

DAWN



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DAWN

Monthly Journal of Mkhonto we Sizwe

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Year of Mkhonto we Sizwe

PEOPLE'S ARMY

COVER: P. J. "Jack" Hodgson



Editorial Comment

Botha never needed the state of emergency

THERE IS nothing of real positive significance that can be read in Botha's lifting of the state of emergency. After all he never needed it. South Africa has always been a police state. Apartheid's statute books are riddled with enough laws.

Before racist Botha proclaimed martial law, our people were already faced with massive police and army repression. The racist army and police have always had enough power to run riot in our townships and murder our people. Add to that the use of secret death squads who have always had enough protection to assassinate the leaders and activists of the democratic movement.

South Africa was under no state of emergency when the people of the Vaal Triangle were living under a state of virtual siege, following the invasion of their townships by seven thousand racist soldiers and police. Their crime was to demand rents they can afford.

It was also under no martial law when the people of Lamontville were massacred, for the same offence. Nor was it when the people of Langa and KwaNobuhle in Uitenhage were murdered in coldblood for burying their dead. Sebe needed no state of emergency to butcher the people of Mdantsane when they refused to ride buses.

RESISTANCE

Botha proclaimed martial law in an effort to arrest our growing resistance to the apartheid system of oppression. He thought by doing so he would regain the control he has lost over our townships. The same revolt against his evil system.

has compelled him to lift the state of emergency.

In Botha's reckon there is also the element that this action will ease the pressure on his imperialist allies who are under enormous pressure from their people in those countries to isolate the South African regime and impose sanctions. No wonder then that the Reagan Administration welcomed the act as if it was something historic, and be silent when unarmed school children are massacred in White-river.

FUTILE EXERCISE

As of this writing there are more troops, policemen, hippos, buffels and casspirs in the townships than there were before the emergency. Which means that the whole imposition and lifting of the state of emergency was a futile exercise, indicating no seriousness on the part of the boers to change their direction. Furthermore, the behaviour of the enemy confirms clearly what the NEC of the ANC said in the New Year Message:

"The Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative. That initiative is now in our hands. The racist regime has no policy and can have no policy either to save the apartheid system from sinking deeper into

crisis or to extricate this system from that crisis. Its political programme has been reduced to a shambles. Its ideological platform has collapsed. All it can do now is to react to events from day to day, without any overall objectives, except to keep itself in power for as long as possible."

Therefore the demand for the lifting of the state of emergency has in reality not been met while the police and army still roam the townships. For us the task is clear: *we must deepen the process of making the country ungovernable and the apartheid system unworkable.* Botha should never regain the control of the townships. Like we drove the hated community councillors out of the townships, we can equally rid our townships of the murderous police and troops.

We need to extend the state of ungovernability existing in the townships to the rural areas, to ultimately engulf the whole country. This should be coupled with the growing actual physical struggle we have witnessed in other areas. Petrol bomb and grenade attacks against the army and police, which have become a feature of our resistance in the recent past, need to multiply manifold. Let us swell the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe and rout the enemy!



**Forward to a
People's Government**

WHY WE MET MABUZA

INTERVIEW with Comrade Mac Maharaj, member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress.

***QUESTION:** Why did the African National Congress meet the Inyandza National Movement of KaNgwane?*

ANSWER: The meeting with the Inyandza National Movement was part of the exercise of the African National Congress to unite our people in action and in struggle.

The enemy has created the bantustan system from as far back as 1954. Part of the reasoning behind that scheme was to divide our people and to fragment our country. And by demarcating our people as belonging to the bantustans it sought to exploit our pride in our African heritage to a point where we would agree to treat our people in the bantustans as some other people, belonging to some other country. It was part of the process of dismembering us, dividing us.

We have always considered it imperative to organise in the countryside and we have never abandoned the goal of activating those areas. To a certain extent at the tactical level the enemy in a limited way may have succeeded with regards to the bantustans. But the people in the bantustans are our people, part of the South African nation.

RECORD OF STRUGGLE

During its short existence, the Inyandza National Movement has created a record of struggle; of refusal to accept bantustan 'independence'. It is a record of determination to see themselves as South Africans first and foremost, and not in terms of the ethnicity that the regime has required of them.

Furthermore I believe that the decision of the Inyandza National Movement leadership to see us was of special significance. It was not just some group sitting at the top having taken the decision to meet us. It was a decision taken at their congress last year, attended by 8 000 delegates who in their turn represented tens of thousands of people who presently live in KaNgwane. And they came to see us because they wanted to discuss the way forward from the current political constitutional crisis that our country faces.

The communique issued after that meeting indicated a great deal of common understanding between the African National Congress and Inyandza despite the fact that it operates within the framework of the bantustan system and therefore exists only at the legal level.

***QUESTION:** Does this meeting differ with the ones held last year with the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and white businessmen?*

ANSWER: The drive was similar in terms of the unifying process, in terms of pinning down the Botha regime to its narrowest support base and winning over people for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. In terms of the depth of feeling expressed it was not like the KaNgwane meeting, mandated by the congress of KaNgwane.

The characteristic of the meeting with the PFP is that we were meeting a group from within the white community which has a basic interest in the system. Unlike the Inyandza National Movement of Ka-

Ngwane, they represent a people who have no vested interests in the system of white domination. They are part of the system of people who are dominated, even though the bantustans have been created to give some leading levels a share as puppets and collaborators. So there are differences there.

But I think the overall drive to unify our people in action did permeate also the meeting with the PFP. Certainly we criticise it for its role in parliament and we have welcomed the resignation of Van



Zyl Slabbert from parliament and from his position in the PFP. We believe that has been a development of extreme significance because it has pointed to the irrelevance of the white parliament.

In our discussions with the PFP we have also pointed to the need for the PFP to square up its practice. For example to say to us we were a relevant force as the ANC and were part of the solution to the problems of our country was inconsistent with their support for pre-emptive strikes by the South African Defence Force into the neighbouring countries of Southern Africa, directed against the African National Congress.

So whilst the discussion with Inyandza was to share and acquaint each other with our basic strategy, to try and understand

each other better, that too was true of the PFP. But there was a difference. We do not accept the issue of the mobilisation of the people within the framework of the parliamentary structure because we do not support the solution which merely looks at democracy in terms of formal structures that are elected once every five years and have no answerability and accountability to the masses of the people. We believe that the PFP has a duty to agitate on a regular basis within the white community and in terms of issues which link up with the liberation struggle.

These then are some of the differences and nuances between the two meetings. One has been to unify our support base within the Black people. The other has been to win over people from the White community who are part of the people who enjoy the benefits of the apartheid system into the common struggle.

QUESTION: The solution to the problems facing our country lies in the institution of majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial society. How did the Inyandza foresee the attainment of this goal?

ANSWER: We quite understood that they are operating at the legal level, within the bantustan system. Their strategy therefore has to search for peaceful ways of change. But the significance was that they not only reject the 'independence' of KaNgwane but the whole bantustan system. That has serious implications, namely, they do not agree even with the existence of the KaNgwane bantustan. How and when they will act in terms of their own strategy on this field is another matter. It is a matter that they will have to consider on their own.

But the emphasis in our discussion and what we appreciated was the way in which they have mapped out a programme to mobilise the masses of the people. Secondly, the Inyandza National Movement has gone beyond the stage of confining its activities to within their bantustan. They



Graham Molodi (ANC Chief Representative in Zambia) and Jacob Zuma (member of the NEC of the ANC) meet Mabuza (right).

recognise, as their President said at their congress, that what happened in Kwa-Nobuhle and Duduza directly affects the people of KaNgwane. That is, over and above the bantustan system, they were now seeking for levels of activity and co-operation with all the democratic forces to act in unision against the Botha regime.

We understand their strategy within the context in which they are operating. That does not mean that we accept that strategy for all time. We accept their independent existence and believe that out of those discussions they have gone back with a broader perspective of the overall struggle. And naturally we will expect that they will try to ensure that in mobilising their people to resist and overthrow that system, they too will act together with all the liberation forces.

CONSOLIDATING UNITY

The meeting with Inyandza was a step in consolidating the unity of our people and in improving the calibre of mobilisation in the bantustans and the rural areas. It is not the end of the process, but merely the start. I think we ought to study the success of the Inyandza National Movement in mobilising the people of KaNgwane.

The comrades in the Inyandza National Movement have got to be asking themselves the question what they can do to influence the people in the other bantustans, what they can do to influence even some of the leading people in the bantustans who are acting as collaborators so as to act in such a way as to isolate the die-hard counter-revolutionaries and draw all the others who are objectively oppressed

and suffering from the system into the mainstream of struggle.

QUESTION: Were there any areas of co-operation agreed upon at the meeting?

ANSWER: This was the first meeting between the two organisations. It did not map out any specific, structured relationship. It served as an exchange of views in terms of the respective organisations strategies and tactics. It has left open the possibility and expressed the need for more meetings and more exchanges of views.

Beyond that this meeting avoided questions that would have other implications, both for the existence of Inyandza National Movement and its legality and the terrain of struggle that it occupies today.

QUESTION: What is the attitude to other bantustan organisations? Can they all meet the ANC?

ANSWER: Not necessarily. Our response to Inyandza's request was based on our understanding of the Inyandza National Movement. Certainly, we have been working both among the masses and at other levels in all the bantustans. That has been a consistent part of our political work. But whether we shall meet any particular group or not will be assessed within the general context of our strategy and tactics, as well as the specific request. It is impossible to predict in general how we will react to a specific approach.

QUESTION: Does the same apply to Inkatha?

