

BLACK PEOPLES CONVENTION



POLICY OF BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

We congregated here at this 4th Congress of the Black People's Convention, do hereby accept the following as our common policy on the philosophy of Black Consciousness:

- i) We define the term Black to include all those discriminated against by law and tradition, that is, politically, economically and socially and who truly adhere to the sentiments as expressed in (i) infra,
- ii) We recognise the essence of Black Consciousness as:
 - a) the realisation by Blacks of the need to rally around the cause of their liberation and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude,
 - b) the determination to expose the myth that Black is an aberration from the "normal" which is white,
 - c) the reconstruction by Blacks of their own value system and the attempt by Blacks to see themselves as defined by themselves and not by others,
 - d) the rejection of the value systems that seek to make the Black man a foreigner in the Country of his birth and to dehumanise him,
 - e) the attempt by Blacks to rid themselves of negative notions resulting in an inferiority complex and to infuse within their efforts, their value system, their culture, their religion, and their outlook towards life.
- iii) The philosophy of Black Consciousness seeks to strive for a totality of involvement by all Black people in the process of re-examination re-orientation and we recognise it as an inherent duty of all Blacks to develop a proper awareness of their situation and to be constantly involved in the process of finding solutions to their problems.
- iv) We reject all negative names like non-white, etc., as derogatory and resolve that no Black shall use or accept usage of such names against themselves.
- v) In a plural society where Blacks constitute the deprived and denigrated component of the total, we recognise Black Solidarity as an important and integral part of Black Consciousness. We define solidarity (Black) as:
 - a) the coming together of Blacks for the specific purpose of solving a particular problem occurring in time using the numbers and their blackness in building up a strong power base,
 - b) the rejection of the overplayed importance of sectional, tribal, or religious differences so often exploited by the believer of divide and rule,
 - c) we see Black Solidarity as only relevant whilst Blacks, who constitute a numerical majority are still a political and economical minority, i.e. whereas Black Consciousness is an on-going and all embracing philosophy reflecting on all aspects of the Black community's life, Black Solidarity is a means to an end relevant only in the course of working towards liberation,
 - d) the cardinal goal of Black Solidarity is bargaining through a show of strength and unanimity of purpose with whoever withholds from Blacks whatever they believe

- vi) We reject the equation of Black Consciousness with Black Power. We believe that Black Power is applicable in an already open society where Blacks constitute a minority and can only impinge their wishes on the dominant groups through total harnessing of their number, we believe that in Azania no open society exists and that this can only be created by Blacks once the Government is rightfully elected by the majority.
- vii) We recognise the promotion and preservation of authentic Black culture as an important aspect of Black Consciousness. We believe that a true set of value system for Blacks can be extracted from the historical evolution of the culture of the Black people and can be used in whatever innovations Blacks make in modernising their culture. We reject the derogatory conception that a call for Black culture implies a "return to the bush" demand.
- viii) We note with dismay that corruption and dilution of Black values have resulted through Blacks attempting to emulate whites because of their dominant cultural position. Whilst not rejecting all that is white, we however, condemn the escalation of the descendant sub-culture so common in the Black urban areas as a result of economic conditions and Black aspiring to be white.
- ix) We believe that authentic Black Culture can be successfully projected through art forms, theatre, literature, music, sculpture, etc.,
- x) We reject the imprisoning notions implanted in the minds of Black children about themselves and their society through twisted educational system that is entirely based on white values. We believe that education is a process of inculcating and transmitting a cultural heritage, acquiring knowledge and ideals and developing critical awareness in and individually.
- xi) We reject the distortion of history that Black People have to learn at school and the deliberately misleading implications that before 1652 Blacks had no history.
- xii) We proudly declare that ~~it is only through Black Consciousness that the inferiority complex of Blacks and Superiority complex of whites can be eradicated.~~ We believe that in a truly open society in Azania all people can live harmoniously.
- xiii) We refuse to accept the given impression that Azania is a European Island in the continent of Africa where Blacks are allowed to suffer peacefully.
- xiv) Black Consciousness shall strive to achieve the following goals:-
 - a) to inculcate amongst Blacks a sense of pride in themselves and a desire and eagerness to analyse their problems and offer Solutions.
 - b) to break the strangle-hold that White society has on privileges, wealth and opportunity and to create a truly open plural society in which all persons shall be treated as equal before the law.
 - c) to eradicate racial prejudice in all its forms and to promote proper understanding amongst the various peoples in the open society to be established.

REPORT ON BLACK COMMUNALISM.

