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New Unity Movement

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We Fight Ideas with Ideas

Comrade Mda Mda - The Centurion (25 March 2023)

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE NEW UNITY MOVEMENT

On behalf of the New Unity Movement, I am indeed honoured and privileged to convey hearty congratulations and best wishes to you, our dear friend and a true comrade, on this your 100th birthday. Having had the privilege for being present at both your 80th and your 90th birthday celebrations I'm extremely pleased and proud to be present at this your centenary celebration.

As the honorary life member of NUM you have endeared yourself to all of us for your steadfastness in upholding the principles and policies of the Unity Movement of which you have been an adherent since the 1940's

We've admired your display of great erudition and good humour which you have always delivered with your characteristic and unique oratory style.

You are a truly remarkable person who in the eyes of all us qualifies you for the title of being a national treasure!

What makes you such a truly remarkable individual?

Firstly, the fact that you are today celebrating your



100th birthday is extremely noteworthy in itself.

Secondly you are probably the very last surviving member of a generation of freedom fighters from the Transkei in particular, who became members of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) soon after its formation in 1943. Names that come to mind, amongst others, include: Cadoc Kobus, Richard Canca, ZK Mzimba, Leo Sihlali, JL Mkentane, Richard Songca and Nathaniel Honono.

Thirdly, as a true stalwart of the Unity Movement, you have devoted the greater part of your life to the service of the oppressed and exploited people of this country. You also served the people of Mthatha and

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The Unity Movement Cadres at the birthday bash with Lungisele Ntsebeza sitting next to Basil Brown

the greater Transkei as an attorney from 1952 to 2001, only retiring from your law practice at the ripe old age of 77. At the time you were the oldest practicing attorney in the Eastern and Western Cape.

We salute you for being a fierce upholder and defender of the principles and policies of the Unity Movement, namely: the Ten Point Programme of Transitional Demands, Non-Racialism, Non-Collaboration and Anti-Imperialism.

It is your unswerving dedication and commitment to these principles and policies which are still so relevant today, that led to your playing a leading role, after the dark years of the sixties and seventies, in the formation of the New Unity Movement (NUM) in 1985. It was in recognition of this role that honorary life membership of the NUM was bestowed upon you.

Your continued interest and enthusiasm for tackling the challenges facing the oppressed masses of this country, even at your advanced age, remains an inspiration in making us aware that one can never retire from the struggle!

Finally, you have left us with a lasting legacy in the form of your informative historical memoir *“Struggle and Hope: Reflections on the recent history of the Transkeian People”* which was published in 2019.

The following quote from the book expresses your opinion on the dispensation that came into being in 1994 in your characteristic caustic fashion thus:

“Instead of attending to the issues afflicting the country, the powers that be are engaged in a vanity fair of celebration after celebration, extolling the virtues of countless ANC leaders. We are treated throughout the year to a nauseating chorus of self-congratulation and ANC achievements, viz, ‘sacrifices in the struggle’, ‘liberating the country’, ‘defeating apartheid’ etc. The monotonous theme of these sermons is that we are beholden to them and, therefore, must suffer their sins of commission and omission. If we are unhappy or discontented, we must not forget that apartheid was far worse. Talk of poor service delivery and corruption is disloyalty. They can do no wrong.”

For those that may be interested the book can be downloaded in PDF format from the African Sun Publisher’s website for free.

In thanking you for all these years of dedicated and loyal service we wish that you may continue to enjoy the good health and the energy you have exhibited up to now, if only for a little while longer. But long enough for you to write the sequel to the book quoted from above.

Basil Brown
President

THE BIRTHDAY BASH



The President, Dr Basil Brown delivering congratulatory message from the New Unity Movement



Dr Aubrey Kali and wife, Nozi



Basil Brown (President) and wife Hazel, Jean Petersen, Claudette Carelsen (in background) Jos Lennert and in the foreground Felicity Titus and Mickey Titus (sec) at the birthday celebrations



En-route to Mthatha



THE NUM CADRES AT COMRADE MDA'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

THE PERPETUAL BLUNDERERS

The period after 1994 was characterised by dramatic decay in the political economy of SA. This decay was exacerbated by the dramatic turn of events of 2008/09, the lack of any significant growth since then, the 2019/20 pandemic and the perpetual blunders by the ANC government. However, economic crises are Inherent in the capitalist system. Immediately after 1994, the ANC government was fêted by governments and bankers to the left and right of the political spectrum.

