



SHARPEVILLE



21 march '60

On the morning of the 21st March 1960, 5,000 black South Africans gathered in front of the police station at Sharpeville to protest against the system of 'pass' laws. Women, men and children were present and at all times the crowd was peaceful and orderly. No hostility was expressed towards the police present. As the hours passed, police reinforcements began to arrive until by noon there were 300 armed and uniformed men in addition to five Saracens. Soon afterwards Lieutenant Colonel Pienaar arrived - he gave the order for his men to fall in. At no stage was the crowd asked to disperse nor was any attempt made to determine why they had gathered. A little later Pienaar ordered the police to "load five rounds." He said later that he never gave the order to fire. But minutes later the police opened fire into the crowd. Within 40 seconds 705 rounds were fired from revolvers and sten guns. The people gathered immediately turned to flee but the police continued to fire: later it was determined that 30 shots had entered the wounded or killed from the front of their bodies while 155 bullets had entered their bodies from their backs.

In forty seconds 69 people were killed (including 10 children) and 180 were injured (including 19 children). Sharpeville 1960

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Sharpeville was one of the last peaceful demonstrations in South Africa. The Nationalist regime responded to the massacre by banning both of the black political parties and declaring a State of Emergency. Hundreds of South Africans were arrested and held without trial.

In 1962 the movements launched campaigns of sabotage as the next level of political opposition to apartheid. Again the regime responded with measures of vicious repression. Legislation was enacted allowing for detention without trial, torture in prison, solitary confinement and giving the security police inordinate powers. Further restrictions were placed on freedom of the press, of speech, of movement etc. In response to the increasing acts of sabotage thousands and thousands of South Africans were arrested and convicted often on fraudulent evidence in mass trials. Many were sentenced to life imprisonment and are still in South African prisons.

In response to the growing repression and the failure of sabotage to bring any change in South Africa, armed struggle was launched in 1967. South African freedom fighters have formed alliances with fighters in Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique in a united effort to obtain their liberation.



U S INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

- *** INCREASING AMERICAN INVESTMENTS ALREADY TOTALLING MILLIONS
- *** CLOSE DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH THE RACIST GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA
- *** REGULAR EXCHANGES BETWEEN AMERICANS AND WHITE S.A. "LEADERS"
- *** THE U.S. MAINTAINS A SPACE TRACKING STATION IN SOUTH AFRICA
- *** SOUTH AFRICA HAS SPECIAL TRADE PRIVILEGES IN THE U.S.
- *** ETC ETC ETC.

Since Sharpeville, despite the growth of fascism in South Africa, United States involvement in South Africa has increased and more support than ever is going to the white regime