ANSWER: There is a special problem there. We believe that the leader of Inkatha, Gatsha Buthelezi, occupies the same trench with the Botha regime. Even when we last met him in 1979 he acted contrary to the understanding and outside of the common agreements that were reached. He has consistently taken positions not only to differ on fundamental issues of strategy and tactics but to insist and make

those differences the key issues around which his whole existence depends today.

If you look at the last conference of Inkatha you will find approximately 80% of the resolutions giving attention merely to attacking the ANC, the UDF and the entire democratic movement in the country. They also attacked COSATU at its formation. One would have thought that a movement of our people, fighting to liberate themselves from the yoke of apartheid, would spend 99% of its time attacking P.W. Botha and the apartheid system.

Gatsha Buthelezi then is doing P.W. Botha's dirty work. As to the people who are members of Inkatha, we do not believe that they are all willingly misled by Gatsha. We believe Gatsha has misled them by taking our national anthem and the colours of the ANC, trying to portray himself as the heir of the African National Congress. In this way he has misled large numbers of our people in the Natal area.

It is our duty to enlighten those people to understand where he is taking them and to show them the right place in the struggle of our people. But as yet I do not think that if Gatsha is interested in any talks he is interested with any seriousness. I believe that if Gatsha Buthelezi wants to make a request for talks with the ANC, he is more interested in the publicity that he would acquire.

And we are not engaged in these rounds of talks for the sake of publicity. We are engaged in a life and death struggle with the apartheid regime, one of the most vicious regimes in the whole world. We are concerned with building solid unity for our people, unity in action. We believe that Gatsha, in leading Inkatha, has not even led the masses of the people that he commands into any action. He is in fact leading them to become puppets of the Botha regime.

LEARN with DAWN N

You too Countryman, can be a Freedom Fighter

the d.l.b.

A Dead Letter Box (DLB) can be used for storing weapons, dropping and collecting messages. The location of the DLB must be known only to yourself and your contact.

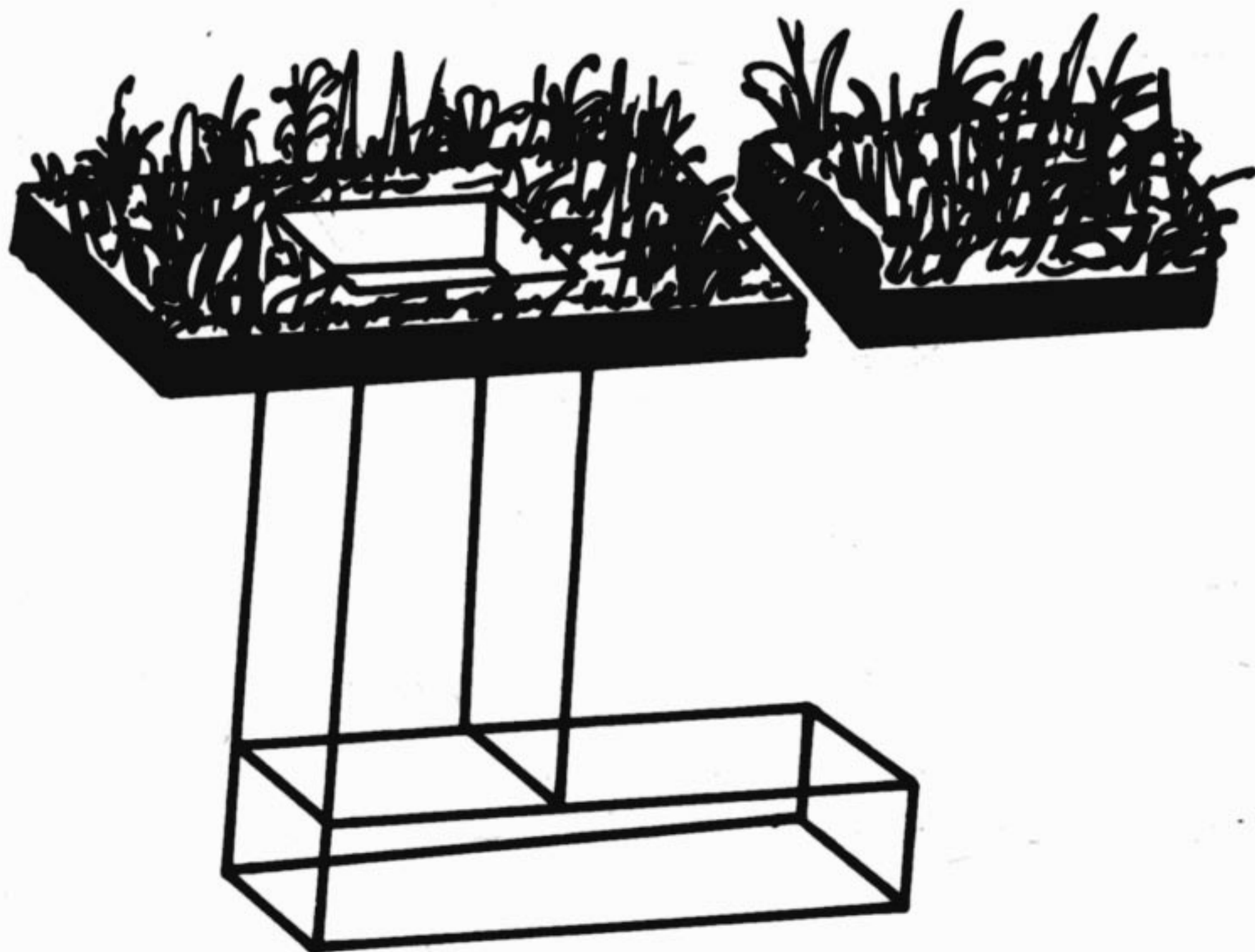
The DLB must be:

- located at a secret place;
- easily accessible; and

- well-camouflaged.

DLB FOR STORING WEAPONS

As we continue to disarm the enemy, amassing weapons for our own combat squads, we must know how to maintain and store them properly. Many enemy weapons jam and mis-



fire when they accumulate dust or rust. Therefore, where and how we keep them is very important.

A DLB is very important for your weapon/weapons to keep it/them out of the enemy's reach, protect them against moisture which results to rusting.

CONSTRUCTING A DLB

You can make a DLB by digging a square hole which will be covered and well-camouflaged. Your hole must be 1,6 – 2 metres deep and 40–50 cm wide.

Your DLB must be on dry soil. That means you cannot construct one on the banks of a river or near the beach where there is moisture

and the soil can collapse.

When digging a DLB, put the soil in a sack and dispose of it elsewhere, but not near your DLB.

Your DLB must be well-camouflaged. For instance, if it is near a big bush, it cannot be detected easily.

After constructing your DLB, there must be no traces that the area or soil has been tempered with. Your DLB must have a lid which can be made by constructing a wooden box or using hand-board which can be inserted and fitted in the hole. This means that some of the top soil shall be preserved for use on your lid so as to appear just like the environment.

