training and planning on the part of our cadres, all of which kept our morale very high.

What do you think were the main achievements of MK?

The ability of MK grew constantly over the years and raised the hopes of our people. MK enabled our cadres to be true patriots and fired the youth with a spirit of resistance never witnessed in the history of the struggle.

Above all, MK together with other democratic formations, forced the regime to sit down and discuss with us a peaceful settlement. ■



Commander in Chief Nelson Mandela salutes MK troops in a visit to MK camps after his release

**Comrade Joe Slovo**

It was just the beginning

The Sabotage Campaign

By Joe Slovo

In 1961, MK first blew up government buildings and installations. This was the sabotage campaign. Joe Slovo, a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee, was in the 1961 High Command of Umkhonto. He was also Chief of Staff of Umkhonto from 1983 to 1986.

The sabotage campaign began when we launched Umkhonto, and continued until 1963. This period from 1961 to 1963, was a particular phase in the life of Umkhonto. This was because it was the first time that the liberation movement began to use violent methods. It is also a particular phase because after this, Umkhonto changed its approach to the armed struggle.

Pylons and pass offices

We attacked things that represented the economy like pylons and things that represented oppression like pass offices. We made sure that it was all done at night so that nobody would be injured. At the same time as the first bombs went off, we issued an appeal to the authorities which said to them:

We are demonstrating what we can do and this will grow. This is just the beginning. A mild beginning. It is not yet too late to change course and there may yet be still time for reason to break through.

We never thought that we could actually overthrow the regime or bring revolution by overturning a few pylons and putting some rather weak explosives at night in targets like pass offices. But we had good reasons for choosing these targets and avoiding taking lives.

No lives must be taken

We wanted to show people that a new phase in the resistance against apartheid had begun. We had to do this because non-violence had been the main policy of our movement. This had not been officially changed in the Congress movement. Some organisations like the Indian Congress still believed very strongly that non-violence was the only way we could struggle against the regime.

For the same reason when Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed, it was not said to be the armed wing of the liberation movement. When MK was formed it was decided to say that it was an independent military body that sup-

ported the liberation movement.

During this period of the sabotage campaign, the leaders of MK had two major tasks. The first was to set up MK structures. The second was to send comrades out of the country for military training and to bring them back.

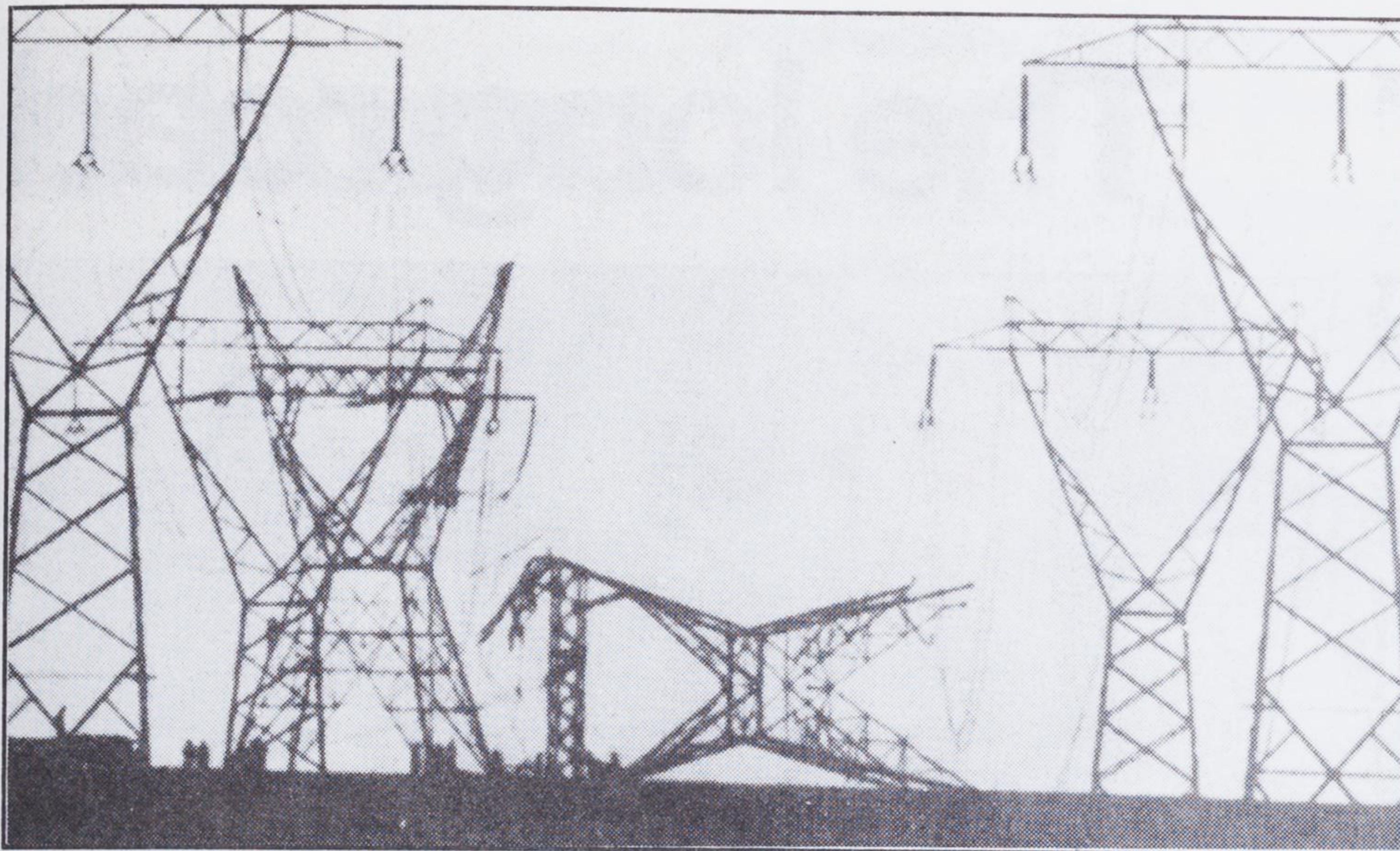
To set up the High Command of MK the ANC appointed Mandela and the SACP appointed me. We set up regional commands in all the main cities: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London.

The High Command

At first the Command consisted of Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki, Mlangeni and Mhlaba. Joe Modise was put onto it later, before he left the country. Kathrada, Goldreich and Goldberg were also involved and were part of the Johannesburg Command together with Hodgson and Motsoaledi.

The High Command sent many hundreds of activists out of the country to be trained in guerilla warfare and military struggle.

START OF MK



Pylons destroyed in one of the first sabotage operations



Comrade JB Marks was sent to consult the ANC outside the country

The High Command wrote a document called 'Operation Mayibuye'. This document was a plan of what Umkhonto would do during this period. We planned ways of bringing trained cadres back into the country.

To do this we planned to set up MK structures throughout the country. We were going to employ political organisers in each region immediately to prepare these structures. We also planned a political campaign to begin at the same time as trained cadres returned to the country.

Unrealistic plans

But our plans for bringing trained cadres back into the country were not realistic. We thought the African states could do much more for us than they could really do. We even thought they could provide airplanes to drop our soldiers.

To prepare for Operation Mayibuye, we also had a plan to make weapons inside the country. Denis Goldberg was in charge

of this. We planned to make 50 000 hand grenades. We had a way of doing it using materials we could get in South Africa.

A meeting of both the ANC and the Party, decided that it was urgent that this plan of Operation Mayibuye be taken to those leaders who had already left the country. Myself and JB Marks were sent to do this.

Meeting with Tambo

We met Tambo and the whole leadership of the ANC outside the country and discussed Operation Mayibuye. We immediately sent people to Algeria and other places to find out what other governments could do for us.

But six weeks later, while I was still out of the country the leadership of the ANC and Umkhonto were captured at a farm in Rivonia. This farm had been our headquarters.

They were put on trial and were given life sentences. Because of the destruction of our structures inside the country we could not

even try to carry on with Operation Mayibuye.

Looking back on it, it was not surprising that Rivonia was discovered and destroyed. We had not been careful enough.

Government got harsher

Once we began the armed struggle, the government also changed their methods. They became much harsher. They sent out policemen for special training in Algeria and the United States. They came back and completely changed the government's security structures and methods to deal with the new situation. They also began to make new laws that were much harsher.

We were not ready for this. In the years immediately after the Rivonia trial, all our attempts to rebuild underground structures failed. The structures of the ANC inside South Africa had been destroyed.

Yet the ANC never gave up on rebuilding these structures and in time these were revived. ■

START OF MK

The long road

Many young South Africans left the country in the 1960s to be trained as MK soldiers. The ANC now faced a serious problem of how to bring these soldiers back into the country to build MK. In 1967, 80 trained soldiers crossed the Zambezi River from Zambia into Zimbabwe. Their aim was to march back home. This was known as the Wankie Campaign.

They never reached South Africa. But the battles that they fought inside Zimbabwe, with the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) were heroic. CHRIS HANI, MK Chief of Staff, was in the Luthuli Detachment. He wrote this article on the Wankie Campaign.



