

MESSAGE TO THE PAC ON SHARPEVILLE DAY

On 24 March 1991 at the Lambeth Town Hall, London, a commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 took place. Sharing the platform with Clarence Makwethu, president of the PAC, was Livingstone Mqotsi a senior Unity Movement person who read out a message. The message was delivered before the meeting in Harare on 17 April 1991 between the executives of the ANC and the PAC to discuss, inter alia, the formation of a "Patriotic Front" and the issue of the united call for a Constituent Assembly. Comrade Mqotsi would, no doubt, have commented on that development.

The message is of great importance. Here we have a seasoned fighter employing his fine intellect and years of experience in the struggle to give invaluable advice. The advice, though directed at the PAC, is no less applicable to the entire liberatory movement.

The message was highly relevant at the time it was delivered. It is more so now.

"I bring you the warm and comradely greetings of the New Unity Movement of South Africa who wish you success in your commemoration of the tragic events that took place 31 years ago at Sharpeville when, at least 69 people were massacred by the violent South African regime, that was determined and still is determined to entrench and perpetuate a system of repression, exploitation and dictatorship. We regard these as occasions of national significance for our people when we should remind ourselves of the basic principles upon which our struggle for liberation and self-determination rest and when it is appropriate for us to re-dedicate ourselves to the cause for which these and many others died. We salute them and hoist our flags in their memory.

We, in the Unity Movement, regard the invitation to this gathering as a significant development in strengthening the relationship that already exists between our two organisations and a milestone in our mutual search for meaningful organisational unity which, as you will know, is the *raison d'être* for our organisation. It is fitting therefore, on this occasion, to reiterate what we consider to be the basic ingredients for building such a united front of struggle. For us these include:

1. full commitment to the creation of a united, non-racial, democratic South Africa;

2. full commitment to the building of national unity on the basis of declared principles and non-negotiable programme of full citizenship rights;
3. full commitment to a programme which recognises the paramountcy of the interests of the workers and the peasants, in the short-term as well as in the long term;
4. full and unequivocal commitment to opposition to imperialism and the machinations of its agents and allies within South Africa and outside that country;
5. unequivocal opposition to the opportunistic, destructive tactic of a "negotiated" settlement, for there can be no viable political justification whatsoever for pretending to our struggling people that "negotiations" can advance their struggle for liberty, justice and peace;
6. full commitment to non-collaboration with the national and international ruling class and its agents.

From this certain consequences follow: One is that we are then able to identify who our allies are and who our enemies are and to treat them accordingly. Another consequence is that we are faced with having to make stark choices. It does not follow, for example, that even erstwhile bona fide freedom-fighter organisations are still so, are still capable of playing a liberatory role. We have to look critically at the alliances and coalitions they form and the company they keep to decide how to tolerate them. But the following are clearly outside the parameters of our liberation struggle:

1. De Klerk and his government of racist oppressors;
2. Big business who are exploiters of our people;
3. Capitalist-imperialist leaders right around the globe;
4. Collaborators and quislings in the tri-cameral parliament and the Bantustans;
5. The liberal bourgeoisie in the Democratic Party, the Five Freedoms Forum and IDASA, and the neo-liberals in the SACP and
6. The ruling-class press.

On this basis we would refuse to be party to our own enslavement, keep our organisations independent of extraneous and inimical influences and strive to liberate our South Africa from imperialist domination.

It is our hope and desire that your organisation will follow in the footsteps of your late President Zephania Mothopeng who was unequivocal in his rejection of "NEGOTIATIONS" with the enemy. We hope your organisation, in honouring those of its members who have fallen in the course of the struggle for liberation, will distance itself from the jockeying that is going on presently in South Africa in the name of liberation and democracy. In this way, can the PAC expect to earn support and blessing of our people. Indeed, its strength as a progressive player in the political arena in our country lies just in this.

To do otherwise would be to throw away a golden opportunity and to promote reaction, entrench and perpetuate the status quo.

We hope finally you will continue to search for unity in our struggle. We welcome any genuine move in that direction. United, we can break the power of the oppressing ruling class and only then will political power pass into the hands of the masses, the workers and the peasants, the social base of our struggle. When that happens, our people will be in a position to "use their franchise to elect representatives to work in the Constituent Assembly (if they so choose) to set up the framework for a united, democratic, non-racial workers' republic.

OUR OPPRESSORS CANNOT DO THIS FOR US

Our priority is not to address ourselves to the ruling class – domestic and international but to organise, politicise, unite and motivate effectively the unfranchised masses."

by LIVINGSTONE MQOTSI

ON THE PASSING OF COMRADE ABDULLAH DESAI OF CAPE TOWN

This year witnessed the passing of Comrade Abdullah Desai of Cape Town. At his funeral we sent our tribute which was read out by the President of the New Unity Movement, Comrade Richard Dudley.

As we wish to share with our readers knowledge of this remarkable man, we reproduce the tribute below:

"To Family Members, Comrades and Friends of Comrade Abdullah Desai: