

The Road to Freedom

■ PAT MAKGWABA

Our people have an old saying whose undiminishing significance in life must always guide us. That saying is: "Inyathi ibuzwa kwaba phambili" and it means that whenever one sets out to fulfil an important task for the first time especially where danger is involved, one must always seek the wisdom of the experienced. This is what our revolutionary times demand of us, the fighting reserve of our people, to make full use of the inexhaustible wealth of experience accumulated by the veterans of our struggle for freedom. This is the only way in which we can be sure that we consistently move along the revolutionary line charted and blazed by our people's organisation, the African National Congress.

This truth is clearly borne in the ideas of freedom expressed in the paper headed "The Role of the South African Youth in the Realisation of the Demands Enshrined in the Freedom Charter". This is one of the papers presented and discussed by our delegates at the 1980 ANC Youth Summer School held in Hungary. Because of its significance to the Year of the Youth, our year, we need to redigest it, now. Let us be reminded of the great words addressed by Uncle Ho to the heroic people of Vietnam at the peak of their protracted struggle which culminated in the irreversible victory of the people. Ho Chi Minh said: "Learn Well How to Seek Revenge, Courage but Intelligent Courage."

For reasons of urgency we will start with the section dealing with our political contribution. We invite all the youth of our country to share in this wealth of ideas.

URGENT TASK

The paper opens with thought-provoking words: "The revolutionary upsurge in our country compell us to reassess the current phase of the liberation struggle, to reaffirm our commitment to the struggle and determination to bring into being a social order that the oppressed people of our country consider just, a society free of exploitation. Challenges and tasks facing our youth are enormous and demanding. This is the time when our youth, more than ever, needs to arm itself with the theory, strategy and tactics of our liberation movement."

It is clear to all of us that the clarion call made to us this year, is a call to resolute action, a call to battle for "bringing into being" as Comrade President Oliver Tambo puts it, "a country which they (the youth -ed) can truly call theirs, a country in which they can mature and pass away in peace and happiness." Let it be clear to all of us that our actions can only yield results only if they are guided by a sound knowledge, knowledge which is the expression of the experience gained by our fighting people led by their authentic movement, the ANC, knowledge which also takes into account the revolutionary experience of all the people of the world.

The first point which we must thoroughly grasp is the position of the youth within the structure of our society, our relationship to the rest of our people, our composition & role in the liberation struggle. As the paper under discussion states:

"The youth is an important factor of the revolutionary shaping of society. The youth, however, should not be regarded as a separate class, but as a social group. It is not a homogeneous group and it corresponds fully to the social structure of a given society. It is marked by a striving on what is new, its sights being set on the future. Its specifics as a social group are determined by the circumstances which every new generation witnesses and acquires experience in the conditions of the same concrete stage of social development. In our country the youth is born in a society tormented by racial prejudice, national oppression and exploitation. Thus our youth experiences the same sufferings experienced by the rest of our population. The struggle of the youth is part of the mainstream of the national liberation struggle led by the African National Congress hence its activities are inseparable from the struggle of other generations of our people. Our youth needs the experience of veteran fighters against oppression and exploitation..."

MISLEADING IDEAS

This is a position which if consistently maintained by all of us, would amount to a deadly blow on the oppressors. In a desperate effort to drive a wedge between the fighting people, in this case between the youth which is joining the struggle in growing numbers and our people who have been fighting for decades, the oppressors and their agents insistantly implant misleading ideas within the youth movement. The aim of these reactionary ideas is to conceal the direct link between the socio-political problems of the entire community and those confronting the youth, the causal connection between the sys-

tem of oppression and exploitation and the grievances of the youth on matters such as unequal and racist education and employment as well as to deny the leading role of their parents and their revolutionary organisations. The ultimate aim is to weaken the entire liberation movement.

LEADERSHIP

The vital question of the leadership of our revolution is given the emphasis it deserves. So also are the aims and means of our struggle.