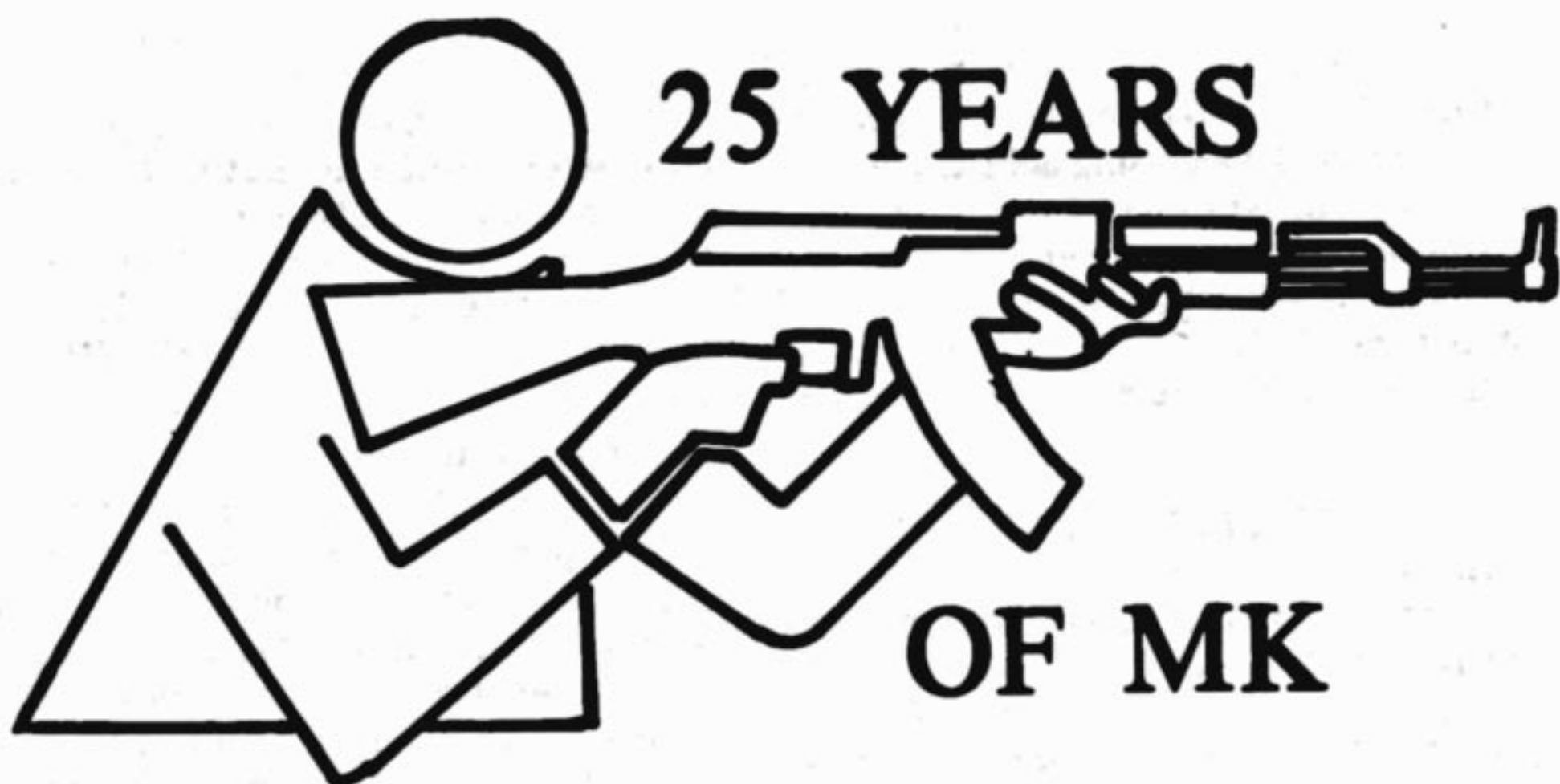
DAWN POLITIXWORD NO. 2 - ANSWERS

ACROSS

1. AEROFLOT 5. SI 6. MLANGENI 9. OR 10. SS 12. TNT
 13. OBESE 16. ORAL 18. EARP 20. CP 21. LAND 23. ET
 24. GRENADES

DOWN

1. AKM 2. REAR 3. FIGHTER 4. MISSILE 7. LO 8. NATO
 11. MOLLER 14. EEC 15. SAP 17. RUN 19. PLAN 22. DOE



THE LONGEST THREE MINUTES IN MY LIFE

AN EPISODE BY COMRADE JOE SLOVO, CHIEF-OF-STAFF OF
UMKHONTO WE SIZWE.

THEORY APART, this venture into a new area of struggle found us ill-equipped at many levels. Among the lot of us we did not have a single pistol. No one we knew had ever engaged in urban sabotage with home-made explosives. Some of us had been in the army but, for all practical purposes, our knowledge of the techniques required for this early phase of the struggle was extremely rudimentary.

The most experienced military man among us was Jack Hodgson, who was appointed to the Johannesburg Regional Command of MK. Unlike me, he had really been through the war; a veteran of the Abyssinian campaign and a 'desert rat' during the early stages of the North African war, he was demobilised for medical reasons. He returned to civilian life to become one of the full-time leaders of the ex-service organisation — the Springbok Legion.

I have learned not to assume that every person who puts on a Communist garb is necessarily a dedicated revolutionary. But Jack certainly wore that garb with distinction. He expected neither position nor personal recognition in return for sacri-

fice. Jack and Rica's flat became our Johannesburg bomb factory. Sacks of permanganate of potash were bought and we spent days with mortars and pestles grinding this substance to a fine powder. After December 16 most of our houses were raided in search of clues. By a stroke of enormous luck the Hodgson flat was not among the targets. Had the police gone there they would have found that permanganate of potash permeated walls, curtains, carpets and every crevice.

We had learned that this substance, more commonly used in washing lettuce, mixed with aluminium powder and catalysed by a drop of acid, could make an effective explosion. For timing devices we had to experiment with various thick-

nesses of paper and cardboard in order to establish the time it took for the acid to eat through. We also managed to improvise an incendiary device using acid as the catalyst. The acid was placed in a small bottle whose outlet was covered by a specific thickness of paper or cardboard and just before placing the device in the target area, one had to turn the bottle upside down.

PRIMITIVE DEVICE

It was with this rather primitive device that I set out to burn down the Johannesburg Drill Hall which had housed the preparatory examination of the Treason Trial (1956). I had reconnoitred it carefully on more than one occasion and had



Joe Slovo

chosen the spot which would have ignited not only the enormous wooden floor but also the hundreds of wooden chairs which covered it. But when the moment came, I found that the military authorities had decided to have their monthly spring-clean. I entered the hall through a side door and found myself in the presence of about fifty Black cleaners who were removing the chairs, polishing the floor, etc.

I wandered through the complex in an attempt to locate another suitable spot. It

was past five in the afternoon and the Administrative offices seemed empty of staff. I chose an office with huge wooden cupboards, turned the bottle upside down and was about to place the carrier bag behind one of the cupboards when a clipped, military voice came from behind me: "Can I do anything for you, Sir?" Although I feared that it might be too late, I had prepared for this moment.

I told him that my brother had received call-up papers but was about to take an important exam and could I be informed who I see about a possible exemption. The sergeant-major, who obviously had no inkling of my real intentions, politely asked me to follow him. I did so with racing pulse, knowing that the acid in that small bottle had begun to eat away at the flimsy cardboard. Had our kitchen laboratory calculated the fifteen minutes correctly?

Fortunately for both of us the officer dealing with exemptions had already left and I was politely advised to come back another day. I gave him a sweaty hand and walked briskly away. As soon as I decently could, I opened the tennis ball cylinder box which housed all the ingredients and snatched out the bottle. The three or four minutes which preceded this were perhaps the longest in my whole life.

We were to discover the following day that Molefe, the first MK cadre to die in action, was killed in the vicinity of his target by a premature explosion which must have been caused by a defect in the acid bottle cover. Some hours after the drift hall incident I felt somewhat redeemed when, as part of a team of Jack Hodgson and Rusty Bernstein, we dealt successfully with a manhole on the Johannesburg/Pretoria road which housed the telephone cables between the two cities.

THOUGH WE HAD NO REVOLVERS NOR AK47's.

Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim is a founder member of Umkhonto we Sizwe. He served in the Natal Regional High Command of Mk with Comrades Billy Nair, George Naicker, and Curmick Ndlovu. He was arrested in 1963, became accused No. 1 in the ensuing Durban Trial, and was sentenced to fifteen years on Robben Island. He spoke to DAWN.

I WAS approached to join Umkhonto we Sizwe at its formation in 1961. The leadership had identified certain activists from the Congress movement and someone would be delegated to approach you. At that time of course the question of a change in the methods of struggle and armed struggle was dominating the debates at all levels of the movement. So from those discussions the leadership would pick the cadres whom they thought were favourably disposed to the armed struggle.

The emergence of Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961 sparked off lots of enthusiasm among the people. Although we were not that many in the beginning, our actions were very widespread. With my unit we carried out at least eight acts of sabotage in the Durban Central area alone. They resulted in many people coming forward in search of MK. Most of the people who came wanting to join the organisation were subsequently sent out of the country to undergo military training.

A significant feature of our operations was that we were not well-trained. We had received a very crude type of training. We lacked the professionalism that our cadres display now and we were not exposed to the facilities of training we enjoy today. The only form of explosive we used was

dynamite, which we stole, and that was all we had. We had no revolvers and AK-47's, let alone knowing how to use them. But given all that, we really had the state worried, for in that period, lots and lots of sabotage attacks were launched.

There's a bit of a story I recall about this dynamite we stole. Next to road construction sites then there used to be little sheds where dynamite was stored. Not knowing how big the dynamite is and how it looks, we went with a carrier bag, only to find that there were big boxes. There were also little metal pieces which we later learnt were detonators. We did not know what they were and we threw them all away. Then we had to learn how to store and use it. And from that little stock of dynamite we were able to supply other provinces as well.

Despite that we were not well-trained, we suffered no casualties. None of us were arrested. Nobody was blown up. We really had the police worried. Despite their intensive investigations, they were not able to uncover us. At one stage, for instance, they had themselves so organised: I was living in an area called Greyville. There was a police station nearby. Immediately there occurs an act of sabotage anywhere in the area, the police

would check on me.

They did that with a number of cadres whom they suspected were members of MK. At times they would wake me at two in the morning, demanding to know when I came home. Then I would know that there had been an attack somewhere. But despite that, with the correct use of timing devices, we would plant an explosive charge at a target and reach home in time, and when the police came they always found us at our homes. It was only with the introduction of the 90 days detention without trial law, the solitary confinement and torture that went with it, that the police were able to uncover some of our units and bring some of us to trial.

TIMING DEVICES

We also did not have factory-made timing devices. We had to solve the problem of how to ignite the fuse. We discovered that if you pour a certain chemical (acid) onto sulphuric powder, fire results. Then we had to develop methods of delaying the liquid from contacting the powder. We found that if you put it in a capsule, it takes about half an hour to eat through it. So once it eats through the capsule, it will contact the powder which in turn will burn, igniting the fuse. To prolong the delay to about an hour, we would pour the acid into a small capsule and put that small capsule into a bigger one. At most, that was the time required by our transport to deliver us at our respective homes.

The attacks we were carrying out were mainly on government installations: power lines, telephone cables, railway lines, offices, etc. The instructions were that we had to be very careful not to endanger or harm human lives. Only once did we blow up the offices of the Nationalist Party newspaper — *Natalia* — and there were two minor injuries. But on the whole no lives were lost.

BIG OPERATION

One big operation I was involved in was when we plunged the whole of the Dur-

ban area into darkness for many hours. We blew up a very big pylon in a place called Montclear, just outside Durban. Ronnie Kastrils and I had gone to the area weeks earlier to conduct reconnaissance. The place was hilly and sparsely populated. We worked out a route passing through some houses.

