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OUR POSITION ON THE OCTOBER MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

In response to enquiries about our stand on the October Municipal Elections, we as a public organisation are duty-bound to respond in clear terms.

1. APDUSA is an affiliate of the New Unity Movement.

The programme of the New Unity Movement is the Ten Point Programme. This programme is a list of minimum demands which are not negotiable. The acceptance of anything less would mean acceptance of the claim that we are less than human beings.

The first point of this programme is:-

"The franchise, that is the right of every man and woman over the age of 18 to elect and be elected to a new democratic parliament and to all other levels of government, both regional and local.

This means the end of all political inferiority, of all communal or indirect representation. It means granting to all people of South Africa the same, universal equal, direct and secret ballot. The tricameral parliament and the system of dummy "homelands" parliaments must go. In their place a single, democratic parliament elected on the basis of a common franchise for all shall rule in the common interests of all South Africans. It means the liquidation of all location systems and the network of community councils, management committees and related bodies which enforce apartheid, oppression and exploitation at present."

4. Membership of the New Unity Movement and APDUSA is based on the acceptance of the whole of the Ten Point Programme.

5. Since the elections concern institutions and bodies which are racial in character and those for the Africans, Indians and Coloured people are without real power, these bodies run in direct conflict with the kind of municipal franchise envisaged in the Ten Point Programme.

6. For the reasons set out above, no organisation affiliated to the New Unity Movement and no member belonging to APDUSA and the New Unity Movement will participate in the elections either as candidate or voter.

CONSENSUS POLITICS =COERCION

All recent claims by the present government that it believes in consensus politics, i.e. political decisions reached through agreement or dignified compromise, convinces nobody. The words of the government do not match its deeds.

The oppressed people have always been told what is good for them and what is in their best interests. This approach is based on the lie that the oppressed people are incapable of knowing what is best for them. The latest act of "goodness" for the oppressed by the government is the local authority elections. Without proper consultation with the oppressed, the elections are thrust down their throats.

When we protest at this blatant undemocratic practice, we are branded as revolutionaries, agitators, communists etc. When we refuse to participate in the cut and dried plans of the government we are told that we are spurning the hand of friendship offered to us by the government. We may well ask: Which hand?

It must be the left because the right hand (traditionally used by people with two hands to show friendship, pleasure etc.) is bonded to Dr Andries Treurnicht.

The latest accusation is that the oppressed people do not wish to communicate their views and feelings to a government which is bent on "reform". In other words the people do not want to engage in dialogue. Again, this is simply untrue.

The oppressed people have always made plain their wishes and feelings. The methods employed by the oppressed people have not always been to the liking of the government.

In the early days when the people found that their new guests were intent on robbing them of their land and cattle, and when they realised that they had improper designs on their womenfolk, they expressed their displeasure by applying their sticks, spears and bows and arrows. At other times, petitions, memoranda and pleas were the means. When that did not work, the people embarked on a totally independent course of action to express their feelings. This was the time of the boycotts, protests, demonstrations and non collaboration. Again, there was no mistaking how the people felt.

At no time was the government unaware of the feelings of the people. Yet it continued to ignore these feelings. The communication was always there. But that was not enough for the government. It felt that it had to call all the shots;

it had to decide on the agenda and it had the right to choose the solutions. When people rejected this high handed method and refused to cooperate, they are accused of being ungrateful and of biting the hand that feeds them.

Instead of paying heed to the aspirations of the people, the government has engaged in a multi-billion rand campaign of political trickery. Example of some of the tricks are the setting up of the bantustans, the Tricameral Circus and massive propaganda campaign to dupe the people. This is coupled with intimidation of the worst kind. The more the people reject the sham solutions to their problems, the greater the threats. Threats are no longer confined to people engaging in the armed struggle or violence.

Threats now cover those people who refuse to "cooperate." So what has happened to the pious avowals of consensus politics? The truth is plainly stated: CONSENSUS IN WORDS. COERCION IN DEEDS.

TRICAMERAL PARLIAMENT

INTRODUCTION

In response to the struggle of the oppressed for full democratic rights, the present National Party government introduced the Tricameral Parliament based on racial lines. The ruling class had already created the Bantustans for the African oppressed despite its rejection by the majority of the oppressed people. These creations are glorified extensions of the former Native Representative Council (N.R.C.), Coloured Representative Council (C.R.C.) and South African Indian Council (S.A.I.C.). The function of these dummy bodies, whatever their names, always remains the same: To work the machinery of oppression and to assist the White rulers in maintaining White domination over the oppressed majority.

PEOPLES' REACTION

The Coloured and the Indian oppressed by a large majority rejected the Tricameral system of government as yet another fraud against the people. They adopted the policy of non-collaboration. They refused to work the machinery of their own oppression. By their rejection of the Tricameral system, the people rejected government based on racial lines. They rejected dummy institutions. Their demand is clear. They will accept nothing less than the full franchise in a non-racial South Africa with one nation, one country, one Parliament.