Money came rolling in that was meant to eliminate the inequalities resulting from the apartheid malaise. However, state capture and corruption on an unprecedented scale, further impoverished the masses. This created one of the most unequal societies in the world. Officially In the world today, more than 200 million people are unemployed, but the real figure can be much higher. According to a United Nations report, 100 000 people die of hunger every day and 852 million people suffer from chronic hunger. This shocking situation exists despite the world producing 1½ times enough food to feed everyone in the world.

In 1994, South Africa had an external debt of \$22 billion and an internal debt of R753 billion. The two combined formed the SA national debt. This was debt amassed by the previous regime. This was debt raised despite the political and financial sanctions imposed on SA. Most of this money was used to enhance the military force of the government in the oppression of the people of South Africa in their legitimate demands. Instead of denouncing this debt (acceptance of this debts was part of the CODESA agreements), the post-1994 government accepted the apartheid debt and made massive loans from the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to offset this debt was which at one stage being serviced at R30 billion a year, money that was sorely needed to build houses, schools, decaying infrastructure and to ensure that everyone has a home and a decent income.

At the same time in SA, there was a dramatic increase in inequality. This was caused by high unemployment, particularly amongst the poor and exploited people. Inequality manifests itself through disparities in income, continuing racial discrimination (although illegal on the

stature books), unequal access to opportunities and the low growth rate.

South Africa is presently in the grip of a severe economic crisis. The rand is hovering around R18.00/dollar thereby increasing the price of imported goods. The price of petrol has increased to R22.97/liter, diesel is at R20.68/liter, LPG gas at R37.35/kg, whilst illuminating paraffin, used mainly by the poor for warmth, light and heat for cooking increased to R14.72/liter. (Fuel prices April 2023)

At the beginning of 2023, the year-on-year inflation rate was 7.3% with energy (+9.7%) and food increasing to (+13.5%). The rate of inflation is such that the Reserve Bank has increased the repo rate for the 9th consecutive time since policy normalization started in November 2021. The latest hike increased the repo rate to 7.75%, meaning that the prime lending rate for consumers is at 11.25%. Hardest hit as is always in the case of an economic crisis, are the poor.

The number of unemployed in SA rose to almost 8 million. The expanded unemployment rate, according to Stats SA, was 42.6% in the fourth quarter of 2022 – this approximates to about 25 million of the population. Dorothy Neufeld, of the IMF's World Economic Outlook projects that South Africa will have the highest jobless rate globally in 2023, estimated at 35.6%. The latest official data reflect two out of every three young people (under 35 years) in South Africa are unemployed. This, in particular, is a ticking time bomb for present-day South Africa.

As if unemployment, the pandemic and the drought were not enough, the price of basic staple food and services is set to rise dramatically. Transport has

increased – taxi, rail and bus fares have increased and soon the price of bread and maize meal will be increased. Milk and cooking oil have become practically unaffordable. All other basic commodities are set to follow suit.

It is clear that those who have usurped the right to govern have abandoned any sense of humanity. They voted themselves obscenely high salaries including perks like paying for four cars, air transport for themselves as well as their children, salaries for their domestic workers, close to a billion rand on houses (in Cape Town and Pretoria) - recently they even spent R2.6 million on generators to mitigate the effect of “loadshedding” for themselves.

For the poor life has always been a nightmare of grinding poverty. Now with rolling blackouts, matters will become worse, especially in the cold, wet wintry nights of the sprawling townships of our country.

Who is to blame for this situation?

