



# APDUSA VIEWS

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IN THIS ISSUE:

**1.**

**Freedom Fighters  
or Plain Killers?**

**2.**

**"Indian Education"**

**in a mess**

# Freedom Fighters or Plain Killers?

## INTRODUCTION

In the present period of unrest and turmoil, a number of features stand out prominently. We now know the REAL meaning of a State of Emergency. We also know what happens when a country's armed forces are turned loose on its own population. Political killings have become an every-day affair and people are becoming immunised to these happenings. One other outstanding feature of this period is the ROLE OF THE YOUTH, especially those in the African townships. The words "Comrades" and "necklace" have acquired new and special meaning.

## THE COMRADES

Initially, the term "comrade" was used to describe the politically conscious and militant youth in the townships. The "comrades" became famous for their uncompromising opposition to dummy bodies like the Community Councils and the collaborators who work with the ruling class. These were the youth who sought to instil a measure of discipline and direction to their actions. For example, wherever the "comrades" made their presence felt, ordinary crime vanished almost to nothing.

## THE "FAKE COMRADES"

With the passage of time and the disappearance of the resident police and the network of informers, certain elements began emerging. They were youth who became better known for their thuggery, hooliganism and indiscriminate killings than for their understanding of the politics of struggle. Yet they claimed to act politically and because of that they soon were given the name "comrades". In truth, they are the FAKE COMRADES. The "Fake Comrades" have now extended their activities to the cold blooded murders of political activists and known members of the liberatory movement.

It is this element which is a law unto itself. It has sabotaged the call of the National Education Crisis Committee (N.E.C.C.) to students to return to school at the beginning of last year. It is the same element which stormed into the classrooms recently and attacked students who were writing their exams. They did this with sjamboks and knives.

## POLITICAL MURDERS

In recent times, we have read of a number of killings of members of the liberatory movement or people close to them.

### Examples:

1. Two members of the Black Consciousness Movement who had served five years each on Robben Island were burnt to death by the Fake Comrades.

2. On the 17th October, 1986, Miss Masabata Loate was brutally hacked to death by some 20 youths. Miss Loate was a well-known freedom fighter, who, according to her mother, spent the best part of ten years in prison as a detainee and a sentenced prisoner.
3. Mr. Jacob Lengane, aged 67, and a father of three AZAPO/AZASM members, was shot in cold blood for no other reason than the fact that he was the father of those activists. The killers had come looking for the son and when they found that he was not there, they took his father in his place and killed him. The alleged "sins" of the son were thus visited upon the father.
4. On the 16th October 1986, Malusi Michael Nkompela, a member of AZANYU, and a student at Fort Beaufort, was last seen alive by his friends discussing the school boycott with four unknown "students". Malusi was not in favour of indefinite school boycotts. Later that day when his friends returned for him they found him murdered by the "necklace" method. Presumably, the four "students" found Malusi's anti-indefinite school boycott views an act of high treason!

## **REACTION TO THE KILLINGS AND THUGGERY**

The reaction to the killings and thuggery of the Fake Comrades is one of universal revulsion and condemnation. The questions that people are asking are : Who are these killers? What gives them the authority to act as judge, jury, policemen and executioners? What is their qualification to act as they are doing? What is their own track record as far as the struggle is concerned?

The UDF, through its Publicity Secretary, Murphy Morobe, stated:

" . . . the recent acts of killings are clearly cold-blooded acts committed by misguided elements who don't seem to have any sense of discipline and organisation."

AZAPO, through its Publicity Secretary, Muntu Myeza, stated:

"It is saddening when people resort to barbarism to resolve problems of whatever nature. Lengane never hurt anybody in his life and it is disgusting cowardice for people to attack and kill a parent of activists with whom they disagreed."

**SOWETO PARENTS CRISIS COMMITTEE AND SOWETO CIVIC ASSOCIATION** stated:

"Students who therefore want to pose as anarchists must be aware that they are causing problems and setbacks for the democratic struggle . . . the undemocratic actions by elements within the students needs to be analysed for their negative nature . . ."

Cde Muntu Myeza went as far as to challenge other organisations to condemn the perpetrators of these deeds.

We, of APDUSA, also condemn the actions of the killer-youth. In doing so we urge all freedom-loving people to do likewise. Silence on our part can only mean that we are either scared or that we support these acts of barbarism.

## **WHO ARE THE KILLERS ?**

As stated above, political killings have become commonplace. There are numerous instances of political activists being killed by reactionary groups and organisations which have the blessing of the fascists. The killings take a tragic turn when members of the liberatory movement are killed in the name OF THE LIBERATORY MOVEMENT !! This appears to be the work of the "Fake Comrades".