Zimbabwean guerillas in the bush during the Zimbabwean war

Crossing the Zambezi was not easy. It was rocky and the current of the river was strong. After crossing the river, we were very happy because we had already crossed the first obstacle which was the river. We marched towards the Wankie Game Reserve.

At Wankie the unit split into two. One unit would move toward the east, towards an area called Lupane. The other would march towards the south. I was in the unit moving south and was the group's commissar. Our aim was to get to South Africa.

Two groups

The unit marching towards the east aimed to stay in Zimbabwe. They would help future MK combatants passing through Zimbabwe.

They made contact with the enemy about two weeks later.

Because of this battle the enemy (the combined forces of Smith and the SADF) knew that we were in Zimbabwe. They also realised that it was not only Zimbabweans who were involved in the battle but also MK.

This frightened the Pretoria regime. They thought they had crushed MK and the ANC. They sent more troops to Zimbabwe to fight the Luthuli Detachment.

A big battle was now looming on Zimbabwean soil. After we

had been in Zimbabwe for three to four weeks, we noticed that the enemy was using planes to search for us.

Planes searched for us

We continued moving south at night. With planes searching for us it was too dangerous to move during the day. During the day we took cover and dug foxholes and trenches in preparation for any meeting with the enemy.

The spirit of the men was magnificent. There were no complaints even though we were very

to home



START OF MK

knew we were close. In the afternoon the enemy began firing in our direction.

We had decided earlier on that everyone must be very careful with the ammunition and bullets he had. This was because we only had the ammunition we were carrying. We had no possibilities of getting more. We were not to shoot until we had a clear view of the target.

A burst of fire

The enemy got impatient. They stood up and began to ask "Where are the terrorists?" This was when there was a burst of furious fire from us.

That burst drove away the enemy. They simply ran for their dear lives leaving behind food, ammunition and communication equipment.

In this first epic battle we lost three comrades: Charles Seshoba, Sparks Moloi and Baloi. One comrade, Mhlonga was wounded. But we killed between 12 to 15 of them, including a lieutenant, a Sergeant-Major, a Warrant Officer and a number of other soldiers.

A feast

This was the first time that we had a good meal: cheese, biltong, meat and other usual rations carried by a regular army. For us this was a feast. We also captured a new LMG, some machine guns, uniforms and boots.

It was a day of celebrations because with our own eyes we had seen the enemy run. We had seen the enemy frozen with fear.

A week after this battle there was another one. One afternoon



Comrade Chris Hani

we noticed that the enemy was going to camp for the day. Three hours earlier the enemy had been bombing the area from the air. But lucky for us the bombing was about two kilometres away. The enemy thought they had hit the place where we had camped. They were going to wait until the next day to finish us off.

The commander decided this was the time to raid the enemy. We crawled towards the enemy's position and first attacked their tents with grenades and then followed with our AKs and LMGs. The enemy fought back furiously. After fifteen minutes we called for more men from behind us and within ten minutes we overran the enemy's position. In that battle we killed the enemy's colonel. We also killed a few lieutenants and other soldiers.

We continued our march south. We were running out of supplies and the country was very barren. We realised that we could not

Continued on page 14

short of water and food. We could only survive on killing wild animals and that was also risky.

Our first battle

Then came the days of our battles. The first battle we fought was in the afternoon. We had done the usual: taking cover, digging ourselves in, and organising defence of our base for that day. After some time we noticed that the enemy was not far from us. We could see their vehicles from a distance. They did not know exactly where we were but they

WANKIE CAMPAIGN**(continued from page 13)**

continue fighting. More and more enemy soldiers were being brought to the area. We decided to move away, into Botswana to refresh ourselves, heal those who were not well, get food and supplies and then go on.

Into Botswana

But the South African regime had forced the Botswana government to stop us getting into Botswana. When they came to meet us they played very friendly, saying that they had not come to harm us. They said that if we surrendered our fate would be discussed in a sympathetic way. They also promised that we would not be detained. We accepted what they said and surrendered. But we then discovered that they were actually being commanded by white officers from Britain and South Africa.

Imprisoned

We were manacled, handcuffed and abused. We were sentenced to between three and six years and ended up in the maximum security prison in Gaborone.

It is true that the conditions were very much against us ever reaching South Africa, through this route. But it would have been wrong for us to wait for a better time. For example it would have been wrong for MK to wait until a neighbouring country became independent, and made it easier for us to get into South Africa. It was important for us to try to create better conditions for MK to reach into the country. ■

MK's Commander

Joe Modise the Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe

Today Comrade Joe Modise is the Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe. As a young man in 1961 he readily joined MK and was part of the Sabotage Campaign. Here we ask him about the early campaigns of Umkhonto.

Comrade JM how did you come to join MK?

Well, I joined MK when the ANC was banned. As you know the African National Congress was involved in a non-violent struggle until 1960 when it was banned. It is no secret that among the young people the feeling was always that there was no way we

could achieve change in our country through peaceful, non-violent struggle. The regime responded to our peaceful efforts violently - it dealt with our people very ruthlessly. The Sharpeville massacre and the banning of organisations brought things to a head. When some of us were asked to join Umkhonto we Sizwe, they found

looks back

a very eager response.

What happened during the Sabotage Campaign? What was achieved?

In the sabotage campaign, the ANC said that no lives must be taken. I believe this was a correct decision. You must remember that at this time black people in this country had no way of getting firearms and had never been able to learn any military skills.

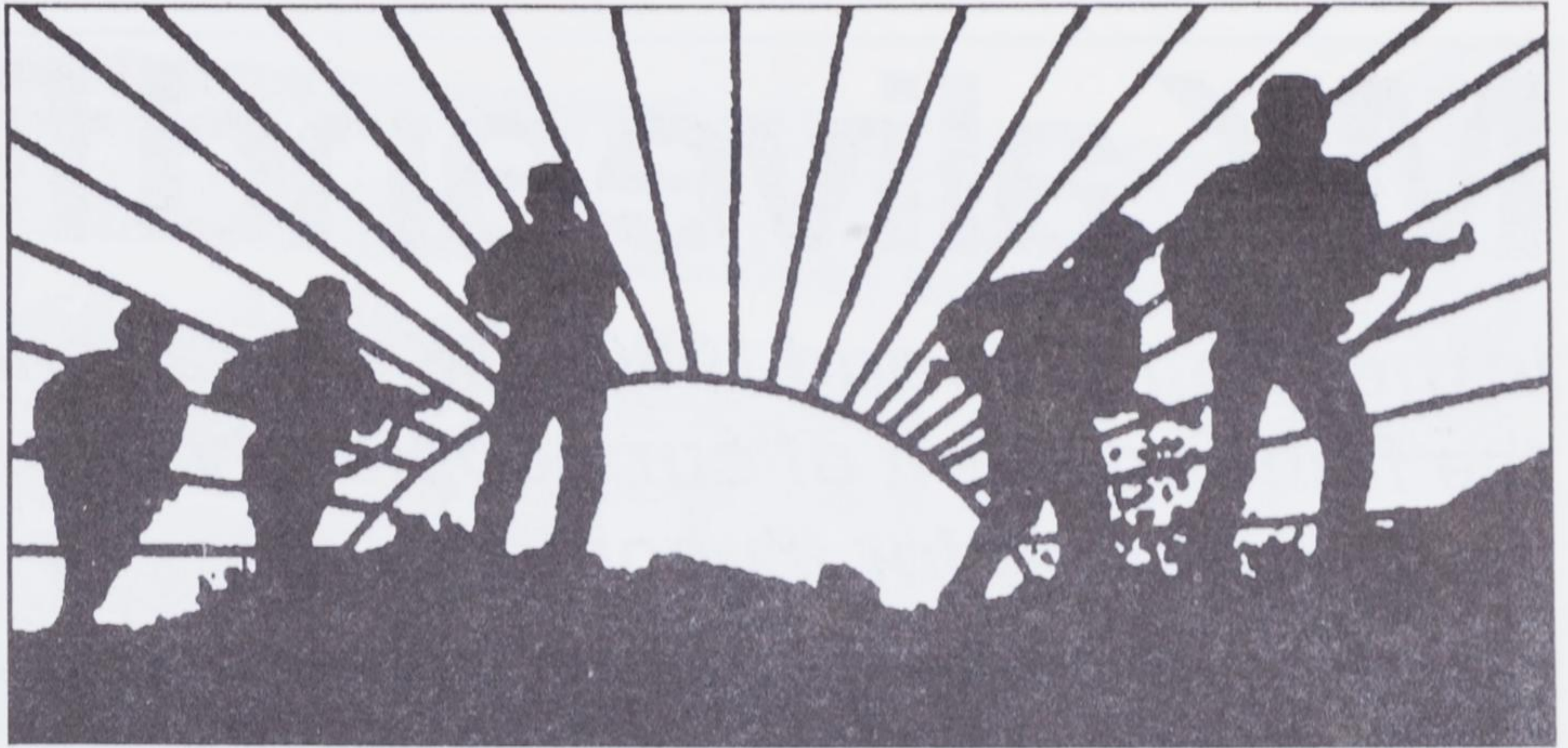
So this left us at a disadvantage. If we had chosen to take lives, MK would have been drowned in blood.