After 1994, the ANC government introduced the (1) **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)**. It was meant to alleviate poverty (note not eradicate) but proved ineffective. When faced with certain economic constraints, the ANC government introduced its macro-economic policy, (2) the **Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)** strategy in 1996 to stimulate faster economic growth to meet social investment needs. However, this also failed as it failed in the reduction of unemployment and consequently in the reduction of poverty levels.

In February 2006 the (3) **Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA)** was introduced to purportedly halve the poverty and unemployment levels by 2014. It was based on the RDP goals of building a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society in a “*single integrated economy*.”

In 2008, the Global Economic Meltdown occurred when capitalist greed and exploitation resulted in major economic institutions failing spectacularly and citizens around the world suffering irreversible economic

hardship. In SA, poverty levels reached alarming levels, squatter camps increased daily and unemployment levels were unacceptably high.

With these developments and upheavals in the ruling elite and with Thabo Mbeki being forced to resign as president, ASGISA died a natural (if not unexpected) death.

By 2010 Zuma announced amongst much fanfare that ASGISA would be replaced by the (4) **New Development Plan** or **New Growth Plan**. Dubbed the “Mangaung Blueprint” for economic and socio-economic development it claimed to expand economic growth, reduce poverty levels and eliminate inequalities by 2030. In the state of the nation address in 2010, Zuma produced his (5) “**9-Point Plan for Social Recovery and Revitalisation**.” These plans floundered on their announcement. In May 2017 Malusi Gigaba unveiled his (6) **14-Point Plan**. This plan was to stave off further ratings downgrades. Gigaba’s plan was to induce higher growth rate in government revenue. It also meant that it would counter the trend of rising public debts. The 14-Point plan was also meant to address low business and consumer confidence.

None of this has come to fruition. All the plans thus far have brought very little positive results. Unemployment and poverty levels including inequality have increased considerably. Millions, if not billions have been spent on Planning Commissions and Consultants, without any significant results.

What has the “new dispensation” brought us?

The deal cobbled at CODESA provided for a single parliament but left control of the economy in the hands of the capitalists. South Africa would commit to the emerging regime of “liberal markets” in effect reducing any obstacles to free investment by foreign corporations (including privatisation of state assets), and there would be total commitment to honouring the foreign debt. In other words, CODESA created the hoax of “one South African nation” (but whose wealth-generating machine would remain firmly in the hands of the capitalists).

In an analysis of the 1994 elections Phyllis Ntantala (Jordan) on the eve of the elections wrote;

The second important question may be phrased: "Is this the revolution for which so many of our people have died?"

The obvious answer is; "For the majority of South Africans the answer is NO!"

If we accept the definition of revolution as the violent overthrow of one class by another, then what is taking place in South Africa is not a revolution. It is merely the replacement of one administration by another, both drawn from the same class – the bourgeoisie – albeit that one administration was white and the next will be black.

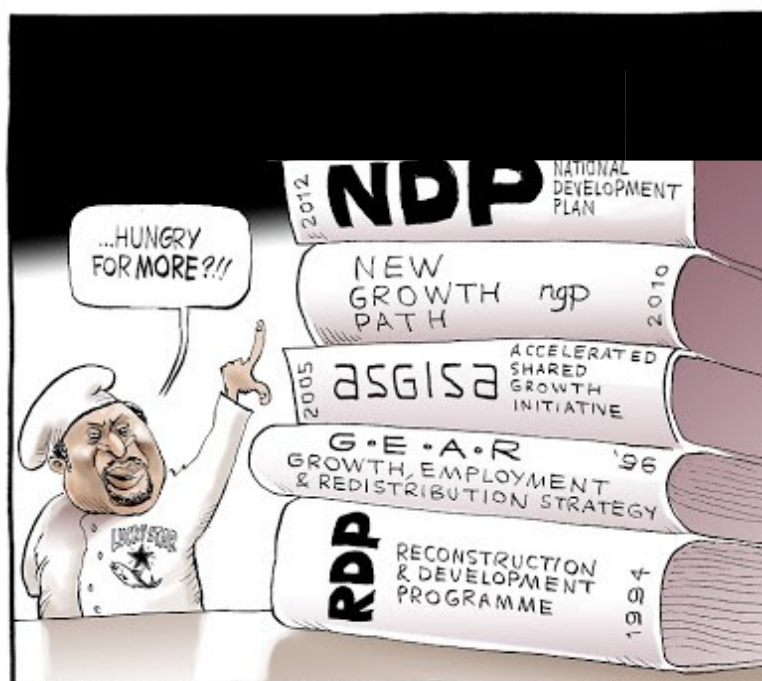
The present levels of unemployment, poverty and degradation in SA's sprawling squatter camps and townships as well as social infrastructure deficiencies negate what is documented and envisioned in the NDP. The poverty levels, the inequality are ample evidence of the imminent failure of the NDP. The ANC has been ensnared into the trap of neoliberalism. With Mandela, being softened up and disarmed by being elevat-