One night we went to this area. We were four, including Billy Nair. We planted the dynamites on two legs of the pylon. This required lot of work. You had to place the dynamite against the object and tape it to stick, get the fuse and put it into the charge. Then, at the spot, you had to fill the capsule with acid, making sure that the acid does not touch you. Which is not a very enviable task. Of course you had to use gloves.

As I was walking home with a friend, the whole Durban area went dark. I then knew that our operation had been successful. At this stage I was working for *New Age*, our newspaper. Of course the editor, Comrade M.P. Naicker did not know that I was involved in this act.

The next morning the radio and the press carried it. I took my camera and went to the area in the afternoon to photograph the pylon that was blown up. I went to the local population to enquire where the pylon was so that nobody would think I knew the place. When I got there I took the photographs for *New Age* and those were the first actual sabotage pictures to be published in *New Age*.

VICTORIA BRIDGE

Another operation I was involved in was in the Durban Central Area. People who know Durban will remember Victoria bridge in the old days. Underneath trains were passing. Even here we did thorough reconnaissance of the area. We studied the time-table and established all the times for the trains. We did not want to destroy the railway line when there was a train passing, in accordance with the instruction that we should not endanger lives. We



WE HAD TO RUN AWAY AND HE GAVE A CHASE. HE THOUGHT WE WERE THIEVES.

also established the location of the watchmen, the railway police and how they operated.

Again we used dynamite. At this time the enemy was making good use of police dogs. Meaning that even if you had left the area you still had to see to it that no traces remained behind. Someone suggested that we use chilli powder. After planting our charges, we left the area safely.

An enormous explosion followed. I was living about 3½ kilometres from this area and I could hear the explosion. That operation earned a lot of publicity. When I walked past the area the following morning on my way to work, I could see

hundreds of people crowding the area, watching the damaged line. There trains were delayed for many hours.

We also blew up an office of a stooge, A.I. Kadjee. He was collaborating with the government. We decided to get to his office in the early evening. It was in a passage. There were people upstairs. We thought we would break in through a window and put the explosive in the office so as to blow up the whole office. When we were about to break the window, we saw the night watchman approaching. He shouted at us. We had to run away and he gave chase. He thought we were thieves. So we left the place to conduct fresh rec-



I TOOK MY CAMERA AND WENT TO THE AREA
IN THE AFTERNOON TO PHOTOGRAPH THE PYLON I BLEW UP

onnaissance. This time we decided to make a very quick job. We put the explosives next to the door whilst somebody was keeping watch on the night watchman. After placing the charge we made a run for it, disappearing into the busy streets of Durban.

We were away for hardly five minutes when we heard a big explosion. The damage caused to the office was quite extensive. This is one place where we could not use the timing device because we thought the night watchman would discover the explosive before it went off.

Those were some of the big operations, in the sense of that time, I was involved in. There were other small operations. There were also a lot of experiments that did not work out. For instance, once we devised what was called a pipe-bomb. We took pipes, sealed them and put the explosive powder inside.

We wanted to blow up a telephone cable. We then put this pipe-bomb on it. We do not know what happened because when we went to check three days later, we found the pipe-bomb still hanging there. It had gone off but nobody even noticed it because it had done absolutely no harm to the telephone cable.

Also as an experiment, we attacked goods trains with Molotov cocktails. We would stand on top of a bridge and throw the petrol bombs on passing goods trains. As you know, they are covered with thick canvas. That also did not seem to work. In some cases it did but with very minor damage inflicted.

NATAL COMMAND

Serving with me in the Natal Regional High Command were Curnick Ndlovu, Billy Nair, George Naicker, Ronnie Kast-rils... At first we did experiment some form of ranking system but abandoned it later. There was just a leader of the group, Curnick Ndlovu. I was the leader of the Durban Central Group.

After the arrest of Curnick Ndlovu and later Billy Nair, Ronnie and I decided to go underground, establishing the underground structure of the Natal Regional High Command. Unfortunately Bruno Mtolo, Mr X in the Rivonia Trial, was also a member. He is the man who decided to break and collaborate with the police after his arrest. He led to many arrests, including mine. He also became the main state witness during our trial.

THE PATRIOTIC FRONT



As is the tradition with guerrillas, this guerrilla of the Patriotic Front has made good use of the uniform of his opponent, the Rhodesian Army camouflage trousers and boots, plus a beret and vest. Armament consists of the 7,62mm G3 rifle; manufactured by Heckler and Koch of West Germany. It has been exported to many countries and is employed by a number of armies, including the SADF. The chest pouches are for spare G3 magazines.

In the 50's political resistance was centred mainly around the activities of the African National Congress in Bulawayo, while in Salisbury — now Harare — it was the City Youth League (CYL), later to be renamed the African National Youth League. The Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SRANC) was born in 1957, a fusion of the African National Congress and the CYL. It was banned in 1959, to be replaced by the National Democratic Party (NDP) in January 1960.

The NDP was replaced by Zapu — Zimbabwe African People's Union — after its banning. The latter in turn was banned, and in August 1963 the major split within Zapu occurred, giving birth to Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu).

Armed struggle began by sporadic sabotage attacks the same year. Between September 13 and November 18, eight plastic bombs were made, directed at the railways and electricity installations. Numerous incidents of sabotage were recorded in the early months of 1964. Zanu launched its first guerrilla unit, the 'Crocodile Commando' that year, attacking a police camp and killing a white farmer.

August 1967 saw the birth of the ANC/Zapu alliance. The combined detachment of Zapu and Mk guerrillas of the Luthuli detachment crossed the Zambesi into Zimbabwe, engaging the combined security forces of Smith and Vorster in bitter battles. The campaign, known as the Wankie-Sipolilo, lasted for about a year.

The *Patriotic Front* was an attempt at uniting the two organisations — Zapu and Zanu. Formed in October 1976 to present a front at the Geneva talks, it sought to centralise under a single command the politico-military activities of the two movements.

THE LONG

People's war is a women's war because most women have been poor peasants and getting rid of feudal injustices, including domination by men, has been one of the primary roles of a people's war. The August revolution of 1945 began to overthrow the feudal regime and at the same time fought for independence from France. Whenever the people's army drove the French out of the region, they confiscated land owned by the French and redistributed it among the peasants.

Vietnamese revolutionaries knew that their struggle would be protracted because they needed so many years to wear down the strength of the enemy who initially had so much power. They needed strong bases of resistance to sustain the fighters. These bases or liberated zones were relatively free from colonial domination.

EARLY BATTLES OF THE LONG HAIRIED ARMY

The work of persuading people to join the struggle, organising protest demonstrations, planning rallies to raise people's spirits and persuading soldiers in the enemy army to desert — all this called for political struggle. The Vietnamese called the movement that waged this political struggle the *Long haired Army* because women took responsibility of most of its activities.

Beginning in 1930, the Women Union organised demonstrations and strikes to challenge the French colonial administration. Their demands reflected the needs of peasants and women who worked in French owned factories: *Reduce rents and interest rates! Equal rates for equal work! No dangerous work for women! Two months fully paid maternity leave! Abolish the habit of holding women in contempt!*

During the political ferment of 1930,



TA THI KIEU

*Heroine of the South Vietnam
Liberation Army
3rd Class Order for Military
Exploits*

VIETNAM

women strikers at local rubber plantations felled trees to make road-blocks and disarmed local French soldiers. Women who were raped by French Foreign Legionnaires blinded the rapists with a mixture of lime and ash. In 1931, in the province of Nge An Ha Tinh, French repression incited peasants to arm themselves and forced local functionaries to flee. Peasant associations took over local administrative functions, creating an embryonic form of revolutionary government.

For the first time in Vietnamese hist-



PHAN THI UT
*Heroine of the South Vietnam
Liberation Army
2nd Class Order for Military
Exploits*

ESE WOMEN

ory land was distributed among peasants. Women took part in public meetings and political education classes, gaining new control over their lives. The peasant administration called Nghe Tinh Soviets, fell after several months of intensive bombings and shelling by French troops. Although they had power for only a short time, the Nghe Tinh Soviets left a deep impression on Vietnamese women. The original Nghe Tinh Soviets armed self-defence unit included forty women out of a total of 120.

While only a minority of soldiers

were women, women status was not diminished by their concentration on political struggle: in people's war, political struggle has a priority. The first unit of the Vietnamese People's Army formed in December 1944 was called the Armed Propaganda Brigade.

Even former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, grudgingly made the following analysis of the sources of NLF strength: *"In practise no matter how strategic a contested area might be militarily, the liberation army would not initiate a battle unless it was clear that the people in that area had been involved in a political struggle and would welcome the liberation forces. Women played a decisive role in this work."*

Three women also joined the original 34 soldiers who formed the Armed Propaganda Brigade. Then in 1954, Ha Thi Que organised the first all women guerrilla unit. In the following years, some one million women took up arms against the French.

Vo Thi Sau was one. She came from a poor peasant family and joined a guerrilla unit when she was only fourteen. She did intelligence work and managed to kill thirteen French soldiers with one well placed grenade.

Later she tried to assassinate a notorious French agent but was caught. Despite torture and bribery, she refused to give the French any information. She became the youngest woman to be executed. Thousands of women vowed to avenge her death and aided in the final defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu.

"We extended our organisation like a drop of oil, little by little. One of us would speak to three others. Each of the three would speak to three more. Befor we spoke to anyone, we would study her history, beliefs and feelings to prevent

infiltration"

DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST YANKEE INVASION

A huge demonstration in 1950 protested against the docking of a US ship in the Saigon harbour. This demonstration was the first to recognise the US responsibility and support for French colonialism, and was a significant show of force against both the US and France. Nguyen Thi Binh, who is currently Minister of Education in Vietnam, was an active participant in this demonstration.