"The vital task facing us in our country is to arm ourselves with the vital policy of our liberation movement. We must look at the ANC as the vanguard of the liberation struggle of the masses of our country. The section of our youth which is not acquainted with the Freedom Charter should study and adopt it as its guide in the fight against the white supremacist regime, learn from and appreciate the revolutionary experience gained by our people led by the ANC.

"And, drawing from this historic document for guidance and renewed dedication to the task of uniting and mobilising all oppressed people, all progressive and democratic forces in our Motherland for the overthrow of the hated apartheid system and the establishment of people's power, we realise that true democracy can only come through total seizure of power by the majority of our population, demolition and destruction of the state machinery of fascist rule. The freedoms enshrined in the Freedom Charter will never be realised through peaceful means as centuries of struggle have taught us... These freedoms must be fought for. This is where we, the youth, must come up more than ever and join our parents for the taking of political power by swelling the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the people's army."

Without the tested leadership of the ANC, active participation in the mobilisation of our people, the creators of victory, the combination of all forms of struggle and actual participation in armed struggle, all our endeavours would amount to shouting empty slogans, a futile and dangerous exercise.

U N I T Y

Unity, the indispensable instrument which the ANC has been forging since its birth in spite of the enemy's divide-and-rule tactics should be strong and it demands an all-out contribution from all of us.

"Working from this firm foundation, the youth of our country must now move towards the consolidation of this unity

and aim their energy and efforts at the total destruction of all apartheid instructions. Using both legal and illegal means, we must take the struggle to a higher level and demand the right of all to vote and take full part in the administration of the country, the replacement of all bodies of minority rule by democratic organs of self-government. We must refuse to serve in the special army units for Coloureds, Indians and Africans of the South African Defence Force and in the tribal armies where we are used to reinforce the aggressive military force against the revolutionary drive of the people."

W H I T E Y O U T H

Apartheid is doomed to destruction and therefore can offer no future to the white community. Its architects already have plans of running away when their imminent day of judgement has come. The ordinary white South African citizen who does not own any factory, mine or farm, the ones who are bribed with doubtful privileges to defend a cause that is alien to their fundamental interests have nowhere to run and neither do they have the means. They will have to reconcile themselves with the revolutionary changes whose realisation is inevitable. The choice is theirs, to quit the sinking ship of racist domination and join the forces of liberation fighting for a future free of racial hatred and fear.

The policy of our movement on the future of all those who live in South Africa, regardless of the colour of their skin is and will continue to be consistently revolutionary. Our people's document containing their basic demands, the programme of the ANC, the Freedom Charter, states in no uncertain terms that: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white." It is in this spirit that the fighting youth declared that:

"The oppressed and unprivileged youth of our country must forge closer links with their white colleagues and involve them fully in the revolutionary upsurge in the country..."

C A D R E S

For any revolutionary movement to effectively implement its policies, be it that the movement is in the fore-front of the people's struggle to seize political power from the oppressors as is the case with our ANC, or one that is leading the process of social transformation that follows immediately as can be seen with FRELIMO and the MPLA Party of Labour, it must have fully committed functionaries who are prepared to serve in any field

under any circumstances. It needs cadres. As our struggle escalates, so too does the need for strong cadres increase. The ANC has grown into a mighty weapon of freedom in the hands of our people because its ranks have always been filled with dedicated cadres, the best sons and daughters of our people.

What calibre of cadres does our revolution and consequently our movement need? Our paper answers:

"For the realisation of the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter, our liberation movement needs a new man - a youth that will carry on the revolutionary traditions of the youth of South Africa, to uplift the revolutionary deeds of the past youth who went into action facing imprisonment and possible death like our leaders Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Dennis Goldberg, Ahmed Kathrada, Oliver Tambo, Yussuf Dadoo and many others.



Dennis Goldberg



Dorothy Nyembe



Ahmed Kathrada

"Our people need a cadre ready to engage himself in all activities of the movement, to exercise patience and to learn, to discard all that the system imposed on us, a youth with a clear understanding of how to combine political education and technical knowhow, social and academic discipline, understand both short term and long term requirements of our struggle.