The "Fake Comrades" or the killer-youth are a direct product of township violence ; of political oppression which deprives the youth of the township of proper education and decent employment. Where there is poverty and where there is no hope for the future; where there is dirt and squalor everywhere, it is there that the criminal elements or the *lumpen-proletariat* are born and brought up. It is this kind of environment which has spawned the murderers of Miss Loate and others. The fact that the killer-youth consider themselves political is purely accidental. They have also grown up in an environment wracked with political convulsions and intense activity. The political struggle is bound to rub off on to them.

Essentially the "Fake Comrades" are an anti-social, criminal element. They are a parasitic breed who live off the sweat and toil of the working class. They are a faceless lot who stalk their victims in darkness. They operate in gangs or packs. Their viciousness is matched only by their cowardice. Nothing can be more contemptible or revolting than the sight of an all male mob falling upon Miss Loate, an unarmed woman, and butchering her to death.

## **A NEW FRONT AGAINST THE PEOPLE**

It is not enough to say that the killer-youth are a product of their environment. That merely explains their conduct. The important point is that these youth *are not just a theoretical analysis* — they are a physical fact of life — deadly, dangerous and menacing. And as such they have to be dealt with.

Freedom fighters have to contend with a number of fronts — the host of security laws, detentions without trial, torture, imprisonment, a battle for a livelihood, vigilantes, death squads, etc. Now ONE MORE FRONT HAS BEEN CREATED. They have to guard against these killers who have donned the mask of freedom fighters.

## **POWER DRUNKENNESS**

Youth are well known for the extremes of their strength and weaknesses. Their energy, their courage and idealism makes them into a powerful force of change. Their weakness lies mainly in their lack of knowledge and experience. Yet no struggle can ever hope to succeed without the vital contribution of the youth functioning under the guidance and discipline of a political organisation.

Power, it is said, corrupts. It has corrupted numerous people — many of whom were once committed to the struggle for true liberation. Only strict discipline, a scrupulous adherence to the principles and practice of democracy, a strong sense of dedication and the ultimate cause of humanity, can rescue a person from the corruptive influence of power. If experienced and otherwise committed people

can have their moral fibre corroded by power, how much more vulnerable are the youth who are ill-equipped psychologically, ideologically and morally to handle power.

Power was thrust upon the youth in the townships. This took place when *they* have had to challenge the armed might of the State while the adult population was no more than concerned spectators. In the eyes of the youth, the adults are a timid lot. Hence their open contempt for the workers and their organisations. The youth decided to do what was "properly" the work of the adults. It is from this kind of thinking that emerged the notion that the youth must call the shots and the rest of the population had to follow submissively. It is this approach that made the youth take the reins of power in the politics in the townships.

The "Fake Comrades" climbed on to the bandwagon of the militant youth revolt and are giving it their special stamp.

### **THE CHINESE EXAMPLE**

It is very rare for youth to gather enormous power in their hands — power which can pose a threat to the government of the day. We are fortunate to have a modern example of this phenomenon. We refer to the Cultural Revolution in China in the 1960's. When Mao Tse Tung, the leader of the Chinese Revolution, realised that the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party had become bureaucratic and counter-revolutionary, he let loose on Chinese society millions of youthful Red Guards as a battering ram against the establishment. The youth set about their task with a vengeance.

In a matter of two years, the youth became drunk with power. Numerous atrocities were committed in the name of the Revolution. There came a time when the Cultural Revolution was a thing to be feared and rapidly lost support. Mao Tse Tung was compelled to admit that the youth were abusing their power and had created considerable chaos. He, therefore, had to send in the People's Liberation Army and contingents of workers to break up the Red Guards. Many were sent to the rural areas for "re-education by the poor and lower middle peasantry."

In the case of the Red Guards, there was a body of highly politicised youth who entered into serious discussion and debates of matters of fundamental importance. In spite of all that, they were unable to handle power. How much worse it is in the case of the fake "Comrades" who have less than a superficial knowledge and education in the politics of the struggle.

### **THE "FAKE COMRADES" AND THE LIBERATORY MOVEMENT**

No organisation claiming the goal of liberation can condone or be indifferent to the activities of the "Fake Comrades". The danger of their activities is not confined to individuals belonging to certain organisations. The entire liberatory movement is being threatened. The violent strife between liberatory organisations has not helped at all. In truth, that strife has been skilfully exploited by agents of the ruling class and the "Fake Comrades". These elements have gone about

murdering members of the liberatory movement and the ruling class media has conveniently pointed accusatory fingers at rival organisations. The violent strife has provided a cover for the foul deeds.