The whole world today is enmeshed in a vicious economic dilemma in which while today there is enough wealth in the world, side by side with this enormous wealth and comfort for sections of the people, millions around the world live in want and misery.

The reason is not far to seek; and it is that the economics of the world today are motivated by materialistic systems which are committed to and idealise personal wealth and successes, and not the welfare of the people.

The only answer we can see is policy based on Black Communalism, which is the antithesis to the exploitative systems by which the masses of the people's labour is exploited for the enrichment of a few and give them power to manipulate in a grip that is relentless, at will.

Black Communalism, the philosophy of our fathers is based on the basic respect of the Black man for the sacred value of the human individual as the basis for the existence of the communities and governments.

The political philosophy of the Black man can be termed "freedom and responsibility", which emphasises responsibility of every member of the group as well as for the group as a whole.

The Black man is an individual who "belongs". He does not exist in isolation. He does not speak in terms of "my" but in terms of "our".

He says "yikithi lapha" (this is our home) not "this is my house".

The basic structure of his society is the family and the extended family which extends beyond the consanguinal extended family, to embrace the tribe, the nation and the society.

It is evident that in such a philosophy everyman is your brother and cannot be used for private gain of another. On the contrary everyone and society itself is under obligation to ensure that every member shall be provided for.

In this society there are no slaves and lords. It is a free society which gives man every opportunity to develop their talents and their means to the fullest but contrains them to exploit others.

If a man by his basic industry has accumulated more wealth than he and his immediate family need he automatically shares his substances for the welfare of needy e.g. through the "aisa" "mafisa" custom. On the exploitative systems such individuals would not only strive for monopoly but would be assisted by the system and enabled to enslave others.

BASIC TENETS INHERENT IN BLACK COMMUNALISM

1. The state belongs to the people, all the people and every individual is the categorical father and mother of every member and inhabitant.
2. The Government exist for the welfare of all its people. It is an indictment on the government if any of its members, the people shall be in want and when the government fails to provide for all its people either by design or incompetence, it earns itself the right to be dismissed.
3. Land, as the basic factor of production and sustenance belongs to the people as a whole and may not be alienated. It is held in trust for the people by the government, which has the duty to see to it that its use is profitably and equitably distributed among productive members of the community for the welfare of the individuals, families and the community as a whole.
4. While individual members deserve the fruits of their industry and inenuity in the use of their land which they owe to the state in community for its use, consequent of this provision, no individual may use his personal wealth for the enslavement of his fellowmen, but is a steward of the community.

Principally the economic welfare of the community is basically the responsibility of the state itself. It shall be incumbent on the state to be the initiator of industry and to use the factors and means of production provided that individuals may individually or corporately undertake such industry or production as they profitably undertake, without initiating the common welfare, basic motive to the philosophy of communalism.

5. While it will be the duty of the state to ensure opportunity for all its members to engage in productive efforts on their own behalf, it shall also be the duty of the state to see to it that everyone of its members shall have the necessary training such that their productive abilities are topped to the full for their personal and more important national gain. This means that education and training shall be compulsory and free for the young and adults of the community according to the need for production and for their own development as people, to utmost capacity.

6. Labour is the means whereby men earn a livelihood and it is a responsibility and duty of every member of society to be productively employed. While men shall be trained as of right and according to their talents for work and shall be free to sell their labour suitably, no man shall be exploited for the good of another. Labour policies and laws shall ensure that every man shall earn a wage that enables him to make a decent living for himself and his dependents as an independent member of the society and not as an appendage of an impersonal labour force.

Commerce and industry exist for the welfare of the community to supply services and goods to the best advantage of the community and should serve that purpose conscientiously.

7. It is obvious that the system in which we live today is not inspired by the motivations implied in this philosophy of life we espouse and even our own communities are losing effective allegiances to it. The value of man in the current society is measured by the material possession rather than the integrity of a person and his own value to himself and the community.

8. It is incumbent on the Black People's Convention to undertake a formulation of these basic values of Black Communalism, which have been the mainstay of our society from time immemorial with investigation and scientific research for these are imbedded in our cultures and folkways. It is necessary and obligatory also to conscientise the community and its institutions as to the tenets, values and consequent practice so that our society shall be mobilised into the new motivation and brainwash the community of the wrong and alien ways, relations and thinking which held our people in bondage and paralysis over the years. So that every Black man shall be his brother's keeper indeed and never a small boss and exploiter but that recognise our family bond and common obligations we shall hold our hands in implicit co-operation of a free and happy, egalitarian society as an individual and common commitment.

GOVERNMENT CREATED PLATFORMS.