Ten years later she led a group of women insurgents during an uprising in Mo Cay on 17th January 1960, South Vietnam and seized power from Diem's tyrannical officials. The uprising was known as the Ben Tre Uprising and it gave a signal for a general uprising throughout southern Vietnam.

From a group of ten women in Mo Cay, thousands of women in the Mekong Delta rose to take part in the insurrection. Uprisings spread from village to village, district to district, province to province. On the 20th December Nguyen joined with other women leaders to form a new political organisation to lead the struggle for national liberation, the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. The People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF) became the fighting army under the leadership of the NLF.

As Diem's outposts collapsed, US troops were rushed to the rescue, and women escalated their struggle.

They co-ordinated political demonstrations with military activity to help divert enemy troops away from guerrilla placements. For example, while local guerrillas were in the process of taking over the Saigon garrison, thousands of women demonstrated outside the local governors

office. They demanded that their sons and husbands — many of whom had been forced to serve in the Saigon army — be given higher pay and less dangerous jobs.

Once when a district chief questioned the demonstrators as to why they thought the salaries were too low, the women replied: *"Everyone knows that during raids on villages, the soldiers steal chickens, rice and even cooked fish. This shows they do not have enough to eat, so we are asking for a salary increase for them."*

Women played a key role in undermining the fighting morale of the Saigon troops and encouraging them to desert. Most ARVN soldiers pro-US or Diem's army, were conscripted against their will and resented their officers and US advisers who treated them with contempt and brutality.

Some demonstrations expected to be pro-Vietcong (National Liberation Front) surprised ARVN troops by displaying banners demanding higher salaries for them.

Le Thi Tiens description of how demonstrators stopped troops movement provide a dramatic example of the military skills of the long haired army.

"We in Ben Tre decided to calculate the exact space ... to know how many we needed to fill it up. Then we could organise the necessary number from the countryside. This has to be done carefully too, so that the exact number could arrive from different directions to be in town at 5.00 am. Every square yard was occupied by our human sea so that the target town would be paralysed by dawn. In this way it would be impossible to arrest us, because the police and troops could not move. Nothing could move except us."

Demonstrations like these required high morale, on going organisation and leadership capable of effective reaction to enemy counter-attacks. The long haired army

was in many respects no different from the regular army. It needed efficient organisation of the rear, including food supplies, attention to family affairs and child care. Older women and men took care of most of these tasks. Sometimes demonstrators would occupy an area for a week. Each village kept a force for political struggle in full readiness.

IN THE CITIES

Also in the cities, women who were members of the PLAF served as secretaries



Mme Nguyen Thi Dinh, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation Armed Forces of South Vietnam.

and servants to top officers in Thieu's army. They relayed valuable information to the liberation forces and had the opportunity to plant bombs in the meeting rooms of the top brass in Saigon. General Dinh pointed out how the officers upper classlifestyles made them more vulnerable:

"They know we do this, but they have to hire servants."

Women were full-time members and often leaders of the PLAF. Some 40% of the regimental commanders of the PLAF were women. There were also regional guerrilla forces and local self-defence militia. A higher percentage of women were in the local militia and regional guerrilla units than in the regular units of PLAF. The local militia kept villages fortified with trenches, booby traps and spikes. These defences were necessary in wearing down the morale of Saigon and US troops.

The Vietnamese still tell stories of women who proved themselves in battle. They hope others will follow the example of Ta Thi Kieu. The night before her first attack on Saigon army garrison, she told herself: *"I must succeed to show men they shouldn't make a mockery of women."*

Some of the men in her unit protested against her participation in the battle because they feared a woman would not be strong enough to carry away the wounded. In the end, Ta Thi Kieu and another woman took the garrison alone. When the two women entered the fort, Kieu boldly announced: *"The liberation forces are here."* The Saigon troops took her word for it and surrendered.

One woman who worked as a bomb defuser summarised the experience of thousands of women in Vietnam: *"We must try to perform things normally considered our capability, and when women performed things normally beyond their capability, myths to justify their exclusion from high status jobs or leadership roles began to crumble."*

work in the enemy armed forces

BELOW we publish excerpts from the book: **Armed Insurrection** by Neuberger. Though the book was compiled for the Comintern (Communist International), the general principles it expounds apply to all revolutions. Therefore, no confusion should arise from the terminology employed. E.g. wherever reference is made to communists, that would mean revolutionaries in our case, bourgeoisie – fascist/enemy, Party – organisation, etc., etc.

DAWN finds the book particularly relevant now that the question of an armed insurrection has entered the debates on the South African revolution. We publish these excerpts with the intention of deepening our understanding of an insurrection, and also provoking even more debate on the matter. We welcome contributions from our readers on the subject.

IT IS enormously important, both in principle and also in practice, to pose correctly the question of relations between the proletariat and the army, and the line to be followed in this domain. *The army is the key element in the organisation of the state. Upon its stability and its general condition depends the stability of the state as a whole. Upon the degree of disaffection within a bourgeois army depends in great measure the proletariat's chance of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and smashing the bourgeois state in the event of an immediately revolutionary situation – when the question of overthrowing the bourgeois class in practice has to be placed on the immediate agenda.*

The history of all revolutions shows that if an army and police force with good military training, provided with every modern technique of attack and defence (machine-guns, armoured vehicles, chemical weapons, air power, etc.) and with good commanders and supported by the armed fascist detachments which exist in every country today, *fight effectively against the revolution, they are capable of rendering the latter's victory singularly difficult even if all the other conditions are favourable.*

Lenin said: *"Of course, unless the revolution assumes a mass character and affects the troops, there can be no question*

*of serious struggle."*¹

It is certainly beyond doubt that in periods of crisis, when there is an acute revolutionary situation, the army and police cannot escape the influence of the prevailing revolutionary mood. By virtue of their class composition, the revolutionary ferment will make itself felt among them in some degree or other. Nevertheless, it would be naive to suppose it possible for the army, or even parts of the army, to go over openly to the camp of revolution without some prior work by the revolutionary party. It would be naive to suppose that the revolutionary process will on its own take root and develop in

the army and police.

The revolutionary party must carry out political and organisational work in the army and police, both before the immediately revolutionary situation and above all during it. The more intensive this work is, the stronger the evolutionary ferment among the troops and their hesitation between revolution and counter-revolution will be, and the more numerous will the individual units going over to the proletariat. Throughout the insurrection, this political and organisational activity within the army must be combined with methods of physical struggle against the latter.

In Germany, if a proper revolutionary agitation had in fact been carried out in the Reichswehr and police units (which was perfectly possible despite the Reichswehr's isolation), the chiefs-of-staff would certainly not have been able to send their troops to occupy revolutionary Saxony and Thuringia so easily as was the case in September-October 1923. In Estonia during the autumn of 1924, if the *proper organisation* (communist cells, groups of revolutionary soldiers, etc.,) had existed in the army, the very considerable influence which the Communist Party already enjoyed among the troops would have made it impossible for the forces of reaction to repress the Reval insurrection of 1st December so swiftly.

Finally, if the Chinese Communist Party in Kwangtung province had been able to carry out, even to a small degree, activity of this kind to subvert and win over politically the troops of Chiang Fa-kuei, Li Chi-shen and Li Fu-lin *sent to crush red Canton* (we are not speaking here of the training regiment, or of many other units in which the Party organisation had worked brilliantly), then the outcome of the battle would certainly have been different. Furthermore, the Canton insurrection began precisely with the revolt of a military unit, the training regiment, without which a general uprising would have been impossible in the conditions prevailing

in Canton in early December 1927.

In all past insurrections without exception (Shanghai, Petrograd, Moscow, Cracow, the various German uprisings, etc.,) the decisive role has always been played by the army. The actual outcome of the revolution very often depends on the degree of sympathy for the revolution in the army, and on the extent to which its commanding officers can use it against the revolutionary proletariat. For the passage of power from one class into the hands of another class is ultimately decided by material strength. And the army is the key element of that strength...

Preparation for insurrection must be carried on simultaneously by means of agitation in the army on the one hand, and on the other by the formation of actual proletarian armed forces, capable of fighting with arms in their hands against the fraction of the regular army which has not yet been subverted. For it must not be forgotten that when the insurrection is launched, the struggle for the army will have to be waged with arms too. But the more the subversion of the bourgeois army is advanced, the stronger will the armed forces of the proletariat and the easier will be the struggle during the insurrection itself. The reverse is also true...

WHEREVER THE MASSES ARE

The essential principle for every revolutionary party is that it should carry out revolutionary work wherever the masses are concentrated. The bourgeois armies and navies always contain tens or even hundreds of thousands of young proletarians or peasants who are no less susceptible to revolutionary slogans and ideas than the factory workers or certain categories of peasants. In view of the fact that the army, the police and the navy are the main instruments of constraint, the principle means by which the bourgeois state (and every other non-socialist state) combats the revolutionary proletariat, the

need for revolutionary work within their ranks *cannot be exaggerated.*

A party which directly or indirectly renounces this crucial field of revolutionary activity exposes itself to consequences which are extremely deleterious to the revolution. *Such activity must be pursued tirelessly by the entire Communist Party, both in periods when the revolutionary forces are being built up, and even more during periods of revolutionary upsurge. We consider that such agitation, in the light of the considerations outlined above, is as essential as the Party's work in a whole series of other domains (winning the middle classes, etc., etc.,)*

Agitation in the army is frequently non-existent or insufficient because it is extremely difficult and involves many risks. This is especially true of mercenary armies like those of China, and of certain European armies: Bulgaria, Germany, etc. Obviously, the structure of an army, military discipline, the isolation of soldiers from the population, etc., create enormous difficulties. The bourgeoisie resorts to terror against any parties which carry out revolutionary work in the army. *But that only means that every communist party must carry out such work with all the more energy, resolution and persistence.*

MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of work in the army, navy and police (or gendarmerie) is to bring the mass of soldiers, sailors and police, into the common front of the proletarian class struggle; it is to ensure that the soldiers know and adopt the Communist Party's slogans and objectives.

