

# STRAIGHT TALK...

## Pommeling Granite with Rubber

This June, 19 years since the incarceration of the Rivonia Trialists and about 21 years since the imprisonment of our leader and national hero, Comrade Nelson Mandela, our talk is straight and unflinching.

In speaking of this towering giant of undying courage and determination, that upright advocate of freedom and justice, the living Prometheus who fetched fire from the hearths of Shaka, Hintsa, Sekhukhuni, Moshoeshe, let us paraphrase Mary Benson in reply to the question what manner of man is this Mandela: Commanding, unrelenting, passionate, magnanimous, Mandela is a fearless man who inspires courage in others. He derives his strength from the people and from his conviction in ultimate victory. But, he insists, he is only one in a large army of people, and he would not want to be singled out from the many thousands of men, women and - since 1976 - school children, who have given themselves to the long struggle.

For close to 21 years comrade Mandela has stuck to his guns, moved by the same bright vision of a free and democratic South Africa and together with his comrades they are fighting by all means in their power to advance the cause. He remains "a competent general who pins his hopes on the superior striking force he commands" and inspires into feats of unparalleled heroism the united masses of the down-trodden people of our land. He is a living legend whose name strikes fear into the hearts of the boer-fascist oppressor.

The enemy fears Mandela not only because he is a force of example to our embattled people but precisely because together with the Sisulus, Mbe-  
kis, Motswaledis, Kathradas, Goldbergs and others he belongs to that dedicated breed of patriots and revolutionaries who, as in the words of the late Chief A.J. Luthuli: *"represents the highest in morality and ethics in the South African political struggle."* He is a symbol of the Black man's commitment to a South Africa of the Freedom Charter. From him we learn that in the fight for a better future for our country and people no sacrifice is too great. Neither the back-breaking toil of a prison quarry at Robben Island, the mind-renting experience of long incarceration nor the sickening arrogance of a boer-warder moron at

Pollsmoor can demoralise a man committed to serve in the front ranks of popular struggle for a life-time. Wise patriots resign themselves to his counsel and follow his example. The conscious and determined freedom-loving millions inside South Africa and abroad will always fight for his release.

At the time of composing this 'talk' dedicated to the 21st Anniversary of Comrade Mandela's incarceration, we are aware of continuing harassment aimed at wrecking his body and soul. The aim of Pretoria's gangsters at Pollsmoor - we do not even need to add that this is per deliberate instructions of the apartheid authorities - in subjecting him to mental and physical harassment is calculated to realise a long cherished dream of putting him to death, and by so doing, it is idly hoped by the myopic racists, the fountainhead of Black popular and revolutionary struggle would have been stemmed and in its place will emerge national demoralisation and submission, and as for the African National Congress and Umkhonto we Sizwe, they further hope in their lunatic fulminations, they must also fumble in due course.

Let the enemy be warned! Should he bring about the murder of Comrade Mandela through whatever schemes he shall not withstand the popular avalanche, he shall not be spared the Spear of the Nation, he shall not be spared the wrath of the ANC. And he may not withstand international condemnation for the death of one who has risen in stature to a position of an exemplary world figure.

We in the fighting ranks do not doubt that the satanic efforts of the enemy will fall short of their object. Nelson Mandela and the rest of that cream of our leaders will never submit to harassment. They will remain upright and will fight back indefatigably and from their example our victory is assured. We are certain that the actions of the enemy against our leaders are as futile as pommeling granite with a rubber mallet.

We call upon all our people and the conscious world to intensify the campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela, our leaders and all political prisoners in South Africa.

Let the enemy assimilate the message clearly:

*Burst Pollsmoor  
For his courage of steel  
Crumples your cardboard grill*

*Burst Pollsmoor  
For not even the lime island  
could choke this titan grand*



*Burst Pollsmoor  
 For you are a sand castle  
 Go you hear the roar of the Black ocean*

*Burst Pollsmoor  
 For the spears of Mandela  
 Strike at Koeberg, SASOL, Pretoria*

*Just go burst Pollsmoor  
 And save yourself the rout.*

- EDWIN MABITSE

# **A SOBER ASSESSMENT**

EXTRACT FROM THE RIVONIA TRIAL STATEMENT

(20, APRIL, 1964).

"I do not... deny that I planned sabotage. I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love of violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had risen after many years of tyranny, exploitation and oppression of my people by the whites.

I admit immediately that I was one of the persons who helped to form Umkhonto we Sizwe, and that I played a prominent role in its affairs until I was arrested in August 1962.

... I and the others who started the organisation did so for two reasons. Firstly, we believed that as a result of Government policy, violence by the African people had become inevitable, and that unless responsible leadership was given to canalise and control the feelings of our people, there would be outbreaks of terrorism which would produce an intensity of bitterness and hostility between the various races of this country which is not produced even by war. Secondly, we felt that without violence there would be no way open to the African people to succeed in their struggle against the principle of white supremacy...

But the violence which we chose to adopt was not terrorism. We who formed Umkhonto were all members of the African National Congress, and had behind us the ANC tradition of non-violence and negotiation as a means of solving political disputes. We believed that South Africa belonged to all the people who lived in it, and not to one group, be it black or white. We did not want an inter-racial war, and tried to avoid it to the last minute."

- NELSON ROLIHLEHLA MANDELA -