The Black People's Convention, is a political movement working for the Black People in the country, recognises Government created platforms e.g. Bantustans, Coloured Representatives Council and South African Indian Council, for what they really are namely:

1. White racists of this country, and white racists alone are the sole architects for these platforms.
2. They are created for the express purpose of diverting the energy of the Black people from the true struggle for national liberation to racialist, tribalist and generally divisive political undertaking which at best keep the real and true goal of total liberation out of immediate sight and attention by Black people and at worst serve to bolster the white racist regime of those who created them.
3. They are a built-in safety valve in the balloon of Black frustration through which the steam is let out so that the balloon should not explode in the face of the oppressor.
4. They are designed to cheat the Black man into participating in his own oppression because of built-in safeguards that make it impossible for any Black person using them to liberate himself.
5. The creation of these separate development platforms is aimed to hoodwink the international community into accepting the racist policy of the white regime as a sincere programme designed in the interest of the Black people and any participation in these platforms by Blacks can only give credibility to the fraudulence, to the detriment of the Black people.
6. They are designed such, that those Black people who participate in them are the ones who soil their hands by doing the dirty work designed and planned by white racists.

It is against this background that BPC.

1. Rejects government created platforms.
2. Has opted to operate as a political movement outside the framework of these institutions.
3. Belives:
 - A. that Blacks have an inalienable right to determine their destiny.
 - B. in this solidarity of all Black people irrespective of ethnic origin, prescribed residential areas or religious affiliation, it is this solidarity that our power as oppressed people lies.
 - C. the whole of Azania is the homeland of all its inhabitants and that no group has a right to partition our country to suit their own motives.
 - D. in a Unity State in which all inhabitants of Azania form one unit one nation whose affairs shall be run by the government which must be representative of the people of Azania.

PROJECTION : FUTURE STATE

We Black people of Azania, under the guidance and leadership of the Black people's Convention, recognise the need to radically change the Azania society to be in keeping with the wishes, aspirations, hopes, interests, ideas and ideals of the majority of the people of our country.

We therefore are striving and working towards the establishment of a society in which:

1. All sane adults, persons who are citizens of our country are accorded the Franchise irrespective of colour, race, religion, status in life or any other consideration.
2. All sane adult persons participate in the making of the laws under which they live through our people's National Assembly which shall be a body constituted of duly elected representatives of our people.
3. All citizens of our country form a united nation irrespective of ethnic origin, language differences, skin colour or any other such consideration.
4. All citizens shall be protected, each from exploitation by other.
5. All people shall be equal in the eyes of the law irrespective of colour, religion, status in life or any other such consideration.

LAND.

6. Ownership of the land, sea and air space shall be vested in the state.
7. All citizens with reasonable need for land on which to have a home shall be allocated proportionate land for this purpose.
8. Distribution of land to organised groups, be it for sporting, religions, farming, industrial, trading, commercial or any other such purposes shall be done in accordance with a central National Plan.

EDUCATION.

9. Education is an instrument of national unity.
10. Education is geared towards raising the cultural, social, economic and intellectual level of all citizens.
11. The general content of education is geared towards the promotion of self reliance, a high level of critical awareness, understanding the community and its problems, a sense of positive self-identity.
12. Education is geared towards the destruction of imperialist, racialist, tribalist, sectionalist, colonialist and neo-colonialist notions..
13. Emphasis in general education shall be in the following areas:-
 - a) With respect to languages, there should be one international language and one national vernacular language which shall be selected by the people's Political structure.
 - b) Environment studies touching on Geography, History, Economics, Political and Constitutional structures mainly of our country, but also as compared with States in Africa and others through out the world.
 - c) Humanities shall include social anthropology, sociology, and elementary community development.
 - d) Basis science shall include arithmetic, mathematics, elementary physics and chemistry comparative economic systems.

A programme of rapid elimination of illiteracy shall be designed and implemented.

15. Elementary education shall be free and compulsory for all citizens.
16. Specialization in education is introduced at the minimum effective level.
17. All teachers in all standards shall be specially trained to specialise in the various fields specified above.

RELIGION

18. There shall be religious freedom, but control shall have to be exercised over the proliferation of different churches, for this purpose a credential council shall be set up. All ministers of religion shall be civil servants, paid by the state directly.

HUMAN RIGHTS

19. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations shall be observed and respected.
20. Our Country is aligned neither to the West nor the East but shall see itself as part of the Third World.