The sabotage campaign was also a process of training. Over these years when we were destroying economic installations, power lines, railway lines - we got experience we had never had before.

At the same time, people were leaving the country to get military training. The first campaign of trained cadres was the Wankie Campaign. What was the reason for this campaign?

You need to understand the background of the Wankie Campaign. When we left South Africa it was surrounded by countries that were sympathetic to SA. During those days Botswana was under the British, Rhodesia was under Smith, Mozambique was under the Portuguese. To get into SA you had to go through those countries.

We considered going through Mozambique. But the distances were much too great. Then we



considered Botswana. By that time Botswana was independent but there were still a lot of British officers in the Botswana administration. We felt it would be unwise to start problems for Botswana which was a young African state. We hoped that Botswana would in the future, help our struggle.

Then we considered Zimbabwe which was then Rhodesia. We knew that the SADF was already in Zimbabwe helping Smith fight against the Zimbabwean African People's Union (Zapu). The Zapu comrades were very willing to assist and suggested a joint operation into Zimbabwe.

What happened after Wankie?

We realised that men walking long distances with their food and weapons was going to be very difficult. We began to send in very small units secretly. We used false passports and found all manner of documents. We got our own experts to produce these documents and our people crossed these borders legally. We used the green border (through the bush) but we also used the official border a great deal. Our experts were so good that our people even came through Jan Smuts Airport!

We also started bringing in weapons separately from the units in vehicles we had adapted. We started using not only South Africans but also people from other countries who supported our struggle. They would bring the material into the country, bury it, work out sketches and send these back to us. There was the famous example of Klaas De Jonge and his wife Helene Pastoors. We are very grateful to those comrades.

What were the plans of MK after the Wankie Campaign?

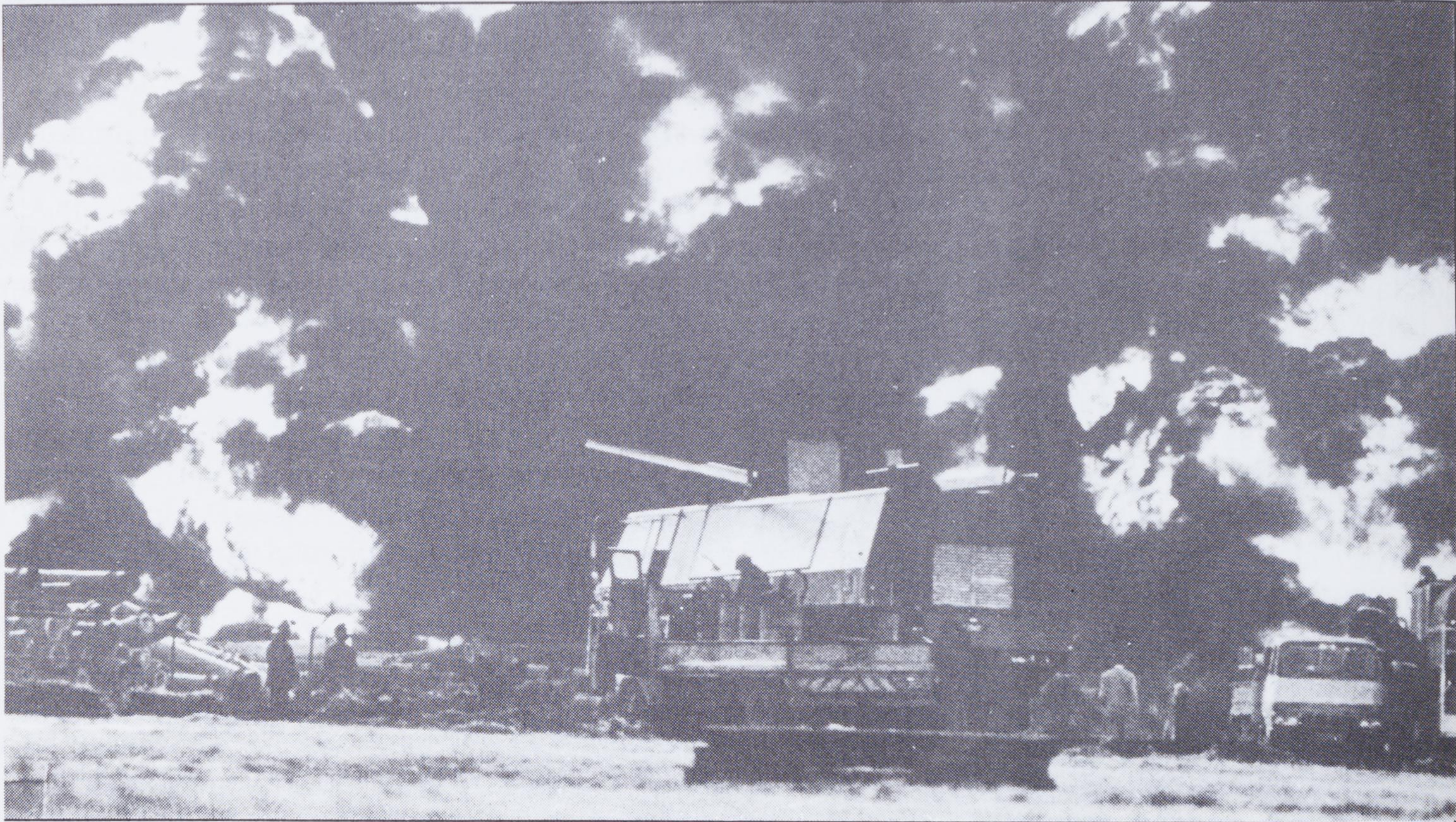
After the Wankie operations there was no MK activity for a long time. We were preparing our units and also trying to solve the problem of bringing weapons into the frontline states. And many of these frontline states did not allow us to bring weapons into their country - they were smuggled through these countries.

A lot of time lapsed and when we started again we had to try and prepare our people to participate in armed activity and assist MK guerillas. We had to restore confidence in our people. We began to plan operations that would show that MK was alive and still fighting. These took off after the 1976 uprising. ■

MK FIGHTS ON

MK alive and fighting!

In the late 1970s and 1980s MK operations increased. MK revived the fighting spirit of our people. By the middle of the 1980s, MK was preparing for a people's war.



The blast at Sasol in June 1980 was one of the most successful MK operations

During the 1970s, the ANC prepared itself for a new phase of the armed struggle.

Since 1961, the ANC had suffered many setbacks. The Rivonia Trial and the arrests of the ANC and MK leaders had destroyed the ANC's structures inside South Africa. The Wankie Campaign did not succeed in getting MK cadres back into the country.

The violent way that the government had destroyed political opposition had made people very

scared to be involved in politics.

Build the underground

This made it very difficult for the ANC to rebuild underground or secret structures inside South Africa. These had to be built to prepare people to fight apartheid. They were also needed to help the ANC and MK take forward the armed struggle by providing MK with information, food and shelter.

There was also another problem in the 1960s and early 1970s.

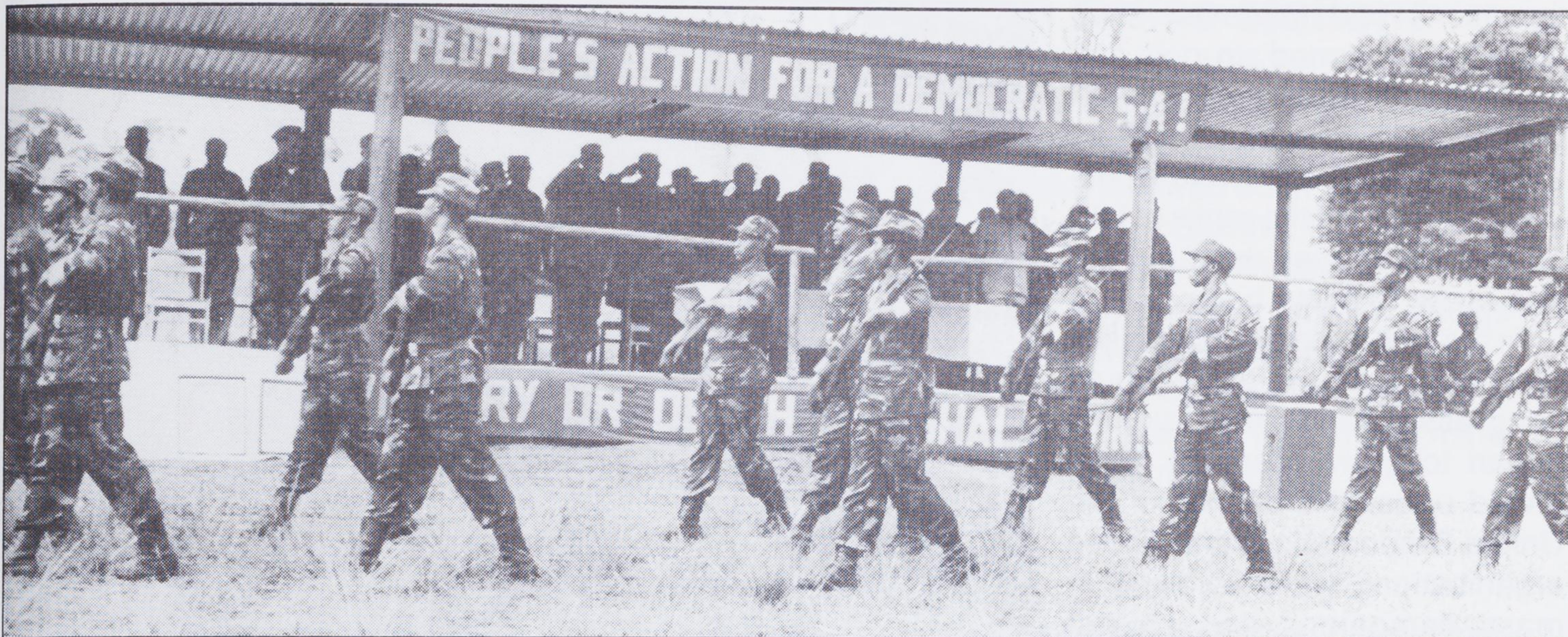
The countries neighbouring South Africa were not friendly to the ANC. We could not use them as 'bases' or stepping stones to enter South Africa.