The people's opposition was reflected by all sections of the liberatory movement. Not one of the authentic organisations of the people came out in support of the Tricameral Circus.

DISMAL RECORD OF THE TRICAMERAL PUPPETS

When the stooges participated in the Tricameral circus. they had promised that they "will fight from within" and would thereby improve the lot of the oppressed people. These puppets have been totally ineffective and have not brought about any meaningful change. In fact the position of the oppressed people has become worse. Some common examples are:

- (a) There is chaos in education.
- (b) Housing shortage. Where houses are provided, rentals and prices are excessively high;
- (c) The cost of health care has increased;
- (d) Unemployment has increased;
- (e) The cost of living is increasing daily;

(f) Bribery, corruption, favouritism, nepotism, inefficiency and jobs for pals are the order of the day.

CONCLUSION

The passage of time has clearly shown that the rejection by the people of the dummy and racial system of government has been justified. Our prediction that the whole system was a sham and a fraud has been confirmed to the hilt.

BOYCOTING BANNED!

The ruling class is going all out to make the October Municipal elections a success. A failure on this issue by a high boycott figure may well have serious consequences for the Nationalist Party. It may mean changing strategy by abandoning "reform" and making peace with its hill-billy cousins in the Conservative Party.

For many years now, the political plans of the ruling class have been foiled by a very simple, cost free device namely the boycott. The boycott is therefore the target of the fury of the government. For the first time in the history of this country, the calling of the political boycott has been made illegal. This means that if you call for a boycott and persuade others to do so, you can get into trouble with the law. But if you decide that you do not agree with what is being offered and therefore will not stand as a candidate or go to vote, You break no law.

We repeat that calling for a boycott of the elections has now been made a crime. Yet the right to reject a proposal by organising a peaceful boycott is a fundamental right recognised all over the democratic world. The boycott does not burn buildings: it does not throw stones; it does not set off bombs. All it does is to demonstrate a rejection of something offered. The boycotter simply says:

"I don't agree with this proposal. I will therefore not participate in it." It is of little use ranting and raving at the boycotter. There is no way that a person can be compelled to vote, unless it is at gunpoint. Even then there will be those who would rather face the bullet than the ballot.

The making illegal of a peaceful boycott campaign against the October Elections means that opposition to the elections has been silenced. Yet those who want to take part in the elections can say as much as they want to (which cannot be much) about why people should take part. It brings to mind the case of two boxers in the ring. The one has both his hands tied behind his back. The other has both free hands with knuckle-dusters. That is what you would call fair fight ~ if you are a P.W. Botha man.

But the people are wise and compassionate. They will always support the underdog. The ruling class is in for a shock - a nasty one. After all they would have caused it.

SQUIRRELS OR RATS?

The Bureau of Information has commenced blowing up R4,7 million of the taxpayers money to publicise the October Election. The real purpose of this binge is to try and get respectable figures for the voting polls. Thus far the voting percentages of 10, 5 and 15 for the Tricameral Circus, Community Councils and the Local Affairs Committees has been a reflection of failure of the government's "reform" initiative.

Even the government realises that the calibre of the candidates likely to stand for the elections will not invite Civic-minded Citizen of the Year awards. Hence the 4,7 million helping hand. So far, all we have seen of this taxpayer's money is a series of weird advertisements on television. The characters in the advertisement, who urge people to take part in the elections, are hard to define. They are rodents of some sort. Some say that they are squirrels and others call them rats with bushy tails. This is one debate we are not going to enter. But all are agreed that the characters are animals, i.e. not human beings. The question that people are asking is : Was the person who worked out the advertisement, trying to send out a secret message to the viewers? Was he trying to tell people that the elections were not for human beings? We don't know. But the boss of the Department of Information, Dr Stoffel van der Merwe, certainly had his suspicions. Therefore he moved in swiftly. He has given instructions that the advertisement must be scrapped!

Too late

"ACTION" AGAINST FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

Out of the blue the South African Government has promised action against fraud and illegal financial practices. We agree that some of the larger frauds and financial scandals have affected the economy of the country - and that means us -the majority of the people. But when we look a little closer and apply our minds to the amounts involved in the bigger cases, one thing is very obvious. These amounts are mere drops in the ocean. What costs us, the taxpayers, far more is the utter wastefulness of the apartheid regime and its hundreds of duplicated authorities; the huge bureaucracy and the corrupt officials of the bantustans. There the wheeling and dealing went unnoticed and unpunished for many years.

As long as these sell-outs did their master's dirty work, all was forgiven. However when corruption reached gigantic proportions, it could no longer be overlooked.

The South African Government could no longer look the other way. The sheer magnitude of the operation and the fact that corruption was not confined to just a single bantustan, compels the government to take heed. Now it takes on a very righteous attitude. "All culprits are going to be dealt with."

But the biggest culprit - the system which generates graft, corruption and greed escapes scot free.

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