HEALTH

21. Health services are the primary responsibility of the State.
22. Professional medical Councils shall be recognised and the standards set by these upheld in the rendering of medical services; all medical and para-medical personnel shall be civil servants.
23. Every sane and healthy adult person shall form part of an effective national defence force;
24. There shall be no use of national territory by foreign forces;
25. Peaceful collaboration with all nations of the world on the basis of principles of mutual respect, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-interference in domestic affairs, equality and reciprocity of advantages, peaceful co-existence;
26. Development of economic and cultural relations with all nations whose governments respect the principles mentioned in 25 above;

SOCIAL WELFARE,

27. The welfare of the handicapped shall be the primary responsibility of the state.
28. National social welfare shall cover care for the following categories for which there shall be state-aided societies and institutes, crippled, deaf and dumb, mentally retarded, blind, aged, orphans, people with certain specific diseases and any other deserving categories.
29. Special emphasis shall be laid on the development of whole communities especially in cases of disaster like floods, fires, drought, famine, earthquakes and epidemics.
30. People under conditions of social aberration like alcoholism, drug addiction and habitual prostitution shall be taken care of and be rehabilitated through the state machinery.
31. All economically active citizens shall contribute to the welfare of the handicapped.

32. A social Welfare Council sets out standards for the rendering of social welfare services and help in shaping of social welfare policy.

FARMING

33. Farming shall be practised in a collective communal way rather than an individual way.

34. For purposes of 33 above, rural communities are re-organised such that the total land available for farming is distributed equally and evenly among them.

35. Farming shall be aimed at raising and maintaining a high level of produce for purpose of self-sufficiency.

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE

36. Monopoly in industry, trade and commerce shall not be allowed to play a major role in our economy.

37. The principles of communalism are institutionalised into industry, trade and commerce.

LAW

39. All citizens shall have the right to fair trial and access to legal defence and to this end the state shall;

• set up advice bureaux with qualified lawyers who will interpret all legal matters to every citizen requesting this.

11. lawyers shall be employed as civil servants to afford all citizens equal opportunity of good legal representation.

RELATIONS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL.

The Black people's Convention, being a movement working for the total liberation of all Black people, has the following as its policy on relations.

NATIONAL

1. The movement shall maintain positive relations with all those national organisations, be they cultural, religious, student, youth or otherwise that subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. Relations with these organisations by BPC shall at the level of consultation on matters of common concern taking on invitation in their occasions or projects, helping them whenever asked by them to do so if this is possible, co-operation with them for the purpose of developing and spreading the philosophy of Black Consciousness, exchange material for the purposes of information and any other activities related to the above mentioned.

The movement shall also maintain positive relations with all those groups who by their nature cannot be national but who nevertheless subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. The relations with these groups will be at the same level as for national organisations referred to above.

Furthermore BPC shall maintain positive informal relations with those national groups that operate outside the framework of the apartheid policy but who nevertheless do not subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. Relations with these groups will be on the basis of expounding the philosophy of Black Consciousness to them and its relevance to the liberation of the Black people in this country. For this purpose their open meetings, conferences and projects shall be the movements point of focus. In this way the movement will be able to keep in touch with the membership of these groups from whom it must gain not only membership but also general support.

Relations with other organisations, national and international are a sole prerogative of National Executive.

The movement shall relate with whatever organisations it deems fit to relay the true feelings of Blacks in their country to the outside world.

The movement notes the historical presence of other political movements and recognise their right of existence while not maintaining any relationship with them.

This policy on relations is designed to enable the movement to have that broad base that is so essential in a movement to have that purpose to work for the liberation of any people. At the same time it is designed to maintain a sufficiently clear stance about the whole white racist system.

RELATIONS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL.

The Black people's Convention, being a movement working for the total liberation of all Black people, has the following as its policy on relations.

NATIONAL

1. The movement shall maintain positive relations with all those national organisations, be they cultural, religious, student, youth or otherwise that subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. Relations with these organisations by BPC shall at the level of consultation on matters of common concern taking on invitation in their occasions or projects, helping them whenever asked by them to do so if this is possible, co-operation with them for the purpose of developing and spreading the philosophy of Black Consciousness, exchange material for the purposes of information and any other activities related to the above mentioned.
2. The movement shall also maintain positive relations with all those groups who by their nature cannot be national but who nevertheless subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. The relations with these groups will be at the same level as for national organisations referred to above.
3. Furthermore BPC shall maintain positive informal relations with those national groups that operate outside the framework of the apartheid policy but who nevertheless do not subscribe to the philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined and understood by the movement. Relations with these groups will be on the basis of expounding the philosophy of Black Consciousness to them and its relevance to the liberation of the Black people in this country. For this purpose their open meetings, conferences and projects shall be the movements point of focus. In this way the movement will be able to keep in touch with the membership of these groups from whom it must gain not only membership but also general support.
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