



SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE TENTH ANNIVERSARY

SHARPEVILLE SATURDAY MARCH 21

ANNIVERSARY EVENT
TRAFALGAR SQUARE 3PM

ARRANGED BY THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT
AND THE UNITED NATIONS STUDENT ASSOCIATION

SHARPEVILLE SUNDAY MARCH 22

FREEDOM THEATRE
DIRECTED BY MIDGE MACKENZIE
LYCEUM STRAND 7.30PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT 89 CHARLOTTE STREET W1
AND THE LYCEUM

On the morning of March 21, 1960, a crowd gathered outside a police station in Sharpeville to protest against an apartheid law. The crowd was not large – only five or six thousand people – and many were women and children. The police, however, called up reinforcements and suddenly, without warning, opened fire on the crowd.

The shooting lasted less than a minute but 69 people were killed and 180 were wounded.

Sharpeville is a small African township, one of many such ghettos in South Africa – separated by law, by fences and by prejudice from the industrial and commercial centre where its inhabitants work and make their contribution to South Africa's wealth.

Another Sharpeville could happen any day in South Africa. The immediate cause of the protest – the notorious 'Pass Laws' – still burdens the African people today. These laws require every African over the age of 16 to carry a Pass recording identity, permitted place of residence, record of employment and payment of taxes, at all times. If it cannot be produced on demand arrest follows. Over 500,000 people are arrested under the Pass Laws every year. Hundreds of thousands of families are broken up, homes broken into by police in midnight raids, and innocent civilians terrorised and brutalised – all in the name of 'influx control'.

In the years since Sharpeville, apartheid has become far worse. In 1960, brave men who spoke out against it could be detained for 12 days without trial. Since then they have had to face 90 days, then 180 days, and now indefinite detention under the Terrorism Act, with the horrors of torture and protracted interrogation, and now (under the BOSS law) little chance of exposing such inhumanity in the press.

Mass removals of non-white communities to isolated, barren areas – described by the Vorster regime as 'cleaning up black spots in white South Africa' – have brought poverty and insecurity to many thousands. And death through disease and neglect.

Yet the resistance to apartheid continues – underground, in prison and in exile. Denied any peaceful path to freedom, Africans are arming themselves to fight for their rights, and their morale is supported by demonstrations overseas against apartheid sport, against collaboration with Vorster through trade and investment, against the sale of arms to their oppressors.

This is why the Anti-Apartheid Movement remembers Sharpeville, and urges all who oppose racialism to support its campaigns. Join the Movement, and help the anti-apartheid struggle in positive, practical ways. We must ensure that those who died on March 21, 1960, did not die in vain.