No alternative

But the liberation movement did not have an alternative. It had to look for ways of getting around these problems. We could not simply wait until conditions got better. We had to try and make conditions better for ourselves.

In 1969, the ANC held a con-

MK FIGHTS ON



An MK parade at a training camp in Uganda

ference at Morogoro, in Tanzania. The fact that no ANC structures existed inside the country was seen as one of the biggest problems. The conference set up structures with the responsibility of rebuilding the underground inside South Africa.

Conditions changed

However by the 1970s some of these difficult conditions began to change for the better. Firstly, in 1975 Angola and Mozambique won their independence from Portugal. This meant that there were now neighbouring countries that we could move through into South Africa.

Secondly, new political organisations and trade unions were springing up in South Africa. These political organisations were the black consciousness organisations like the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention. These organisations and trade unions brought back a mood of militance among the people and challenged the re-

gime. The youth and the workers were ready to fight again!

Thirdly, the underground was being rebuilt inside the country, although on a small scale. Comrades like Harry Gwala and Joe Gqabi who were recently released from prison were two of the main people involved in doing this. They also started to link the underground units with the new working class movement and the Black consciousness movement.

People were angry

These three changes helped a great deal in rebuilding the underground leadership of ANC and rebuilding the mass movement.

In 1973, a huge strike was staged by workers in Durban. In 1976, the students of Soweto took to the streets to reject Bantu education. The protests spread across the country and hundreds of students were shot by police. The mood of the people was very angry.

The ANC tried to support the workers in the 1973 strikes and the students in 1976. But it could

not do so very well. The underground was still small. After a short time Harry Gwala was arrested and others like Joe Gqabi had to leave the country.

MK had not carried out any operations since the Wankie Campaign in 1967. MK had to show the people that it was still alive and fighting. This it did through operations which it called 'armed propaganda'. These operations aimed to win support for the armed struggle from the people. The operations also aimed to show the people that we could win against the power of the apartheid state. This would give the people confidence to continue the struggle.

Police stations

The main operations were directed against the enemy installations (buildings) and symbols of apartheid like police stations. MK was instructed to avoid taking the lives of ordinary people or civilians.

By the time the 1980s arrived,
Continued on page 18

MK FIGHTS ON

conditions had improved even more for the armed struggle and the ANC. Many angry youth left the country and went for military training after the Soweto uprising. This swelled the ranks of MK. By the 1980s they were trained and ready to come back.

In the 1980s, organisations like civics, student congresses, youth congresses and trade unions began to grow. Many of these united under the banner of the United Democratic Front. These organisations were involved in mass campaigns and protest against the government. They made it easier for MK to be in touch with the people and give them military training.

MK had grown

MK as an army had grown and was more powerful than ever. MK could now challenge the enemy directly at its most highly guarded places. Successful operations like the attack on the Voortrekkerhoogte SADF base, the car bomb at SA Air Force Headquarters in Pretoria and many police stations showed what MK could do.

MK put fear in enemy forces and showed our people that they could take power. The South African Police realised that they could no longer escape death as they had thought before.

People's war

In the townships many young people began to challenge the government by using anything they could lay their hands on - petrol bombs, stones, and even capturing policemen and police vehicles. The youth were ready



Youth lead a funeral march for an MK member at Tumahole

to sacrifice for freedom. MK was able to build detachments of people who were linked to Umkhonto we Sizwe and who saw themselves as members of MK.

The successes of MK in the 1980s does not mean that MK and the ANC did not still have problems and weaknesses. One serious problem was that it was still not easy for MK cadres to get into the country. Even though neighbouring states like Zimbabwe and Mozambique were more sympathetic to the ANC they could not provide the ANC with rear base facilities. This was because the South African government attacked them for supporting the ANC, often killing civilians. They also used economic pressure to force these countries not to give the ANC bases in their countries.

There was also another problem. Armed missions and underground political work were planned and carried out by different structures. And often armed

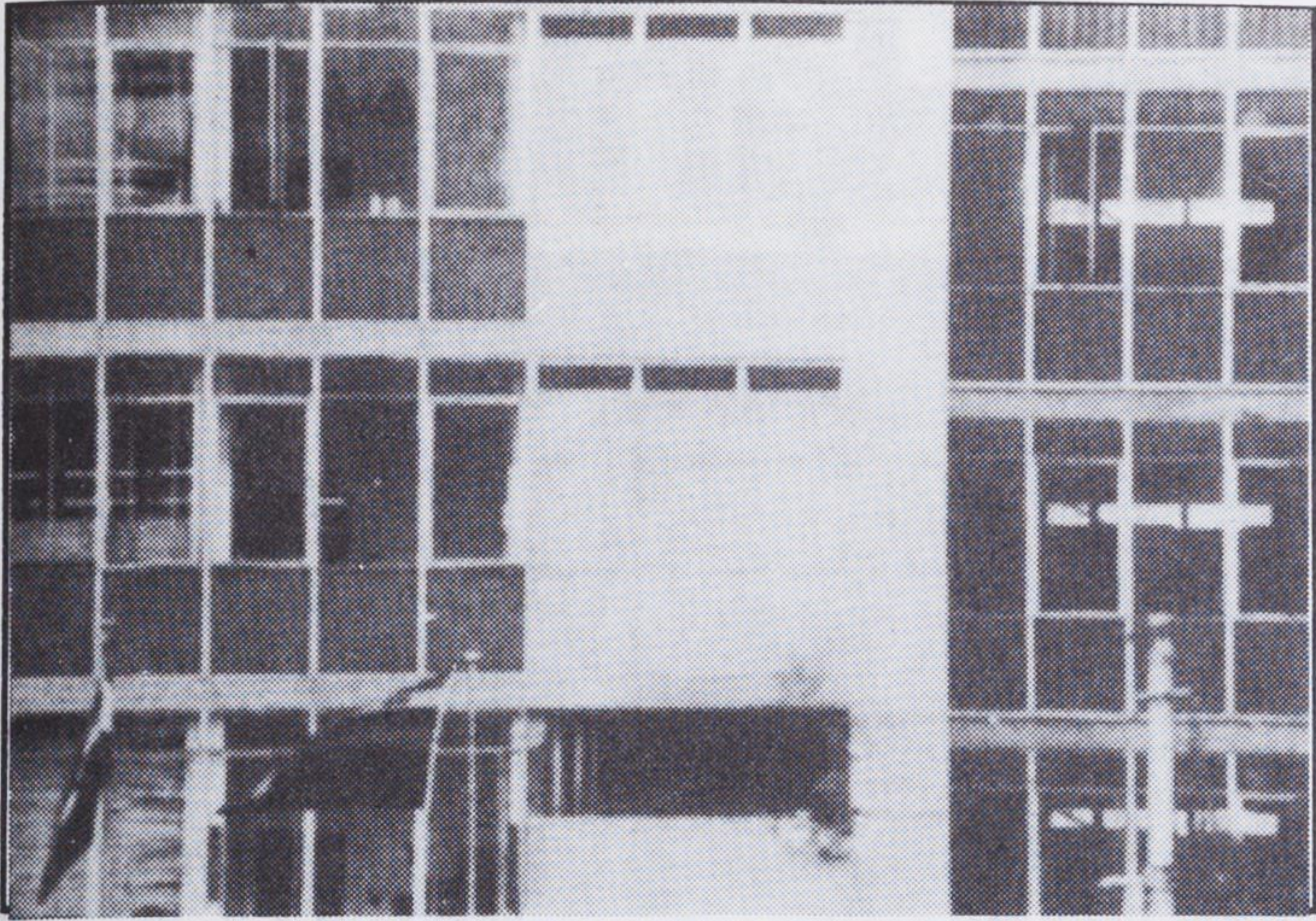
missions were treated as more important than political work - which would aim at involving masses of people in the struggle. This made it difficult for the ANC to build towards a people's war - a war that would involve everyone in fighting the state. Another problem was that of fighting the armed struggle from exile. The challenge was to send senior leadership into the country.