ed to "sainthood" (à la Clements Kadalie) and landing in the clutches of capitalism-imperialism, the ANC became obsessed with neoliberal dictates that have served to maintain the apartheid economic structures.

Everywhere things are going horribly wrong, Court cases in Metro's abound, Coalition agreements in councils are collapsing daily, Mayors of major cities resign or motions of no confidence are passed almost weekly, and the Correctional Services are in a tizzy. Whilst the president was addressing the world at an investment conference, blackouts were occurring all over the country. Most cities and towns are on the brink of virtual collapse and even the post office has been liquidated due to the ANC's poor governance and corruption.

Much of the apartheid culture, ethos and economic systems have survived and are being implemented. What is being punted as the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is in fact merely a retention of the same repressive economic system under another governing elite.

We have to work towards sweeping these perpetual blunderers to the dustbin of history.



BUILDING THE NATION

Schools are required to complete a document, the Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) in which it is required to provide the “race” of the learner. In addition, matriculants are required on admission to examination to complete the form stipulating their “race”.

How is this done when the Population Registration Act of 1950 has been scrapped from the statute books? According to the explanation given the teacher is somehow to ascertain the “race” of the pupil by the racial categories defined in the act that has remained ingrained in South African society. The racial categories purportedly form the basis for statistics aimed at redressing the past economic imbalances.

Hamilton Petersen, a (former) principal in the Eastern Cape and a member of the New Unity Movement, refused to classify the learners at the school on the basis that there was only one race – *Homo sapiens*.

In a letter to the Education Department he added;

.... In the South African context “Coloured” was regarded as a separate and an inferior “race”. And, this was its intent. The term classifying a section of the population as being “Coloured” is as derogatory as is “Hotnot”, or “Eskimo” or “Redskins/Red Indians” or “Slams” or “Makwerekwere” or the use of the K-word, – these terms are detestable in the extreme. It breeds discrimination and divisiveness. It is unscientific and cannot be justified in any sense. It riles me to think that in this “enlightened” age we can still classify people according to “race” and create division when we should be building a unified nation.

Needless to say, there was no response to the letter.

It is almost 72 years since Van Schoor wrote *The Origin and Development of Segregation in South Africa*. Van Schoor submits in an unequivocal manner that discrimination based on “race” is not accidental but forms an inseparable part of capitalism/imperialism as well as being an effective key to providing an understanding of SA history in terms of labour, land and the struggle for liberty.

The wars of dispossession against the indigenous tribal formations in this country in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were part of the process of world-

wide capitalist expansion – that is, part of the process of primitive accumulation known as “colonialism.”

Racism and the process of land and cattle robbery, the strangling of the economies of the indigenous people by foreign invaders, the humiliation of the conquered people. A more devastating process – one of tremendous social upheaval to serve the needs of expanding mining capital from the late nineteenth century onwards, followed the land grabs and enslavement of local people.

In the 1980s, SA had the most revolutionary working class on the brink of a revolution on the continent. Now 29 years of comprador bourgeois reaction has restored tribalism, racism, sexism, patriarchy, Afrophobia and Xenophobia on a sickening scale. The recent *Herald/CANRAD* debates on race and in particular, some of the contributions from the audience would have pleased the legacy of Hendrik Verwoerd.