It has been said in certain quarters that the activities of the "Fake Comrades" has had at least one beneficial result — namely, that the killing of persons suspected of being ruling class spies and informers has discouraged others who might have considered taking up that profession. To the immature mind, the "necklacing" of a suspected spy may provide emotional satisfaction. But serious political fighters cannot entertain this approach. There are too many risks. For a start, who is to judge whether a person is a spy or not? To date, the young semi-criminal elements have performed that role. How many have been wrongly tried and executed? Let the apologists take time off and ponder! Spy-hunting can very easily become the favourite past-time of psychopaths and substitute activity for ill-disciplined and brutalized youth.

We do not believe that the killing of spies is the correct method of dealing with them. It is open to great abuse. Private feuds can be settled under the cover of spy-killing. Killers can be hired to murder political rivals in the name of spy-killing. We believe that spies and informers are best dealt with politically and organisationally. On this score we can learn from Lenin when he wrote:-

"It is highly undesirable and mistaken to make a system of it (i.e. killing spies and informers), and that we must create an organisation which will be able to render spies innocuous by exposing them and tracking them down. It is impossible to do away with all spies, but to create an organisation which will ferret them out and educate the working class, is both possible and necessary."

We repeat that the liberatory movement, as a whole, is being threatened. Before we castigate the ruling class and the "Fake Comrades", we must have a hard look at ourselves. Amongst us are dangerous fanatics who seek to promote their particular organisation *at all costs*. In doing this they lose sight of what the struggle is all about. If we believe in liberty, then we can never incite assassination of another simply because that person differs with us politically. If we do this then we have no grounds for condemning the ruling class when *it* suppresses the freedom of thought, conscience and expression. If this is how the fanatics behave NOW, there is nothing horrendous they will not do when they come into power.

The liberatory movement must defend itself and its reputation. Its noble ideal of liberation and the concept of comradeship must not be allowed to be sullied. The struggle for liberation means a genuine love for all that liberation stands for. It means that we must practice the values which we claim we are striving for.

## THE "FAKE COMRADES" AND THE PEOPLE

We know that it takes only a handful of *organised* individuals to terrorize and hold to ransom an entire population which is *unorganised*. The people must, therefore, be told that if they wish to defend themselves they must band together in organisations. As individuals or single families, they will remain helpless prey

to all their enemies — the ruling class, its agents, criminal gangs and other anti-social elements like the “Fake Comrades”. *It must be brought home to the people that if they cannot discipline the youth because they fear them, how can they ever hope to overthrow a system of oppression and exploitation which is a million times more powerful than the killer-youth?*

## **CONCLUSION**

The easy freedom with which the killer-youth go about their bloody business is a sad commentary on the state of the liberatory movement. It is a clear admission of failure to control and curb these youth. It is also an admission that the liberatory movement has failed the people.

It is our firm view that where the political struggle is concerned, the liberatory movement must reign supreme. When its supremacy is challenged, it **MUST CLOSE RANKS!** The liberatory movement enjoys a very high reputation among the people and we have no doubt that the people will give it unstinting support to discipline the killer-youth. The matter will not end there. The very process of closing ranks, working together and setting up organisations of the people to deal with this problem will be a great leap forward in the struggle for liberation itself.

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## **“Indian Education” in a mess**

When the idea of separate Parliaments for “Coloureds” and “Indians” was first mooted, APDUSA criticised this concept as yet another creation to maintain White domination over the oppressed Blacks. APDUSA likened these institutions to the Bungas, Advisory Councils, Bantu Affairs, Coloured Affairs and Indian Affairs Departments, Bantustans, Coloured and Indian Councils.

Blacks (African, Indian and Coloured) now do the work of the White Parliament in maintaining White Supremacy and White Domination over the Black people. These Black puppets and stooges are co-opted by the Whites to do their dirty work.

Education has always been a key factor in oppressing the Blacks. Hence the Whites created “Bantu” Education for the African, Coloured and Indian child. Now, however, the Education of the Black child is controlled and administered by the separate Baboons’ Parliaments.

Recently the administration of “Indian” education has come up for much criticism. The House of Delegates or “Indian Parliament” is barely two (2) years in existence and already there are many instances of maladministration and mismanagement of Indian Education.

“Black lists”, punitive transfer of teachers, withdrawal of bursaries to teacher trainees and dismissal of teachers have become the norm.