Operation Vula

The ANC tried to solve this problem. It set up the Politico-Military Committee, which tried to bring political and military work together. Operation Vula in the late 1980s also aimed to address these problems.

From the end of the 1970s the regime realised that MK would never be destroyed. The blows of MK and the mass uprising of our people in the 1980s forced the regime to unban the ANC and MK in February 1990. ■

MK FIGHTS ON



Attacks on police stations

In May 1979, a three-man MK unit under the command of Mlongwane attacked Moroka police station, killing one policeman and wounding others. Three other attacks followed soon afterwards: on Orlando police station in Soweto, Booyens and Soekmekaar in the northern Transvaal. Even the most closely guarded police buildings did not escape attacks. The charge office of John Vorster Square (left) - headquarters of the South African Police - was blown up by a limpet mine placed by MK cadre Marion Sparg.



The Sasol Operation

In June 1980 a unit commanded by Mokgabudi and including Barney Molokoane carried out one of the most effective of MK operations. The Sasol plant and refinery at Sasolburg (left) and Sasol's Secunda plant in the Eastern Transvaal were blasted. These plants were owned by the government. The explosions caused about R66 million damage. The SADF responded by raiding Mozambique and killing a number of people involved in these special operations. Among those killed was Mokgabudi.

Voortrekkerhoogte

In 1981 an MK unit commanded by Barney Molokoane shelled Voortrekkerhoogte, SADF Head Quarters. They fired at least four rockets into the military base. This was another victory for MK because it showed that MK could hit the SADF even in its most guarded places. Molokoane, who led many MK operations was killed in a shoot-out when the unit retreated after this operation.

Operation Vula

Operation Vula began in the late 1980s. It was a long term operation with the aim of strengthening the underground inside the country. It aimed to bring military operations and underground political work closer together - so that military and political operations would be planned together and strengthen each other. If this could be achieved, it would mean that the ANC's ability to build the struggle into a people's war would be much greater.

According to Mac Maharaj, an ANC NEC member and leader of Operation Vula: 'The struggle had reached the point where the long lines of communication - of directing a struggle from Lusaka - become an obstacle.' This meant that the ANC had to send high level leaders into the country so that decisions could be made on a daily basis. Mac Maharaj, Siphwe Nyanda and Ronnie Kasrils were sent into the country to implement Operation Vula.

Koeberg

In 1982 a Cape Town MK unit smuggled three limpet mines into the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station. This plant probably has the tightest security of any government installation. Three explosions caused at least R100 million worth of damage. The blasts delayed the operation of the plant for a year.

Chris Hani talks

After 1976 MK carried out its first operations since Wankie in 1967. What were these operations?

In the 1970s the ANC underground was very weak. The spirit of people was also very low. Our people had to be convinced that the enemy could be tackled and defeated. The ANC felt that the most powerful way of showing the ANC's presence amongst our people was by carrying out military operations. If a bomb was placed at a police station, an electric substation, at a military barracks - the bomb will tell the story itself: that the ANC and MK are alive and fighting. People would know that the police had been attacked. We called these operations 'armed propaganda'. They aimed to tell people about the movement and to draw into the struggle as many of the oppressed people as possible.

Was armed propaganda successful?

The strategy of armed propaganda was very successful. Umkhonto we Sizwe became very popular in the minds of many young people. Also, people began to see the ANC as the only leader of our struggle. To go forward we had to begin to build MK within the country now. We wanted to begin to train people inside the country. We started to build up towards a people's war where all the oppressed people and democrats would be involved.

Can you tell us about this period of people's war?

In the years 1984 until 1986 there was a mass uprising - big-



CHRIS HANI is MK's Chief of Staff

ger than we had ever seen before. Millions of our people supported stayaways and thousands took to the streets. Millions refused to pay rents. The youth took on the SAP and SADF in the townships with whatever they could lay their hands on - petrol bombs and stones. The system of local administration in black areas was collapsing. South Africa was becoming ungovernable.

During this time Umkhonto carried out hundreds of operations inside South Africa: against police stations, army barracks and had blasted installations. It was clear that Umkhonto would grow and carry out big operations and that the enemy could not stop this process.

These struggles led to the situation we have today - where the government unbanned the ANC

and is now prepared to negotiate.

MK tried to avoid killing civilians. Why was this so?

The ANC has a long history of non-violence. This was the history of the ANC for almost 48 years. But as you know the road of peace led us nowhere.

In 1960, to our surprise we were banned. Not because we had become violent. We were banned because we had called upon people to demonstrate against the pass laws. But that peaceful struggle in 1960 led to the banning of the ANC. It was clear that all avenues to peaceful struggle had been closed. Now even after the formation of MK we still felt that if we avoided taking lives, the regime could still be persuaded to negotiate for a democratic South Africa. But we

about operations



Men and women soldiers of MK

were wrong.

Violence against the people increased and more and more people were arrested. The enemy was determined to rule this country by the gun. By the 1970s it was clear that we had to move away from hitting just installations to attacking enemy personnel as well. But we still avoided taking civilian lives.

What about operations like the Amanzintoti bomb blast where civilians were killed. Was this a change of policy?

No, no, no. But you must remember that this is a period of 'total strategy' by PW Botha - the South African defence forces crossed into Maputo killing MK cadres and civilians, and also into Botswana and Lesotho. In Zimbabwe and Zambia people were blown up by the regime's bombs. Inside the country the army patrolled the townships and shot unarmed civilians, workers, students and peasants.

Our MK soldiers were outraged by this. Zondo who placed the bomb at Amanzintoti was utterly devastated by the December raid in Maseru that killed Morris, Leon, Meyer and others. He placed that bomb at Amanzintoti because he was outraged by the whites in this country who supported the cross border raids that killed our people and civilians in those countries. He wanted to make South African whites realise that this country was moving into a civil war where civilians on both sides would be affected. I have refused to condemn him and I still refuse to do so. Our fighters cannot be expected to have the coolness of an iceberg. They are emotionally involved in the struggle for freedom. And when they see the whites of this country completely uncaring about the loss of lives, some of them acted. I didn't support those actions, but I understood them. In most cases the civilians killed in our operations have been people caught in

crossfire. Civilians killed as a result of MK operations are very few compared with the black civilian casualties killed by the police and SADF in this country. So we have got a proud history of trying our best to avoid civilian deaths.

The SADF often tried to kill MK members including yourself by bombing and attacking houses in the frontline states. How did these affect MK?

We lost some of our best comrades as a result of cross border raids. In Mozambique, a greater part of the command of Special Operations was killed, including the Commander of Special Operations. In Lesotho, a similar thing happened - we lost many of our officers and comrades. But we were able to recover and repair the damage. Those raids made us even more determined to put an end to the unjust rule of the Pretoria regime.

Which operations of Umkhonto we Sizwe do you think were the most successful?

Well, it is very difficult to single one out as the most outstanding. But in terms of sheer brilliance, outstanding planning and real courage, I think of the following: the attacks against the Sasol installations the shelling of Voortrekker-hoogte SADF base the beautiful car bomb operation against the Air Force head quarters in Church Street, Pretoria

I believe those operations will go down as being amongst the best carried out by Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Continued on page 22

MK FIGHTS ON



Tell us about the fighting in Angola to defend our camps.

Our involvement in fighting against Unita in Angola could not be avoided. Unita was supported by the South African government as well as other conservative governments. Its main aim was to weaken the Angolan government.

Angola was an important training centre where we had trained thousands for combat work. We were not going to easily give up a base that had done so much for us. We helped the Angolan government by fighting against Unita and clearing Unita from the areas around our camps.

In those operations against Unita some of our comrades were killed in action. This led to one of the most unhappy events in the history of MK. The growing number of ANC or MK casualties was cleverly used by some elements

who opposed our involvement.

Some people - among them people who were working for the South African regime - began to call for the withdrawal of Umkhonto from operations against Unita. They became increasingly outspoken.

They took over our Viana transit centre in Luanda. We were able to defeat this mutiny with the help of the Angolan army. But a few months afterwards they struck again. This time at our camp in Pango where they killed and wounded dozens of our best Commanders, Commissars and Officers and took over a camp.

No army - anywhere in the world - can allow this to happen. Some of their grievances were real in my view, but what I'm questioning here is the violence they used against our comrades and officers. We had no alterna-

tive but to hit back and to recapture the camp - again lives were lost. Precious lives of good revolutionaries. The leaders of the mutiny were rounded up and sent to Camp 32 (Quatro).

After three to five years there the movement released them and took them to Dakawa. Some of them then left Dakawa for Kenya and with the help of people working for the South African government they were able to come back to South Africa. When they returned they began a campaign to discredit the ANC.

Well, the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe have also made some mistakes. We have done some wrong things.

But torture can never be acceptable. At the moment there is a commission to investigate allegations of torture and some of us know that some people were badly treated.

I hope that the commission will come out with a report so that our people get a balanced story of that mutiny.

When you look back today what stands out as your best memory?

I think the best time for me was when I was the Political Commissar of MK.