The activity of the Party and Young Communist League to subvert the bourgeois army and navy must be carried out on two main levels:

- (a) Inside the army and the fleet; and
- (b) Through the general activity of the Party as a whole outside the army: e.g. the parliamentary group's act-

ivity on military questions; agitation by word of mouth or via the press to popularise some particular slogan within the army, etc.

These two modes of action, inside the army and outside it, *must be immediately linked, under the direction of a single centre - the Central Committee of the Party.*

The methods and forms of propaganda and agitation in the army vary from country to country. Every Communist Party, orienting itself in the light of local conditions in its own country and army, must work out the appropriate forms and models. The essential thing here is that the subversion of the bourgeois army must be pursued as energetically as possible, that the work of the Party's military organisation inside the army (such an organisation must be created) and the work of the Party as a whole to subvert the army, should be closely related to everyday political activity and to the slogans which the Party issues regularly to guide practical, day-to-day struggles.

Revolutionary work within bourgeois armies and navies almost everywhere is bound to be strictly illegal and clandestine. The bourgeoisie is prepared to devote all its efforts and all its resources to protect its armed forces against any revolutionary influence liable to subvert them; it enforces draconian measures against any revolutionary elements discovered within them. Nevertheless, with the sharpening of the class struggle, and in particular with the approach of an immediately revolutionary situation, in other words when an open struggle for the army begins between the proletariat and the ruling classes, then the scope of the Party's secret work increases progressively, and ever greater numbers of soldiers, inspired by the communist slogans, are drawn into the revolutionary struggle. At such moments, the revolutionary Party has to achieve the correct combination of secret methods inside the army with revolutionary mass action to win the latter over.

BOLSHEVIK EXPERIENCE

An excellent illustration of this is provided by Bolshevik activity inside the army during the various phases of the Russian Revolution. From 1902 onwards, the Bolshevik Party carried out a tireless clandestine revolutionary agitation in the Tsarist army. During the 1905 revolution, in a number of garrisons this activity had reached a scale which permitted it genuinely to affect the masses. The Bolsheviks knew how to combine organised secret activity with mass agitation among the troops.

After the defeat of the 1905 revolution, when the Party was obliged by the Tsarist terror to resort to clandestine methods as it prepared the masses for new revolutionary battles, its work in the army took on a yet more secret character. This situation lasted right up to the revolution of February 1917. Nevertheless, immediately after the overthrow of the Tsarist government, the Bolshevik Party began mass activity among the troops on a vast scale. Clandestine methods gave way to legal methods of subversion: communist cells, soldiers' committees, conferences of soldiers' delegates, soldiers' newspapers, etc., etc.

In order to win the bourgeois army over to revolution, and in order to weaken it generally, it is necessary to rely to a considerable extent on agitation for partial demands, and on the revolutionary struggle to reform various aspects of military life under the bourgeois state. In every country — depending on the nature of the regular armed forces, the method of recruitment, the length and character of service in the conscript units, the material and juridical situation of both officers and soldiers, etc., — the partial demands of the proletariat on military matters will vary. The revolutionary party, at every given moment, must present partial demands whose realisation will on the one hand interest the mass of soldiers and on the other be comprehensible, in the given

concrete situation, to the greatest possible number of workers.

Here is how the Sixth Comintern Congress defines the aims of the communists with respect to partial demands on military matters:

In conducting the struggle for revolution and for Socialism, we do not refuse to bear arms. The aim of our struggle is to expose the militarization the imperialists introduce for the benefit of the bourgeoisie.

As against this sort of militarisation we advance the slogan: *Arm the proletariat*. Simultaneously, the Communists must advance and give support to the partial demands of the soldiers which, in a concrete situation, stimulate the class struggle in the armies and strengthen the alliance between the proletarian and peasant soldiers and the workers outside the ranks of the army.

The partial demands are approximately as follows:

1. *Demands in Connection with the System of Defence:* Dissolution of mercenary forces; dissolution of standing and principal military units; disarming and dissolution of the gendarmerie, police and other special armed forces for civil war; disarming and dissolution of Fascist Leagues; concrete demands for the reduction of period of military service; introduction of the territorial system of military service; abolition of compulsory residence in barracks; soldiers' committees...

In the case of volunteer, mercenary armies, the demand should not be for the reduction of the period of military service, but for the right to leave the service whenever the soldier desires.

2. *Demands in Connection with the Legal Rights and Economic Position of the Soldiers:*

Increased pay for soldiers; improved maintenance; the establishment of stores committees composed of soldiers' representatives; abolition of disciplinary punish-

ments; abolition of compulsory saluting; severe penalties for officers and non-commissioned officers inflicting corporal punishment on private soldiers; the right to wear mufti when off duty; the right to be absent from barracks every day; furlough, and extra pay while on furlough; the right to marry; maintenance for soldiers' families; the right to subscribe to newspapers; right to attend political meetings.

The fact that in numerous imperialist countries a considerable percentage of the armies are recruited from among the oppressed national minorities, whereas the officers either entirely or for the greater part belong to the oppressing nation, provides very favourable ground for revolutionary work in the army. Consequently, among the partial demands we advance in the interests of the masses of the soldiers should be included demands corresponding to the needs of these oppressed nationalities (for example: military service in their home district; the use of the native language in drilling and instruction, etc.)²

The list of partial demands could easily be extended. Only the most important have been mentioned here — those which can be presented on behalf of the soldiers of most capitalist states.

The theses continue:

The demands of both the above-mentioned categories (only a few of which have been enumerated — must not only be put forward in the army but also outside it — in parliament, at mass meetings, etc. Propaganda in support of these demands will be successful only if they bear a concrete character. In order that they may do so it is necessary:

1. To have a close acquaintance with the army, with the conditions of service, with the needs and demands of the soldiers, etc., which can only be acquired by maintaining close personal contact with the army.

2. To give consideration to the system of defence in the given states and to the situation in regard to the military question at the given moment.

3. To take into consideration the morale of the army and the political situation in the country at the given moment. For example, the demand for the election of officers, as a rule, can be advanced only when the army has reached an advanced stage of disintegration.

4. To link up closely partial demands with the principal slogans of the Communist Party — arming the proletariat, proletarian militia, etc.

These demands will have revolutionary significance only if they are linked up with a distinct political programme for revolutionizing the bourgeois army.

Special attention must be paid to organising the soldiers for the protection of their interests, in alliance with the revolutionary proletariat, prior to their being called up for service (recruits' leagues, mutual aid clubs), during the period of military service (soldiers councils) and also after the conclusion of military service (revolutionary ex-servicemen's leagues). It must be the special task of the trade unions to maintain contact with their members in the army and to help them to form the above-mentioned organisations.

The conditions for revolutionary work in volunteer armies differ from the conditions for such work in conscript armies. In volunteer armies it is usually much more difficult to carry on agitation in support of partial demands like those mentioned above. Nevertheless, the work must be undertaken. The fact that in a majority of cases volunteer armies are recruited among the proletariat (the unemployed) and from among the poor peasants, provides a social base for mass work among the soldiers. The forms of this work must be carefully adapted to the social composition and the special features of the troops.

Strenuous agitation must be carried on among the masses against the special forces the bourgeoisie organise for class struggle against the proletariat (gendarmes and police) and especially against their volunteer forces (the Fascists). The reformists who talk loudly about the 'public utility' of these forces, about the 'national police' and about Fascist 'equality' must be relentlessly combated with particular energy, and every effort must be made to rouse a passionate hatred among the people towards these forces and to expose their real character. But every effort must be made to stimulate social differentiation

even among those forces and to win over the proletarian elements in them.

Revolutionary work in the army must be linked up with the general movement of the masses of the proletariat and poor peasantry. If an immediate revolutionary situation prevails, and if the industrial proletariat is beginning to establish Soviets, the slogan — "Establish Soldiers' Councils" — assumes immediate practical importance and facilitates the work of uniting the masses of the soldiers with the proletariat and the poor peasantry in their struggle for power.³

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, P. 174, in 'Lessons of the Moscow Uprising'.
2. *Theses and Resolutions of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International*, 'The Struggle against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists' section 45-46.
3. *Ibid.*, section 47-49.



