



Sharpeville: An Apartheid Massacre and Its Consequences

Tom Lodge

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On March 21, 1960, a line of 150 white policemen fired 1344 rounds into a crowd of several thousand people assembled outside a police station, protesting against the Apartheid regime's racist "pass" laws. The gunfire left in its wake sixty-seven dead and one hundred and eighty six wounded. Most of the people who were killed were shot in the back, hit while running away.

The Sharpeville Massacre, as the event has become known, marked the start of armed resistance in South Africa, and prompted worldwide condemnation of South Africa's Apartheid policies. In *Sharpeville*, Tom Lodge explains how and why the Massacre occurred, looking at the social and political background to the events of March 1960 as well as the long-term consequences of the shootings. Lodge offers a gripping account of the Massacre itself as well as the wider events that accompanied the tragedy, particularly the simultaneous protest in Cape Town which helped prolong the political crisis that developed in the wake of the shootings. Just as important, he sheds light on the long term consequences of these events. He explores how the Sharpeville events affected the perceptions of black and white political leadership in South Africa as well as South Africa's relationship with the rest of the world, and he describes the development of an international "Anti-Apartheid" movement in the wake of the shootings.

In South Africa today, March 21 is a public holiday, Human Rights Day, and for many people, it remains a day of mourning and memorial. This book illuminates this pivotal event in South African history.

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