

# POSITION PAPER ON "BLACK THEOLOGY REVISITED"

**A group of revolutionaries met at Inchanga on 5 September 1987 and interrogated whether a true Black Theology existed in occupied Azania. This Position Paper is the result of their deliberations.**

REALIZING THAT Black Theology (BT) developed in the crucible of the Black people's struggle against oppression, exploitation and dehumanisation and constitutes an attempt to radically re-define the traditional religious message which belongs to the ideological arsenal of the oppressors;

AND REALIZING FURTHER that there is a deliberate attempt to sap Blackness out of BT and to deflect it into reformist and reactionary channels as evidenced by the Kairos Document prepared on 13th September 1985;

AND BEING WELL AWARE that this attempt to pervert Black Theology is motivated by the deepening struggles since the historic events of the Rand Revolt of September 3rd, 1984 and aims only to create a complacent, Church-going "black" Christian community (see the Preface to the Second Edition of the Kairos Document);

AND NOTING THAT:

1. There is no theology which is ideologically harmless;
2. Western theology is a product of imperialism and a tool of ideological control over the masses which becomes an opiate;
3. The initiative in developing BT has been surrendered to revisionists who have blindly accepted (*à la* Kairos's "prophetic theology" or "people's theology") the Bible as the word of God by listening

to the eloquent voices of the ruling classes in the Bible rather than the suppressed voices of the oppressed and the exploited;

4. We have the stirrings of a true BT in the use of materialist tools of analysis which take a positive stand for the oppressed and against the oppressor;
5. All attempts to define BT have hitherto easily fallen into the imperialist trap of defining religion as *ipso facto* Christian religion and therefore ignoring and subverting the religions of the colonized people;
6. There is a dire need to develop Black content and thought in the Islamic, Hindu and other religions in occupied Azania as there is a consistent attempt to de-politicize religion both by the ruling class and by the priesthood;
7. The Western Cape Uprising of 1985 showed the potential for the Black voice asserting itself in an Islam which has been misused particularly by the "Indian" merchant class in occupied Azania;
8. The concept of *Jihad* as articulated by the following Quranic verse:  
"Oh you who believe, wherever there is tumult and oppression rise up against it (with your hand) until there is no more."  
was taken up by the masses in revolutionary action in the 1985 Western Cape Uprising and was a slap in the face for the *mullahs* (i.e. the Muslim clergy);
9. The *Hijra* being a journey to close ranks in order to fight the common enemy combined with *Jihad* (i.e. righteous war) is the theological justification for BC from an Islamic perspective;



10. Materialist tools of analysis have been positively used by Muslim scholars such as the late Dr Ali Shariati.

WE HEREBY RESOLVE THAT:

1. Materialist tools of analysis be used to develop BT into a potent and vibrant revolutionary force;
2. All attempts to depoliticize religion by elevating it above the unfolding struggles of the masses must be exposed and eliminated;
3. The Kairos Document and its "prophetic theology" must be exposed as part of a scheme to engineer a negotiated solution with the powers-that-be and to dilute the militancy of the masses;
4. The priority is to make BT a material force rather than an opiate. ■