

# "NOW THE ENEMY IS AFRAID OF THE PEOPLE"

DAWN INTERVIEW WITH COMMANDER JULIUS MOKOENA

**QUESTION:** As we commemorate the 21st Anniversary of MK, what can you say have been the achievements of this 21 years of arduous struggle?

**ANSWER:** well the 21st Anniversary of MK is the continuation of a long struggle the achievements of which, setbacks and prospects for forging ahead are multitude in character. Since the inception of MK we have been faced with setbacks here and there. First it was with the arrest of the leadership and what came to be known as the "Rivonia Trial". The enemy hastened to boast that it had completely destroyed the ANC and therefore maybe to the best of its capabilities South Africa would remain free for plunder by the Western powers. But they were wrong as developments proved that they failed to understand the type of struggle the ANC is leading. It is not an adventure, it is a principled and continuous struggle which involves the entire population and it will only end when victory over the enemy is won.

## FACILITIES

We have been not very successful in the past owing partly to the fact that we had no proper or appropriate facilities so vital for carrying out the struggle under the new conditions. Hence the only solution which the leadership arrived at was that people must leave the country, go outside, acquire the necessary military skill and go back to fight the hated enemy inside the country. This has never been easy more so consequent to the arrest of the leadership and the subsequent disbandment of internal structures which meant serious foiling of most of our plans.



The enemy welcomed as a victory on its side because they had thought that with the type of tactics they've organised to defend themselves against the tide of the revolution which resulted in what came to be known in the early sixties as the "Umbrella type" of defence which clubbed together Smith, Caetano and Vorster, Africa would remain forever insusceptible to the winds of revolutionary change. They thought that with this type of protection the armed liberation forces will never reach South Africa, that whatever the movement thought of would only end up at being futile exercise in that it would only end up in the boundaries beyond the South African territory. But history and the activities of our movement were to prove the enemy wrong.

Our numbers as we came out of the country were very little, we were just like a drop of water in an ocean. But the main task was to train and go back inside the country, mobilise, recruit, and train more people right inside South Africa and do the fighting. But the situation never came out the way it has been envisaged by the movement and the leadership in general. And we did not end up there, MK strove and then we say thanks to the type of leadership we have because we have never bowed down on our knees and say farewell to arms throughout the history of MK. Zimbabwe, Rhodesia by then, bears a historic landmark of the activities carried out by our movement. South Africa was approached from all angles: through Zimbabwe, by Air using J. Smuts Airport itself as well as the sea. The enemy came to realise one fact that by arresting our leadership, persecuting them and sending some for life and other long-term imprisonment in Robben Island it has never solved the problem as the struggle continued, police terror never stopped the revolution or quelled the revolutionary spirit among our people. This has been the case all along. MK has never given up hope until such time that the developments inside the country, developments to which the movement never stayed back and folded its arms and became spectators to the situation, resulted in another test to the enemy. I say test in the sense that when the June 16 student uprising began, the enemy hastened to trumpet that it was some kind of action led by individuals among





Boyseens



SASOL



Mabopane



the students who felt disillusioned at their prospects of success, and wanted an excuse to do something disruptive so that they can easily do away with schools. The imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction sparked off fire whose embers smoulder to this day. The heroic students who survived those brutal and forever agonising murders came out in search of the movement and the movement made itself available.

With the developments since 1976 the enemy had to come to one conclusion that the ANC was never destroyed and it will never be. It is the arrogant racist leaders themselves who confessed openly to their white followers that "Terrorism is here to stay in South Africa" and Whites should outgrow all the myths they have always clinged to and accept and learn to live with that situation.

