



APDUSA VIEWS

AUGUST 1985

CC. M&E 1980

EMERGENCY: A LICENCE TO KILL!

The State of Emergency imposed on the country on 21 July 1985 is a declaration of failure by the ruling class to suppress the liberatory struggle. It is an acknowledgement that the ruling class is acting out of tremendous fear for its own crumbling edifice.

The valiant struggle of the oppressed for freedom is once again assaulted by Botha's racist regime with a state of emergency. The Emergency is a fancy word for the regime's strategies of repression and brutality with which we are all too familiar.

Why was the state of emergency imposed and what does it mean to the struggling masses?

The resistance within the country took on its most pertinent form in recent times when workers, students and the masses identified and supported one another in a united movement against oppression. Workers' strikes in support of basic demands for employment, wages and trade union rights received wide community support in the form of consumer boycotts, stay-aways and withdrawal of purchasing power.

UNITY OF STRUGGLE

The forging of unity between workers' and the people's demands for political rights has been clearly demonstrated in the great Sarmcol, Bakers, Siemens and other strikes. The people have rallied with the striking workers. Solidarity and morale has never been greater. Unity has been further bolstered by the sustained student movement country-wide. Students have vented their rage against gutter education and side-by-side with workers and the general populace, they have refused to collaborate with systems and structures that are part of the whole machinery created to keep the black majority in perpetual slavery.

The oppressed have, in no uncertain terms, demonstrated their rejection of the structures of apartheid designed as controls over them. They have identified and acted against collaborators and agents of the regime. They have scorned and rendered unworkable the Tricameral circus, local councils, homelands, management committees and self-appointed negotiators and mediators. They refuse to be hoodwinked by the so-called reforms of the racist regime. Instead, the call of the people for a free and undivided South Africa emerges loud and clear.

ROLE OF "BIG BUSINESS"

It is the unity of the people and their uncompromising goal that arouses the terror in the ruling minority class. It is seen by them as a threat to their political and economic power and thus have closed ranks in an attempt to entrench their common interests. The state of emergency was not an act of government alone. It was conceived with the cooperation and blessings of big business and the imperialists.

We can see this in the reaction of big business and the US State Department. Both have accepted the Emergency. It has been reported that the US Embassy knew that 'firm action' was in the offing a week before the emergency was declared. Assocom and the Federated Chamber of Industries as well as the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut, the mouth pieces of Big Business, have all accepted the emergency as necessary. The USA was even more supportive. It hoped that the "measures would reduce unrest and allow the Botha Government to push ahead with its reform measures." ("Weekly Mail" - 26/07/85)

POWER UNLIMITED

The state of emergency has unleashed brutality on the oppressed. Since the declaration, an average of 4 persons a day have been killed. The death toll related to violence since September 1984 has risen to 750.

It is well known that without declaring a state of emergency, an emergency situation has prevailed in the country for some time. The suspension of what little civil liberties there were and the handing over of the country to the police and military is in effect a licence to kill. The police have unlimited powers to seal off townships, impose curfews, search, seize and detain people and blackout information on their activities. The police and army are indemnified against their wrongful acts. The emergency empowers them to rule by the gun.

The police have not hesitated to use their unbridled powers. They have invaded the people's right to bury their dead in the manner they choose. With callous disregard for the grief of the bereaved, they seek to suppress us from speaking out the truth and paying tribute to our heroes.

DIVERSION OF STRUGGLE

It is clear that by these acts of repression, those who have usurped the right to govern this country, aim to divert us from the path of true struggle to a negotiated settlement. We hear the sounds of "reform", "negotiation" and "moderate responsible leaders". Who are these so-called leaders and what will they negotiate? Will they sell out our basic right to a full franchise in an undivided South Africa? We must be aware that sell-outs come in various guises and masquerade as leaders of the people.

The imperialists are clamouring for reforms by negotiation. They are applying pressure on the Botha regime to negotiate. They are blowing up and parading "Bishop Muzorewa"-like figures from church and gentry. We must ask — What do these "moderate elements" stand for? Do they demand full democratic rights or will they sell out, compromise and negotiate away the rights of the masses?

Freedom is non-negotiable. The people recognise this. There can be no fundamental solution to the problems in this country unless the people's demand for a full franchise in a democratic society is met. The Botha Government is acting from a position of weakness, not strength, when it tries with its declaration of emergency, to strangle this demand.

Apdusa says:—

"FORWARD TO VICTORY!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

A PEOPLE UNITED CAN NEVER BE DEFEATED!"

Full democratic rights in one South Africa!