DON'T ASK ME FOR SMILES

**Don't ask me for glory
while I still breathe
the cries
of those wounded in battle**

**Don't ask me for glory
I am the Unknown Soldier
of mankind**

To the generals belong honours

**My glory
is all I suffer
and have gone through
my smiles
all I have wept**

Nor smiles nor glory

**Only the stern face
of the man building the road
that must be travelled
stone by stone
in difficult country**

A face sad

**from so much effort spent
the effort of the unflagging who tire
at evening
after work is done**

**Unlaurelled head
I am not to be found
in the catalogue of human glory**

**I have not shown myself in life
and untamed woods
hide the paths
I must travel**

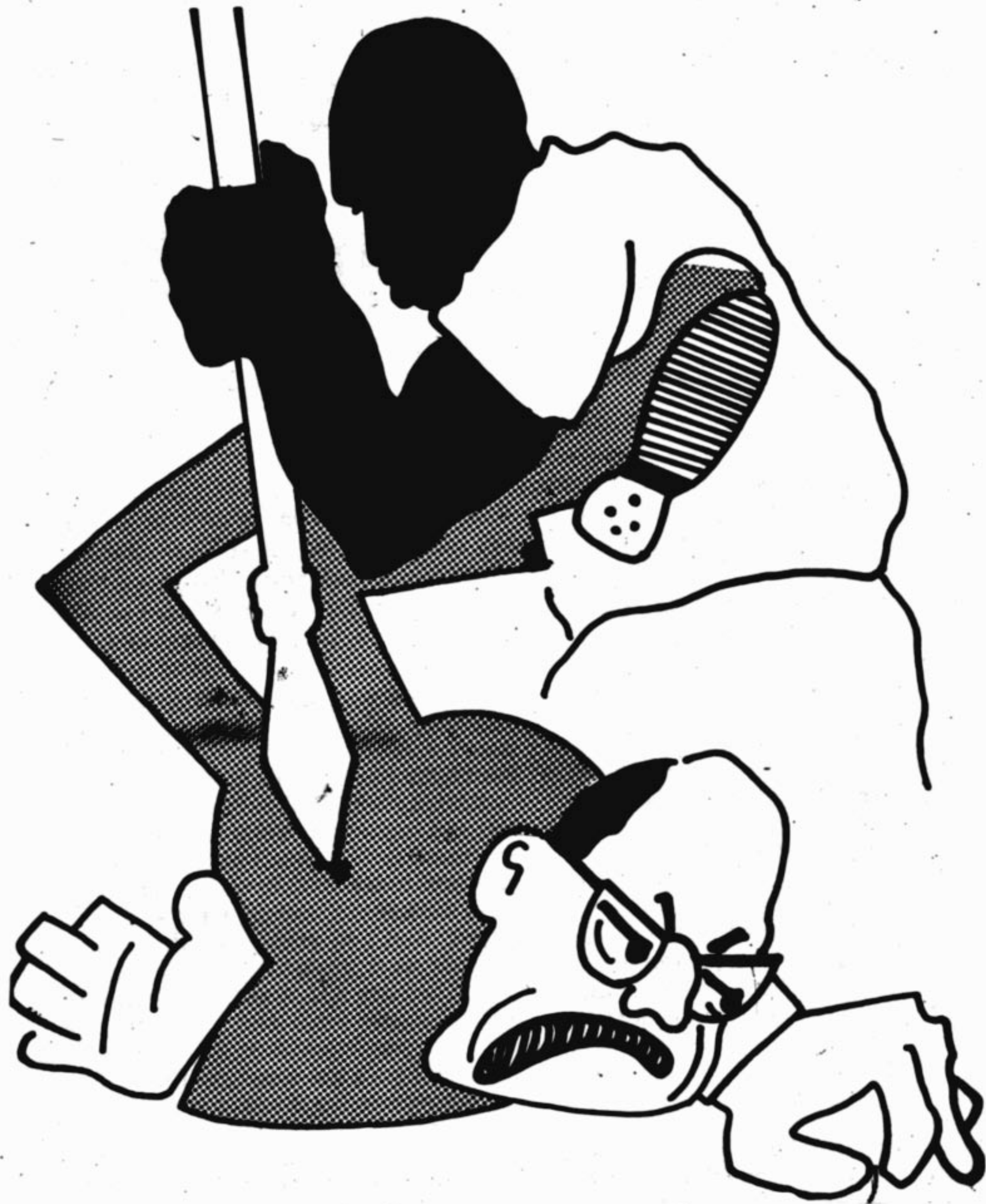
**But I shall find them
and follow them
whatever the price**

**Then
in the new catalogue
I shall show you my face
palm branches will crown it**

**I shall have for you
the smiles you ask**

— AGOSTINO NETO

FINISH BOTH OFF!



the fate of a man

*An excerpt from a novel by the famous Soviet writer
Mikhail Sholokhov.*

"TO START with, my life was just ordinary. I'm from Voronezh Province, born there in 1900. During the Civil War I was in the Red Army, in Kikvidze's division. In the famine of twenty-two I struck out for the Kuban and worked like an ox for the kulaks; I wouldn't be alive today if I hadn't. But my whole family back home — father, mother and sister — starved to death. So I was left alone. As for relatives anywhere, I didn't have a single one, not a soul. Well, after a year I came back from the Kuban, sold my cottage and went to Voronezh.

"First I worked as a carpenter, then I went to a factory and learned to be a fitter. Soon I got married. My wife had been brought up in a children's home. She was an orphan. Yes, I got a good woman there! Good-tempered, cheerful, always anxious to please. And smart she was, too — no comparison with me. She had known what real trouble was since she was a kid. I dare say that had an effect on her character. Just looking at her from the side, as you might say, she wasn't all that striking, but, you see, I wasn't looking at her from the side, I was looking straight at her. And for me there was no more beautiful woman in the whole world, and there never will be.

I'd come home from work tired, and bad-tempered as hell sometimes. But no, she'd not fling your rudeness back at you. She'd be so gentle and quiet, couldn't do

enough for you, always trying to make you something nice, even when there wasn't enough to go round. It made my heart lighter just to look at her.

"After a while I'd put my arm around her and say: "I'm sorry, Irina dear, I was damn rude to you. I had a rotten day at work today." And again there'd be peace between us, and my mind would be at rest. And you know what that means for your work, mate? In the morning I'd out of bed like a shot and off to the factory, and any job I laid my hands on would go like clockwork. That's what it means to have a real clever girl for a wife.

"Sometimes I'd have a drink with the boys on pay-day. And sometimes the scissors-legged way I staggered home afterwards, it must have been frightening to watch. The main street wasn't wide enough for me, let alone the side streets.

In those days I was tough and strong and I could hold a lot of booze, and I always got home on my own. But sometimes the last stretch would be in low gear, you know. I'd finish it on my hands and knees. But again I'd never get a word of reproach, no scolding, no shouting.

"My Irina, she'd just laugh at me, and she did that careful like, so that even drunk as I was I wouldn't take it wrong. She'd pull my boots off and whisper: "You'd better lie next to the wall tonight, Andrei, or you might fall out of bed in your sleep." And I'd just flop down like a sack of oats and everything would go swimming round in front of me. And as I dropped off to sleep, I'd feel her striking my head softly and whispering kind words, and I knew she felt sorry for me.

"In the morning she'd get me up about two hours before work to give me time to come round. She knew I wouldn't eat anything after being drunk, so she'd get me a pickled cucumber or something like that, and pour me out a good glass of vodka — a hair of the dog, you know. "Here you are, Andrei, but don't do it anymore, dear." How could a man let someone down who put such trust in him? I'd drink it up, thank her without words, just with a look and a kiss, and go off to work like a lamb. But if she'd had a word to say against me when I was drunk, if she'd started snapping at me, I'd have come home drunk again, believe me. That's what happens in some families, where the wife's a fool. I'd seen plenty of it and I know.

"Well, soon the children started arriving. First there was a little boy, then two girls. And that was when I broke away from my mates. I started taking all my pay home to the wife; we had a fair-sized family by then, and I couldn't afford to drink any more. On my day off I'd have just a glass of beer and let it go at that.

"In twenty-nine I got interested in motors, I learned to drive and started to work on a lorry. And when I got into the

swing of it I didn't want to go back to the factory. Driving seemed to be more fun. And so I lived for ten years without noticing how the time went by. It was like a dream.

"But what's ten years? Ask any man over forty if he's noticed how the years are slipping by. You'll find he hasn't noticed a damned thing! The past is like that distant steppe way out there in the haze. This morning I was crossing it and it was clear all round, but now I've covered twenty kilometres and there's a haze over it, and you can't tell the trees from the grass, the ploughland from the meadow.

"Those ten years I worked day and night. I earned good money and we lived no worse than other folk. And the children were a joy to us. All three did well at school, and the eldest, Anatoly, turned out to be so bright at mathematics that he even got his name in one of the big papers. Where he inherited this gift from, I couldn't tell you, mate. But it was a very nice thing for me, and I was proud of him; mighty proud I was!

"In ten years we saved up a bit of money and before the war we built ourselves a little cottage with two rooms and a shed and a little porch. Irina bought a couple of goats. What more could we want? There was milk for the children's porridge, we had a roof over our heads, clothes on our backs, shoes on our feet, so everything was all right. The only thing was I didn't choose a very good place to build. The plot of land I got was not far from an aircraft factory. If my little place had been somewhere else, my life might have turned out different.

"And then it came — the war. The next day I had my call-up papers, and the day after it was "Please report to the station". All my four saw me off together: Irina, Anatoly and my daughters — Nastenka and Olyushaka. The kids took it fine, though the girls couldn't keep back a tear or two. Anatoly just shivered a bit as if

he was cold; he was going on seventeen by that time. But that Irina of mine...

"I'd never seen anything like it in all the seventeen years we'd lived together. My shirt and shoulder had been wet all night with her tears, and in the morning it was the same. We got to the station and I felt sorry for her, I couldn't look her in the eyes. Her lips were all swollen, her hair was poking out from under her shawl, and her eyes were dull and staring, like someone who's out of his mind.

"The officers gave the order to get aboard but she flung herself on my chest, and clasped her hands round my neck. She was shaking all over, like a tree that's being chopped down. The children tried to talk her round, and so did I, but nothing would help. Other women chatted to their husbands and sons, but mine clung to me like a leaf to a branch, and just trembled all the time, and I couldn't say a word. "Take a grip on yourself, Irina dear," I said. "Say something to me before I go, at least." And this was what she said, with a sob between every word, "Andrei...my darling...we'll never...never see each other again...in this world..."