I was able to spend a lot of time with our soldiers. I got a very good understanding of their problems, their hopes and their wishes. These comrades were absolutely selfless. They had to stay away from home and even from any sort of mixing with the people who lived near the camps. But they never complained for a moment about that type of life. ■

Umkhonto prepares for a future defence force

Commander Joe Modise and Chief of Staff Chris Hani talk about the tasks of MK today and a future army



MK cadres are being upgraded from a guerilla army to a regular army

Today the ANC has suspended armed operations of MK to create conditions for a negotiated settlement. Does this mean MK has been disbanded?

CH: No far from it. MK cannot be disbanded until we have achieved the goal for which MK was formed. And that goal is freedom, democracy and a united non-racial, non-sexist country. Apartheid is in place and we are still ruled by a minority government. We are in a ceasefire at the moment. This does not mean that the battle is over. It means that we are talking to each other. We hope that the

talks will lead to a settlement.

JM: When a democratic government has been established, then that government will consider the creation of the South African Defence Force. The real South African Defence Force - one that will be truly national, made up of MK, SADF and the forces of the 'independent homelands'. It is from all these forces that we are going to create the future army of our country.

Is MK still recruiting members?

JM: Very much so. And we are doing a lot of training. We are

changing our army from a guerilla army into a regular army. This means we have to now train people for all the armed forces. For example we are training helicopter pilots, naval officers and jet pilots. We are still recruiting and preparing soldiers for a future South African defence force.

Can you tell us more about this training?

CH: We will be visiting countries to look for training facilities in the air force, the navy and the army. I have just come back from India. We want to send people to naval



Political prisoners released from Robben Island

and airforce schools. These must be people with university degrees in science. I want to tell the youth that some of this training needs high educational qualifications and they should come forward for this training. We also need people to train to be sailors - people with matric. At the same time we shall do our best to make sure that our comrades who have spent most of their time in the guerilla army are given training so that they can stay in the army if they want to.

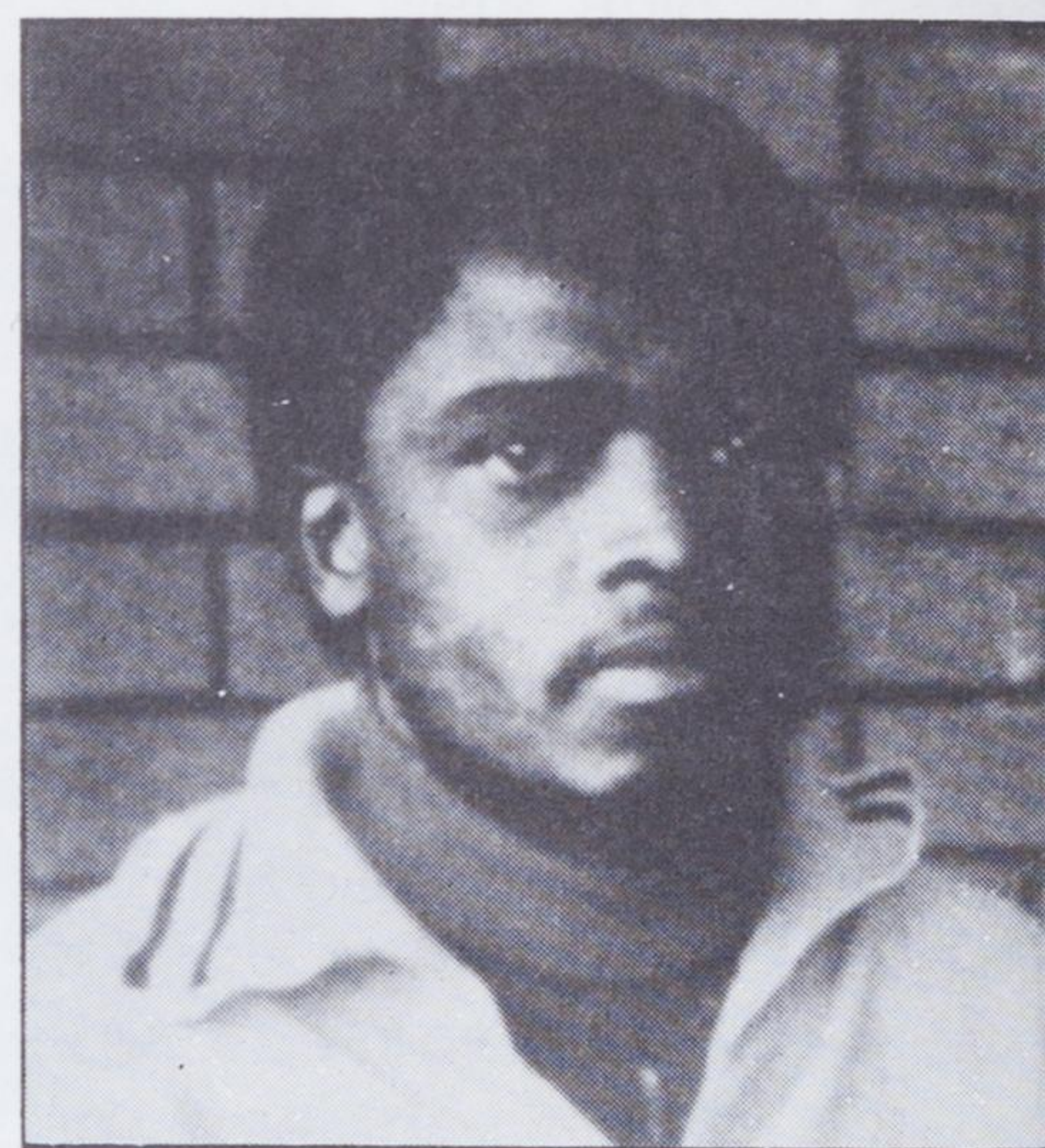
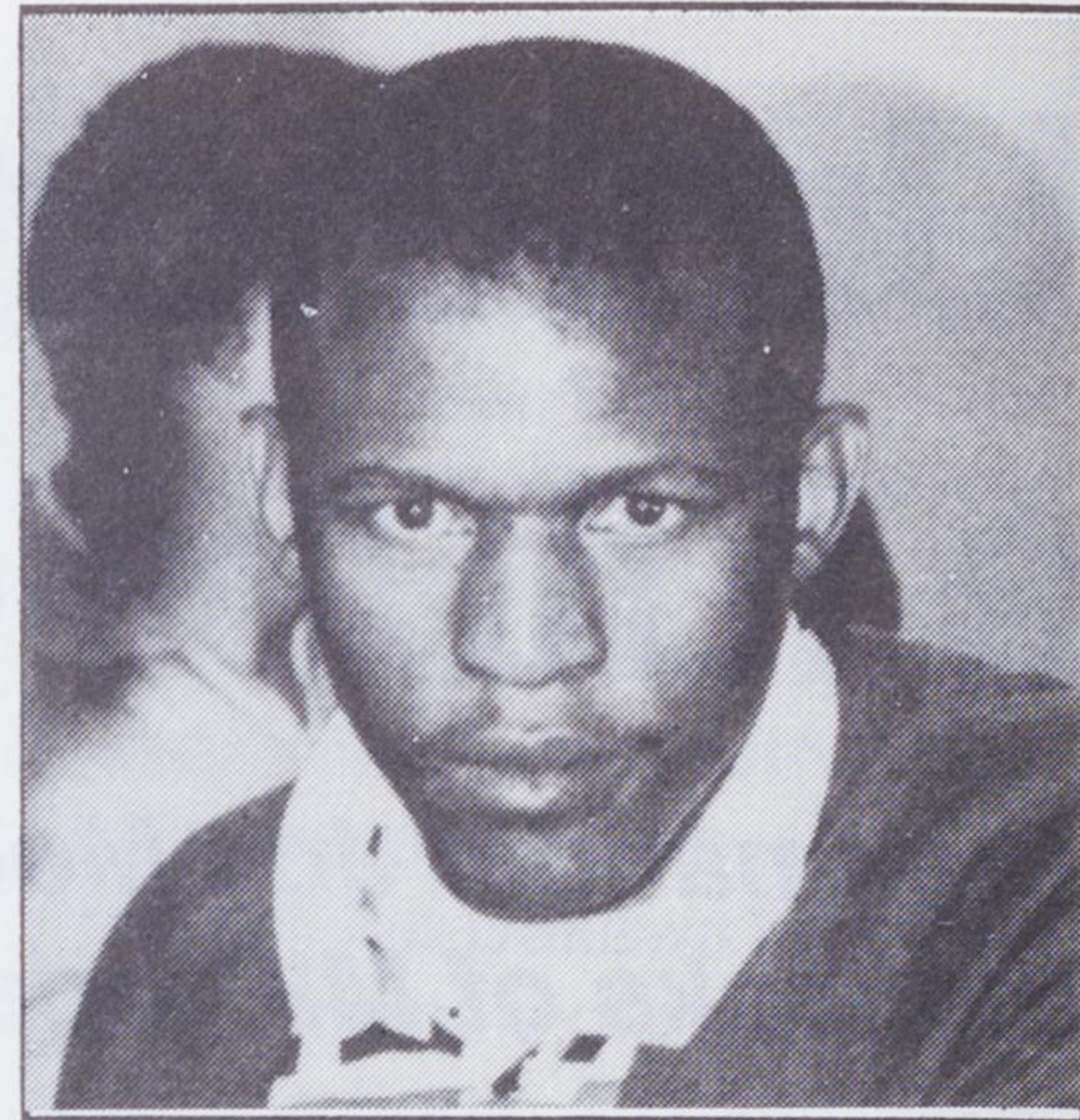
When do you think MK and SADF will unite into one army?