#### DIARY

The struggle changed in quality and quantity in the sense that for the first time in our history here in exile we didn't only manage to send in material for use by MK combatants inside the country but MK acted. Today we have a combat diary which cannot be said to be ANC propaganda. Gunfire and explosions were heard by all and the South African press' objective reporting became an object of governmental censure. The press was accused of playing the role of political journals and organs of our movement and to deprive the oppressed of our land of news of their situation and internationally, the press was persecuted by the police. Many journalists were detained without trial and banned after their releases; black newspapers were banned and many oppressive laws restricting the role of the press to naught were enacted. We have also seen the racist regime amassing large troops along the borders of Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, etc. in a bid to arrest the visibly growing guerilla war. Now there is the land deal with Swaziland whose aim is nothing less than creating little buffer zones around South Africa by making African fight Africans. Our struggle is in South Africa and MK has never fought along the borders. The enemy himself has summed up acknowledgement of this fact when he declared that the ANC wages an "Area War", as our

guerillas are spread all over our land.

So in short in its 21 years of existence MK under the wise leadership of the ANC has proved to be a force to reckon with.

**QUESTION:** As we have this interview news of the Maseru Massacre is still flowing in. What does the racist regime aim at achieving by this campaign of naked terror?

**ANSWER:** The incursions, murders and massacres in the neighbouring countries are the exportation of the apartheid policies as practiced internally by the racist regime led by P.W. Botha. The racist regime never hid its devotion of hunting down like game all its opponents wherever they can be found, especially the leadership and the entire membership of the African National Congress. They are emulating what their Zionist allies are doing in the Middle East by transforming the whole sub-continent into a Lebanon. But South Africa is not Israel and it is them and their allies who have made South Africa what it is.

Today our people are up in arms, they have said enough is enough and they want to be masters of their destiny. The South African regime would like to emerge from the quagmire it finds itself plunged into through the use of force. They have taken upon themselves the reactionary role of destabilising the neighbouring and newly independent countries by recruiting, training and infiltrating bandits like the ILA, NRM, etc, to destroy military installations, economic infrastructures, murder civilians and disrupt social order. They would like to keep these countries under perpetual South African economic domination so as to be able to determine their policies and dictate to them treacherous terms like forbidding passage to the ANC personnel, arresting, sentencing and even deporting our fellow combatants. But Africa wants to be free from all foreign domination. Africa knows that the very presence of the South African regime poses a continuous threat to their very independence.

Faced with this situation and the growing opposition inside the fascist regime has become even more vicious.



Yesterday it was Matola, and today it is Maseru where 30 South Africans and 10 Lesotho nationals have been brutally butchered by the racist cutthroats. The crime committed by the Lesotho people is not to join hands with the racists in their onslaught on the ANC because they know, as Africa and the world know what the ANC is. We are not bandits but a revolutionary movement dedicated to the overthrow of the apartheid regime and the building in its place of a new and democratic society based on the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

The struggle inside the country is daily attaining new heights and we should expect the enemy to be even more rabid in response. Added to Matola and Maseru, tomorrow it will be somewhere else. But this does not and will never stop the revolution!

QUESTION: What can you say are the most urgent tasks for general revolutionary advance?

ANSWER: The struggle in South Africa should be intensified so that the enemy stops roaming around and concentrate inside South Africa. The people are ready, they have responded to the call by the movement and on top of this they've been inspired to the outmost by the activities of the movement inside the country. The people now have come to pin their hopes on the future South Africa which will be under the rule of the ANC their teacher, mouthpiece and defender.

MK in the drawing of the Manifesto, determining the place and role of MK in the overall strategy of the movement stated that in its preamble: "Umkhonto We Sizwe will be at the frontline of the people's defence, it will be the fighting arm of the people against the government and its policies of race oppression. It will be the striking force of the people for liberty, for rights and for their final liberation!" And this is exactly what is happening. This document went on further to state that in these actions we all are working to the best interests of the people of this country, black, brown and white whose future happiness and well being cannot be obtained without the overthrow of the government of the National Party and the abolition of white supremacy.