The retraction of apartheid legislation in the 1990s did little to change the material conditions of the unfranchised majority. This is not surprising as “race” and capitalism have always gone hand-in-glove, and that the 1994 settlement was all about securing the future of capitalism and not about eliminating oppression and exploitation. Racial prejudice has many causes, but in the context of South African history, the most significant would be the economic system. That is to say, racial discrimination, poverty and capitalism are inextricably linked. It is clear that, unless we put the economics in our country onto a new trajectory, we will not be able to solve the problem of racism in our society.

This in no way denies the existence of deeper social cleavages, but it does raise the question of directing and harnessing of the political energies of the mass of the

citizenry.

In his treatise *Background of Segregation*, Kies (1943) wrote:

In South Africa, the reign of the exploiting class is prolonged by the basic segregation of the working class into a white labour aristocracy and a black serf majority. The fundamental class issue of owner and worker is overshadowed and blotted out by the crusade of white against non-white.... and they have almost finished with the non-whites. They have carved us up into three groups until today we look upon ourselves as either African oppressed, Coloured oppressed or Indian oppressed. They intend to reduce us all to the same low level of slavery, but to keep us segregated even in subjection. Each section is to be in the same chains as the other, but each group is always to think that its chains are somewhat different. (p 3)

Why, after eight decades, is this still true? Only for a brief period in the 70s and particularly, the 80s (post the 1976 Soweto uprisings) did we find a semblance of unity of the oppressed.

Some sixty-odd years later, the non-racial ethic espoused by Kies, Tabata and others in 1943, continues to be given credence. Lisa Gannett (2004) states: “[there is] widespread agreement among contemporary race theorists that race was an ideological invention of the late-eighteenth century science.” (p. 325) Also, J. Craig Venter (2000), founder and CEO of Celera Genomics, one of the two groups responsible for determining the sequence map of the Human Genome, declared in an article on Race and Genetics that “race is a social concept, not a scientific one” (p.1). Studies by Kies, Tabata and others were able to rely on the historical researches conducted by Gordon Childe on the history of the early hominids. The work of Gordon Childe is brought into its own by the inestimable contributions made by the Leakey's at Olduvai and Western Kenya. In this country, these

labours have been well supported by the researches of Phillip Tobias at the site called *The Cradle of Humankind*. This long line of intellectual labour affirmed the position of Kies, Tabata and members of the Workers Party of South Africa in the following ways:

Firstly, there is only one human species, with no further scientific classification into races.

Secondly, the human species appears to have originated on the African continent.

The recent debates on race and racism presume that nonracialism is being practised in post-apartheid SA, whereas, closer inspection reveals that the apartheid regime's policy of multi-racialism, or multinationalism (separate but equal), is in fact the policy that has been adopted. It is also disappointing that universities and many academics across the country have imbibed the poison of politically correct Nazism or apartheid racial policies. The promotion of nonracialism is one of the building blocks of an egalitarian society.

What is the position of the present government? The ANC is tied to its four-nation thesis on the national question. All other parliamentary political parties support this concept, some because of expediency and opportunism, others just follow suit because of the legacy of apartheid. The present government expedited their learning process in the art of governance by emulating their predecessors - cloning their divide and rule tactics.

As South Africans we should all be engaged in building one South African nation. The indigenous people in South Africa, which include the Khoi-San, the Nguni, and the Sotho clans/tribes, have gained prominence recently, all to “claim their rightful place” amongst the people of SA. They, excluding the Khoi, the San, and the Griquas, are part of the SA parliamentary system. The resurrection of the Traditional Courts Act gives the ‘leaders’ extraordinary powers and has the effect of re-balkanisation of SA.

By advocating the rise of a single SA nation, instead of

creating and promoting tribalism, we are certainly not attempting to deny people their cultural heritage.

Culture is defined as the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. If this is the case, then we have to strive for building a South African culture. The duty of those wishing to build a united SA, is to develop a South African culture that we can all claim as our own. Further, we should be thinking of building an African culture, and a World culture.

For, another world is possible.



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