JM: This will happen soon after there is a settlement. A future democratic government will have the task of creating the future army.

CH: We have already taken important steps in having discussions with the Venda Defence Force, the Transkeian Defence Force and some people in the Ciskeian Defence Force. There is going to be one army in a future SA. SADF soldiers and officers, Umkhonto we Sizwe and the bantustan defence forces will all have a place in that new army. We need to discuss guidelines for that army and are ready to meet the SADF. When this happens will depend on discussions at the negotiating table.

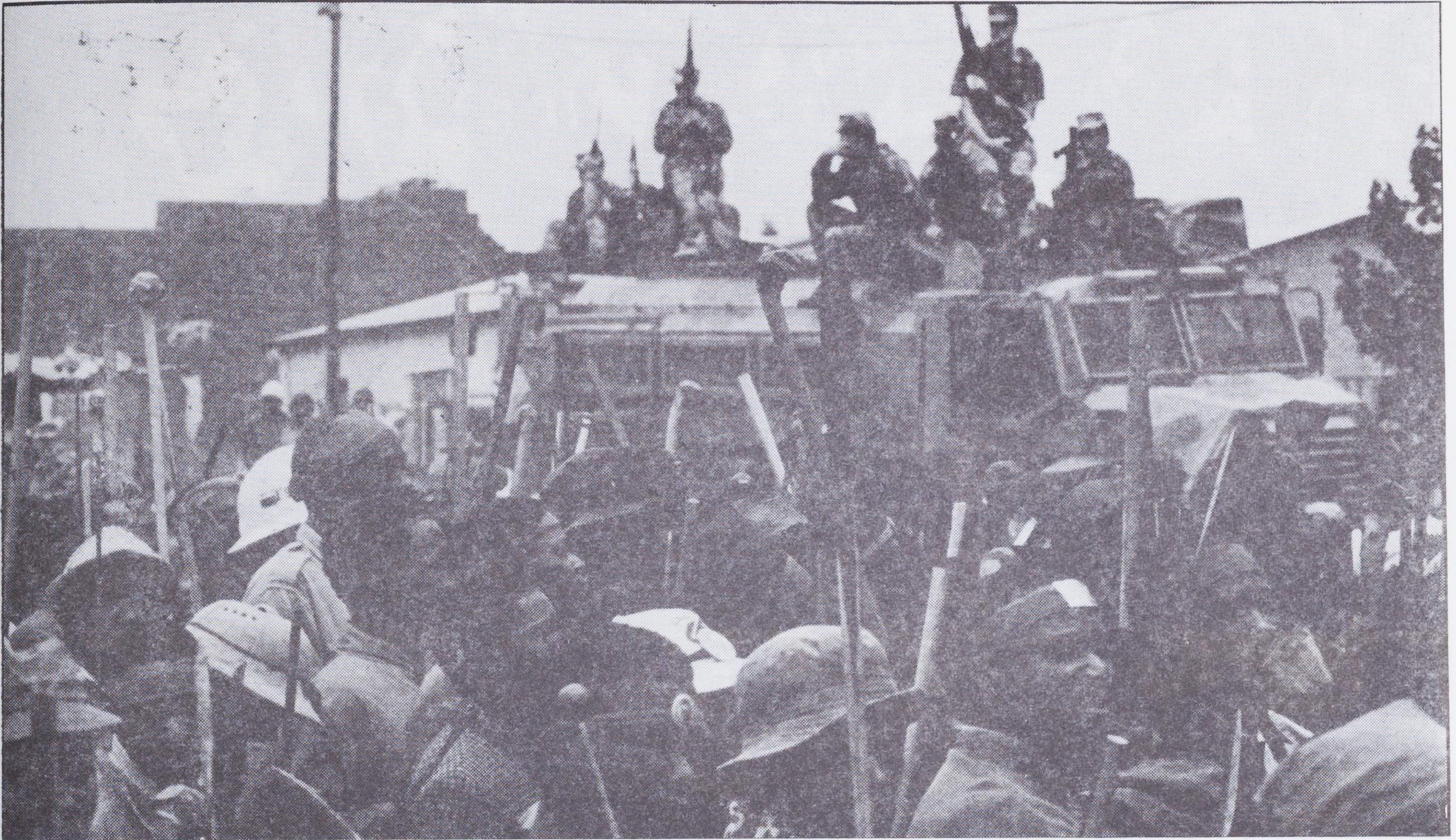
Does the ANC argue for compulsory military service?

JM: No. We want voluntary forces in our army. Of course in times of war this may change. But under



Not all combatants have been released from apartheid's jails. Mzondeleli Nondula (top picture) and Mthetheleli Mncube (above) are on death row. Robert McBride and Sibusiso Masuku had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment and are still in prison.

a democratic government we would not expect war - the cornerstone of our policy will be peace and we shall work for peace. The ANC believes we should have an army that is based on volunteers and I am sure thousands of our young people will come forward to join the defence forces of our country.



People must build self defence units and defend themselves against the violence of armed impis, bandits and the security forces.

Over the last year our people have been victims of some of the worst violence ever from armed impis, bandits and security forces. How can our people defend themselves against this violence?

JM: We have called on our people to organise themselves and to begin to build self defence units. This is their right. The people's organisations and community structures like civics must build these units. MK will assist them. But they are not ANC structures - neither are they MK structures, they are community structures.

CH: The best way of dealing with this kind of violence is to train the people to defend themselves. Take for example the random violence in the trains - it is just im-

possible for Umkhonto we Sizwe to monitor that violence and defend the people - because you never know when the attacks will happen. And I hope that the people's organisations - the ANC, Cosatu, the Party and the civics - will tackle this matter seriously by making use of the skills of MK men and women. Our branches must make use of these comrades to train people the self defence units select. Because these self defence units must belong to the people and be accountable to the people. And I also think that our people should think of all sorts of ways to get hold of weapons. They cannot defend themselves with bare hands. I believe that the people are aware of how to do this. We have made

an open appeal to our members to help mass organisations. And I'm sure that every MK member is ready to help.

But MK has signed the D F Malan Minute with the government which says that no MK training will take place in the country. Won't training people for self defence be against this agreement?

CH: Not at all. We made it clear at the DF Malan meeting that self defence units are a right of a people who are subjected to attacks. The National Peace Accord says it is the duty of each and every South African citizen to defend themselves against violence. Violence will only stop when

Continued on page 26



ANC supporters celebrate the release of ANC and SACP leaders

those who are attacking us realise that there is a price to pay when they attack communities.

The National Peace Accord also says that no political organisation can have its own army. Does this affect MK?

JM: De Klerk wants to use the peace accord to force the ANC to disband MK. They are trying to say that political parties cannot have private armies. But Umkhonto we Sizwe is not a private army it is a national army - it is an army of all the people of South Africa - both black and white. We say it is De Klerk who has a private army. The SADF has always been the private army of South African whites, fighting and defending white privilege in this country.

Will the peace accord help to reduce violence?

JM: The peace accord has got certain elements that are very important. Structures will be set up and controlled jointly by all the parties that are involved in the peace accord. The police can no longer go out and shoot people and nobody questions them. These structures will question them and investigate when there are incidents of police shooting.

What are the immediate plans of MK and what role should MK cadres be playing now?