"We must learn how to work as a collective. Our youth, be it in the People's Army or in the different centres of study, should raise the level of political understanding and consciousness and rejuvenate our political life through constant discussions of topical issues both in relation to the situation in our country and on the international scene."

VIGILANCE

Revolutionaries must not only know how to fight and destroy the enemy. They must also know how to defend themselves from the enemy, even the concealed enemy within our ranks who

shouts our revolutionary slogans and sing with us our national anthem. This is a time-honoured truth. Already in the very brief period of our involvement in our revolutionary struggle our experiences provide us lessons which no stacks of volumes on the question of vigilance could. This is serious business, a matter of life and death.

"A cadre of the people both academically and militarily will be in the forefront, expose enemy manoeuvres, clean our ranks of saboteurs, subversive elements, brewers of confusion, unwarranted mistrust, aiming at misdirecting our actions, weakening and disrupting the strong bonds existing between different sections of our people between our movement and the socialist countries and progressive world organisations fighting against apartheid. In the spirit of the Morogoro Conference and other events, we hint the order that came from the Conference expounded by Comrade President O.R. Tambo, saying:

"These are the orders to our people, to our youth, to every soldier. These are the orders to our leaders. Close ranks. Wage a relentless war against disruptors and enemy agents. Defend the revolution against enemy lies and enemy propaganda, whatever form it takes. Be vigilant. The enemy is vigilant. Beware of the wedge-driver - men who creep from ear to ear, driving wedges among us."

OUR FRIENDS

While the crime of apartheid, a system of brutal national oppression and exploitation is condemned by the whole world except the imperialists who plunder the wealth of our country and their puppets, our just struggle enjoys the unconditional support of all the freedom-loving people of the world. Therefore, we should never forget our friends who have always stood with us through thick and thin. Therefore "At this peak of our struggle we should strengthen the anti-imperialist forces and win progressive youth onto the side of the fighting people led by the African National Congress. We must rally the youth in the imperialist countries and strengthen existing links with the youth in the socialist countries. We must support the struggles of the fighting peoples of Namibia, Palestine, Chile, East Timor, El Salvador, etc., fighting for national liberation."

In summing up the following deserve added emphasis. "All attempts to detach our generation from other generations of our

fighting people and, hence, to weaken the revolutionary movement as a whole have failed." We must strengthen this position.

"Our task is to mobilise all South African youth who still do not understand the policy, strategy and tactics of our movement, to explain what the Freedom Charter is and the role it plays. Our youth must not allow itself to be deceived that it has any important role to play outside the national liberation movement. We must reject slogans like "the generation gap" and "let the youth take over", and destroy forever the illusion that the youth can lead the revolution. Such naive beliefs only serve to alienate the youth from the mainstream of our struggle and pay service to the enemy and its imperialist forces."

This is the line of our revolutionary struggle as developed and set out by the ANC and our people. This is the line which our movement has maintained consistently throughout the decades of struggle for freedom. This is the line which must be followed by our entire youth who are honestly prepared to give everything including their life for the sake of the freedom of our people. This is the only road to freedom.

MATOLA, PONTO DO OURO AND CHIAWELO

- ANC KHUMALO

The body of the dead Boer soldier covered in mud, blood and sea-sand, stares at you from the front page of "NCTICIAS", the Mozambican daily newspaper. Around him are strewn his weapon, binoculars, helmet and other equipment. He lies awkwardly, stiffly, almost like a shark hauled out of the nearby Indian Ocean. He is one of the two Boer soldiers killed in a clash with Mozambican soldiers at the small seaside resort of Ponto do Ouro which is situated on the border with South Africa.

The racist troops were attempting to infiltrate into Mozambican territory during the early morning of March the 17th. They were spotted by a local villager who alerted border guards. The Boers were quietly encircled. Firing broke out. They retreated in panic, carrying one of their dead with