"There I was with my heart bursting with pity for her, and she says a thing like that to me. She ought to have understood it wasn't easy for me to part with her. I wasn't going off to a party either. And I lost my temper! I pulled her hands apart and gave her a push. It seemed only a gentle push to me, but I was strong as an ox and she staggered back about three paces, then came towards me again with little steps, arms outstretched and I shouted at her, "Is that the way to say good-bye? Do you want to bury me before my time?" But then I took her in my arms again because I could see she was in a bad way.

He broke off suddenly and in the silence that followed I heard a faint choking sound. His emotion communicated itself to me. I glanced side at him but did not see a single tear in those dead, ashy eyes



of his. He sat with his head drooping dejectedly. The big hands hanging limply at his sides were shaking slightly; his chin trembled, and so did those firm lips.

"Don't let it get you down, friend, don't think of it," I said quietly, but he seemed not to hear me. Overcoming his emotion with a great effort, he said suddenly with a hoarse, strangely altered voice:

"Till my last, dying day, till the last hour of my life I'll never forgive myself for pushing her away like that!"

He fell silent again and for a long time. He tried to roll a cigarette, but the strip of newspaper came apart in his fingers and the tobacco scattered on to his knees. In the end he managed to make a clumsy roll of paper and tobacco, took a few hungry pulls at it, then, clearing his throat, went on:

"I tore myself away from Irina, then took her face in my hands and kissed her. Her lips were like ice. I said good-bye to the kids and ran to the carriage, managed to jump on the steps as it was moving. The train started off very slow, and it took me past my family again. I could see my poor little orphaned kids bunched up together, waving their hands and trying to smile, but not managing it. And Irina had her hands clasped to her breast; her lips were white as chalk, and she was whispering something, and staring straight at me, and her body was all bent forward as if she was trying to walk against a strong wind.

"And that's how I'll see her in my memory for the rest of my life — her hands clasped to her breast, those white lips, and her eyes wide open and full of tears. That's mostly how I see her in my dreams too. Why did I push her away like that? Even now, when I remember, it's like a blunt knife twisting in my heart.

"We were drafted to our units at Belaya Tserkov, in the Ukraine. I was given a three tonner, and that's what I went to the front in. Well, there's no point in

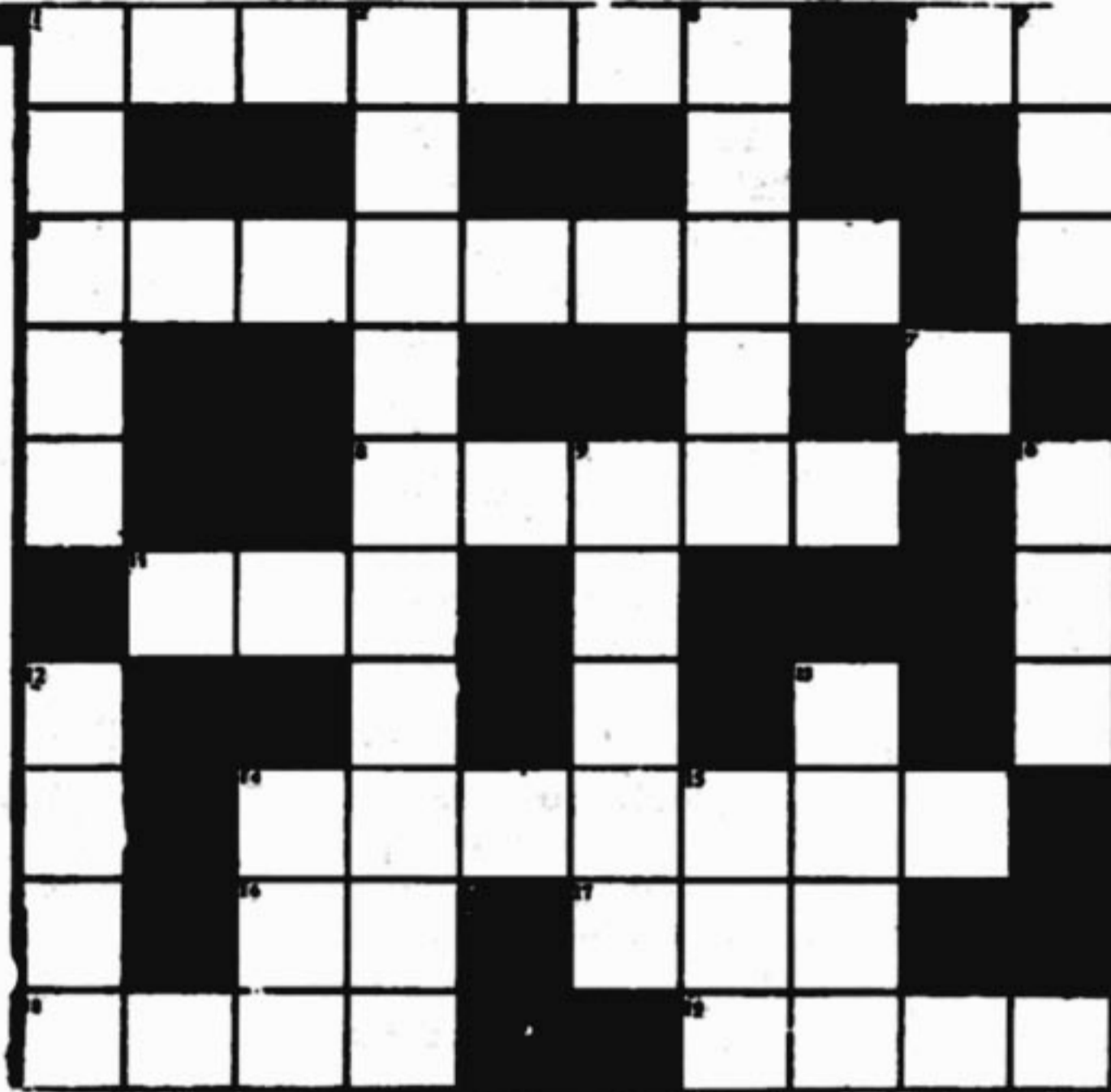
telling you about the war, you saw it yourself and you know what it was like to start with. I got a lot of letters from home, but didn't write much myself. Just now and then I'd write that everything was all right and we were doing a bit of fighting. We may be retreating right now, I'd say, but it won't be long before we gather our strength and give the Fritzie something to think about. What else could you write?

"Those were grim times and you didn't feel like writing. And I must say I was never much of a one for harping on a pitiful note. I couldn't stand the sight of those slobbering types that wrote to their wives and girlfriends everyday for no reason at all, just to rub their snot over the paper — oh, it's such a hard life, oh, I might get killed! And so he goes on, the son-of-a-bitch, complaining and looking for sympathy, blubbering away and he can't understand that those poor unhappy women and kids are having just as bad a time of it back home as we are.

"Why, they were carrying the whole country on their shoulders. And what shoulders our women and children must have had not to give in under a weight like that! But they didn't give in, they stuck it out! And then one of those whimperers writes his pitiful letter and that just knocks a working woman off her feet. After a letter like that, the poor thing won't know what to do with herself or how to face up to her work.

"No! That's what a man's for, that's what you're a soldier for — to put up with everything, to bear everything, if need be. But if you've got more woman than man in you, then go and put on a frilled skirt to puff out your skinny arse, so you can look like a woman, at least from behind, and go and weed beets, or milk the cows, because your kind aren't needed at the front. The stink's bad enough there without you!

TO BE CONTINUED
IN THE NEXT ISSUE.



Clues

CLUES

ACROSS:

1. Honorary President of NUM..
2. Mandela's initials.
6. Leave of absence granted to a soldier
8. South African communist murdered by the boers.
11. Extreme limit.
14. Racist officer commanding the S.W.A. Territory Force.
16. Note Well.
17. Form of explosive.
18. Hair style.
19. Natal UDF Vice-Chairman.

DOWN:

1. Plain clothes worn by a soldier.
2. Late King of the Thembus.
3. Owns the Sowetan newspaper.
5. Soviet Light machinegun.
7. Thirteenth letter of the alphabet.
9. Not covert.
10. Israeli sub-machinegun.
12. Member of the NEC of the ANC.
13. National Union of Angolan workers.
14. South Africa's puppet.
15. House providing lodging.

See Answers in DAWN Vol. 10.No.4

DISCIPLINE IS THE MOTHER OF VICTORY

Radio Lusaka

Shortwave 31mb, 9605 KHz

**7.00 p.m. Daily
10.15-10.45 p.m. Wednesday
9.30-10.00 p.m. Thursday
10.15-10.45 p.m. Friday**

Shortwave 25mb, 11880 KHz

8.00-8.45 a.m. Sunday

Radio Luanda

**Shortwave 31mb, 9535 KHz
and 25mb**

**7.30 p.m. Monday-Saturday
8.30 p.m. Sunday**

Radio Madagascar

Shortwave 48mb, 6135 KHz

**7.00-9.00 p.m. Monday-Saturday
7.00-8.00 Sunday**

Radio Ethiopia

Shortwave 31mb, 9685 KHz

9.30-10.00 p.m. Daily

Radio Tanzania

Shortwave 31mb, 9750 KHz

**8.15 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday
6.15 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday**

**To move forward we must attack,
act in unity and unite in action.**

the year of



**umkhonto we
sizwe**