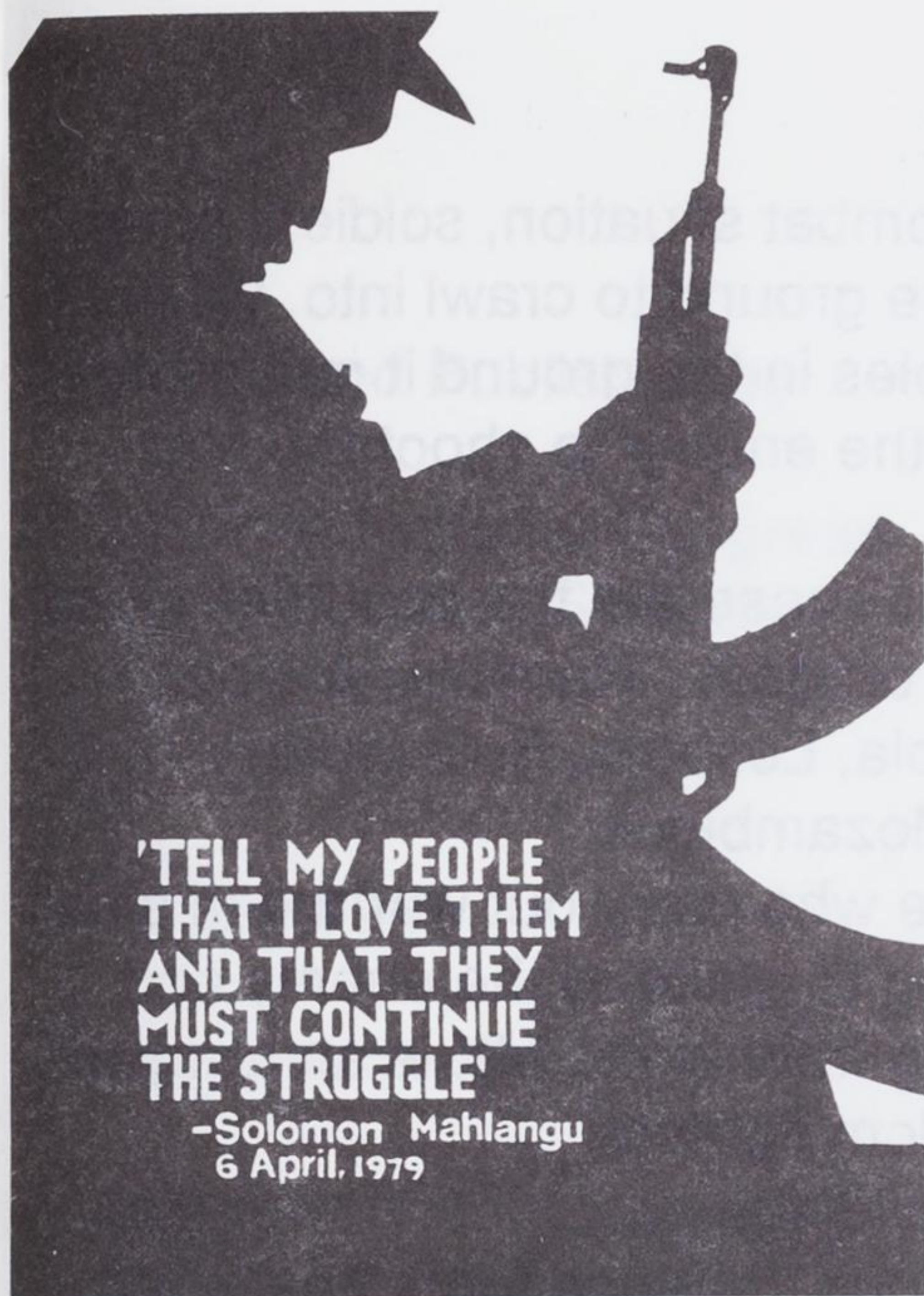
JM: MK is part of the African National Congress. The immediate plan of the ANC is to organise our people, mobilise them against the common enemy - that is the apartheid regime - and ensure

that these negotiations produce results that will guarantee a better future for our people. Our immediate plans are to build a very strong and effective ANC.

CH: We are also reorganising Umkhonto we Sizwe inside the country. We have already started to set up Regional Commands so that our comrades can have a sense of belonging to their own army.

Secondly, MK has an important political role to play. We are a political army and have got to participate fully in the political struggle. While negotiations are going on, MK comrades must be political organisers. They must be deployed as political education officers, in street committees, in area committees and in the trade union movement. ■

Army of the people



Poster of Solomon Mahlangu



Dorothy Nyembe



Vuyisile Mini

Who are these men and women who leave the comforts of their homes and their loved ones to give their lives in the struggle for freedom?

Umkhonto we Sizwe, born of the people, has been called a people's army. This means that MK fights for the rights of the people. It also means that it is people of South Africa - from all walks of life - who join the ranks of MK.

In the Freedom Charter our people declared that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white'. In the Freedom Charter our people said: 'We will fight, side by side, throughout our lives until we have won our liberty.'

From the beginning MK was made up of all those South Africans, black and white, who were committed to changing South Africa into a democratic country. Men and women who joined the ranks of MK came from all the corners of our country and from all our

communities.

They have come from the townships and suburbs of the cities, from the villages, farms and dorps.

They are workers and farm hands, youth and students, lawyers and nurses, christians, muslims and communists. They are mothers and fathers and sons and daughters. All have been driven by one overwhelming dream - freedom! It is this dream that inspired many to lay down their lives in the fight for freedom, to defy death and the hangman. We remember comrade Vuyisile Mini a youth leader and trade union organiser who refused to trade-in the life of his comrades to escape the hangman. Solomon Mahlangu of the June 16 Detachment, a student and youth, who from the gallows inspired thousands of our youth to cry 'Victory or Death!'

In our hearts, beats the spirit of Basil February of the heroic Wankie Operation, a true son of the Western Cape who single

handedly fought the enemy to the last bullet. There are thousands who in the tradition of our forbearers have heroically held high the flame of freedom.

This story is incomplete without the dedication and strength of comrades Thandi Modise, Dorothy Nyembe and Marion Sparg, our mothers and sisters, combatants of MK, who despite the many years in apartheid's prisons came out ready to fight for another day. In the words of the MK Military code:

'Umkhonto is a people's army fighting a people's war. We fight to liberate our oppressed and exploited people. We fight for their interests. Umkhonto has no mercenaries, no paid soldiers or conscripted troops. It consists of the sons and daughters of the most oppressed, the most exploited sections of our people. For these reasons we claim with pride and truth: Umkhonto is the Spear of the Nation.' ■

A list of political and military terms

armed forces: The armed forces of a country are made up of the army, the air force and the navy. Together they defend the country's borders, the airspace above it and the seas around it.

ammunition: Bullets

base: A base is a military camp, where an army can live and train its soldiers and keep its weapons.

cadres: People who are trained to do military or political work. A cadre is a very experienced activist.

campaign: Campaigns are planned activities that work together to achieve a political aim. An example of a campaign is the campaign against VAT.

combat: Fighting with weapons. For example, in a war, soldiers are involved in combat.

combatants: soldiers

commissar: An MK commissar is a soldier who has a very good understanding of politics. He or she has the job of teaching people about politics.

conventional army: This is an army that belongs to a country and is under the control of the government. It can operate openly. This is different to a guerilla army which is formed by the people of a country to fight against the government of that country. A guerilla army has to work in secret. Because a conventional army is controlled by the government it has a lot more money to give its soldiers special training and buy weapons.

deploy: To deploy someone or a group of people means to send them out to do a particular job. For example, troops are deployed in an area to fight the enemy.

detachment: A group of soldiers that fight together

disbanded: When an organisation or an army is disbanded it means it stops existing.

discipline: A person who has discipline is someone who lives strictly according to a set of rules. In an army, soldiers must have discipline and follow their orders or the army would collapse.

engagement: In military terms this means a confrontation or battle with the enemy.

foxholes: In a combat situation, soldiers often dig foxholes in the ground to crawl into. When soldiers are in holes in the ground it makes it more difficult for the enemy to shoot them or bomb them.

Frontline states: These are the countries close to South Africa's borders - Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Mozambique.

guerillas: People who carry out warfare in small groups, appearing to strike at the enemy and then disappearing from sight. MK is an army of guerillas or freedom fighters.

installations: Buildings, factories, power stations, police stations, defence force bases etc that belong to the government.

LMG: light machine gun

manifesto: A document that states the beliefs of an organisation.

mission: In military terms this is a task that is carried out. For example, MK carried out a mission to blast Sasol.

morale: Mood. For example, after winning the battle the morale of the soldiers was high.

operation: In military terms this a task.

patriot: Someone who loves and serves his or her country

policy: Ideas and guidelines decided on by an organisation. These are guidelines for what the organisation does in practice.

recruit: to look for and bring new members into an organisation

regime: A government.

regrouping: To bring a group of soldiers back together again after they have been separated in a combat situation.

regular army: See conventional army

resources: Money and facilities

sabotage: To damage something so that it no longer works

underground: The underground is made up of people who do political work secretly so that the government cannot find them or discover their plans.

upgrading: improving

Produced and Published by

The African National Congress
Political Education Section
51 Plein Street
Johannesburg
2000
(011) 330 7240

in association with

Learn and Teach Publications
P O Box 556
Johannesburg
2001
(011) 29 5051

Johannesburg, 1991

Photographs by: Southlight, ANC Department of Information and Publicity, Drum Magazine, The Star

This book can be ordered from The Political Education Section of the ANC, ANC regional offices and Learn and Teach Publications

For 30 years, Umkhonto we Sizwe has fought for unity, democracy, non-racialism and non-sexism in South Africa. This is a goal shared by all freedom loving South Africans. Umkhonto is their army - it has fought on the side of the people against the violence of the apartheid system.

Today the goal of Umkhonto seems closer than ever. But the victories of MK have not been without sacrifice. Hundreds of MK combatants and thousands of our people have laid down their lives in the struggle for freedom.

This book tells the story of these struggles - from the small beginnings of the sabotage campaign in 1961 to the mass uprisings of our people in the 1980s. Nelson Mandela, the first Commander in Chief of MK talks about how the ANC decided to begin armed struggle. Joe Slovo writes about the difficulties MK had in its early years. Chris Hani shares his experience of the Wankie Campaign and also looks at MK's operations in the 1970s and 1980s.

While MK is much closer to reaching its goal, it has not reached it yet. And as Commander Joe Modise says, MK will not be disbanded until a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa is in place. In its 30th year MK faces many new challenges. This booklet also looks forward to the tasks of MK that lie ahead.

Published by the Political Education Section of the African National Congress

Price: R2.00

Taj Printers