**PRACTICE**

The ANC has come out to put this in practice. Our people have been persecuted, oppressed, exploited, suppressed and they're not supposed to have any opinion in so far as the running of their country is concerned and their future had been decided. Instead of improving the working conditions, living standards of the people, creating more and more facilities for recreation and education, medical care, you find that South Africa concentrates on building of more police stations, jails and now of late fortifications, and more and more Africans are daily being condemned to slow but sure death in the poverty-stricken "Bantu homelands". All these futile attempts by the regime to pump fear into the hearts of the oppressed have and continue to meet with failure. Now on the contrary it is the boers who are afraid of the people, it is no more the people who are afraid of them and their weapons, their guns. In its endeavours our movement has come to defeat one thing, that is the monopoly of the gun by the enemy; the enemy has guns and we have our own guns and so we speak the same language and in the process this also encourages our people to more heroic feats of mass struggles. MK's strikes against police stations and other racist government's installations seriously undermined the racist Pretoria regime. The activities of MK make the people more free to act and has therefore inspired the people to stand on their feet as envisaged by Comrade President O.R. Tambo when he said "We in the African National Congress do not imagine that the defeat of imperialism in Southern Africa will be quick or easy. We realise it will be long-drawn and bloody. But we are confident of the final outcome. As our forces drive deeper into the South, we have no doubt that they will be joined not by some, but by the whole African nation; by the oppressed minorities, the Indian and Coloured people; and by an increasing number of White democrats. Towards this victory we will fight to the bitter end!".

And the situation in South Africa doesn't fail this. People are liberated from fear because they know what the ANC is and what it stands for. Even behind the grim walls



of Robben Island our leaders have declared that their morale has never been higher and on more than one occasion they have managed to smuggle inspiring messages to our fighting people. In his message Comrade Nelson Mandela, having been imprisoned for close to two decades wrote:

"Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of armed struggle we shall crush white domination". This is the picture in South Africa: Mass action and MK strikes in indissoluble unity; with the two serving as a hammer and anvil the enemy is bound to be crushed.

It is in this year of Unity in Action that the enemy has become more unpopular even internationally. Inside the struggle now is joined by democratic whites. They are aligned now like our people the Africans, Coloureds and Indians and this doesn't fail what the movement has envisaged in its strategy and tactics that the struggle is the struggle of the people and as the struggle unfolds and more people starting to understand more and more all that the struggle is about they will join the organisation in large numbers. This act itself will make the enemy to find itself isolated and with this isolation it will be liable to be brought down on its knees under the wise and unfailing leadership of the ANC.

Our approach with regards to the role of the white population has always been a sober one. . . We've always seen Whites as people like any other people and the enemy has been the enemy because of his actions: the system, the state machinery it has created under its control and is being directed against the people. So all in all the struggle inside South Africa is gradually bringing to the fore the finalisation of the gaining of victory and putting into practice of the Freedom Charter.

**QUESTION:** On this the 21st Anniversary of our glorious Army what message do you have to our heroic combat ranks outside here and all over our motherland?

**ANSWER:** A message to MK fellow combatants both inside and outside South Africa is one that we should mobilise ourselves into a formidable force. We should never lose sight of our obligation. The enemy is everywhere, we cannot



think only in terms of meeting the enemy on the battlefield. The enemy is among us, it lives with us, it surveils us, our activities. And it comes to our places at awkward moments, and kills our people as it was the case with Matola and Maseru now. This exhorts that we should step up our combat readiness and vigilance. We must know ourselves so that we can be in a position to spot our enemy at a first glance. And all these terroristic-activities by the enemy should not make us to lose hope or

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# "WE SHALL OFFER

SPEECH DELIVERED BY JAMES MAKHAYA, A COMBATANT OF MK TO A GATHERING TO CELEBRATE SOUTH AFRICA'S HEROES DAY, SOMEWHERE IN THE THICK FOREST OF THE CONTINENT.

Dear Comrades, today the 16th of December 1982 we are celebrating the 21st Anniversary of Umkhonto We Sizwe - the cutting edge of people's resistance in South Africa. In these words, "We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The government policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance only!", Umkhonto We Sizwe proclaimed its existence.

Therefore the formation of Umkhonto we sizwe was not just a choice but an absolute necessity. It was imperative that our people should demonstrate their preparedness to meet the challenges of the enemy, to demonstrate their resolve to fight with arms in hand to achieve their freedom.