

C23

## The Broad Struggle

- honoured President of the UDF, Oscar Mpetha Ref 49-6023
- Mr Chairman and Comrades we meet here today as our people are meeting throughout the length and breadth of our country. We meet because we refuse to allow our oppressors to trick our people into working the system of our oppression. But we are also meeting because our country is in crisis. We meet so that we can act in unity and as a united oppressed people to face that crisis. I have no doubt that in the days and months ahead we shall require strength and courage and we shall have to mobilise all our energies to meet the crisis overtaking our country.

To avoid defeat we need to understand clearly what it is that faces us and what our tasks are.

- In the first place, that crisis is a conflict between ruler and ruled, between oppressor and oppressed. It is a struggle against those who play God over our lives and deny us the right to determine our own lives and the destiny of our country. It is a struggle for our rights to determine how we shall be ruled and by the leaders of our choice. We are not claiming this right in some distant foreign country. No, we are claiming our rights in the land of our birth, on the soil that have absorbed the blood, flesh and breath of our ancestors, the land whose every blade of grass, every grain of seed and every drop of water is a precious part of our very being and is the heritage of our children.

That conflict therefore is about claiming our birthright and that of our children and the generations to come.

In the second place, that crisis is also the conflict between exploiter and exploited, the conflict between those who own the wealth of our country and those who toil in the mines, in the factories and on the building site. It is a struggle against those who live in unbelievable wealth and luxury by the vast mass of our people who create that wealth but lead a miserable existence. We see daily the abundance of goods we produce and we read about the mountains of meat, butter, cheese stacked away and lorry loads of food destroyed to keep prices, and profits, high while many thousands of our people are hungry and even starving. We see daily how the few enjoy that abundance we produce side by side with our people roaming the ghettos with broken bodies, stunted development and old long before their time. We see vast lands in the hands of the few side by side with rural people without even a vegetable patch to grow a few miserable vegetables. We see massive factories and giant machines, grand offices and shopping complexes created by the sweat of our labour often manned by foreigners while many thousands of our people are denied the most menial opportunity to earn a miserable livelihood. We see grand facilities to educate the few in luxury while many thousands of our children roam the streets unable to read and write and who must battle each other for a place in school.

In short Mr. Chairman and Comrades we are oppressed as a people, held in the hand of our birth, but we are also exploited as workers and denied the benefits of the wealth we created. It is a two-sided edge they use against us. Those who rule over us have proved themselves totally incapable of ruling. Their role in society is a totally reactionary one. The time has come that racialism, oppression and exploitation be dumped on the rubbish dump of history. Our people have declared their dedication to rid our country of the scourge of racialism, oppression and exploitation. The actions of our people speak loud and clear whether it be on the factory shop floor, the squatter camps, the dumping grounds, or the church and school.

Those who rule over us, those who reap the benefit of our labour and those who have plundered the resources of our country are seeing the dark storm clouds of the oppressed peoples anger on the horizon. Those who impose their will on us because they have guns are fast realizing that their prisons, armoured cars, mirages and machine guns are not going to stop us from achieving our freedom. Gone are the days when we meekly submitted and voiced our anger in private. Gone forever are the days when as unorganized workers, community or students they could simply impose their will on us and to hell with the consequences. They are no longer sleeping comfortably. They understand that the gathering storm can not be stopped by their arsenals of murderous weapons.

Those murderous weapons can not produce the lifeblood of this country - gold, diamonds, coal, iron, meat, maize and other food or all the many other goods of an industrial society. That lifeblood is produced by the toiling masses. Those masses have learnt of their massive strength as an organized working class. Our experiences in the factories, in the many struggles in the community and in the schools have brought us together in a national struggle for total liberation.

The rulers therefore have to sharpen their efforts at looking for allies, quislings and traitors in our ranks. They are redoubling their efforts to divide us. Thus they have renewed efforts in their so called new constitutional proposals to make us a party to our own oppression. They are attempting to coopt sections of the coloured and Indian people as junior partners and defenders of the apartheid regime. They are also attempting to coopt the African people through the Local Authorities to police the townships, control the lives of the people and hound them from their homes implementing influx control. Under the pretence that we will control our own affairs we shall be made to impose the oppressive laws of the whiteman on our suffering people. In their next move they are going to attempt to coopt sections of the urban Black workers under the Koomhof Bills against the vast majority of oppressed but struggling workers. The beast that is destroying us by imprisonment, starvation wages, bulldozed shanties, long working hours, totally inadequate health facilities is suddenly pretending

- X that they are giving us genuine local administration.
- At this very moment that beast is destroying the Bakwena Ba-Magopa like it is trying to destroy the people of Crossroads, Kooigrond, Kipton and elsewhere. We know that we are being offered a few crumbs, poisonous crumbs, in exchange for our birthright. The vast majority of our people have spoken with one voice
  - We shall not sell our birthright for your poisonous crumbs.
  - We shall not be betrayed by the Hendrickses, the Rajbansis, the Thebehadis and the like.
  - We shall not let you divide our struggle.

Our tasks therefore are clear

- We must carry the voice of our people into every factory, township, church and home.
- Each and everyone must go out and ensure that the voice of our people shall ring across all corners of our country.

- X ●
- We must build our people - workers, community and students - into a massive avil, an avil on which the beast that is destroying us will meet its end.

X Let our pride in the response of our people fire us with a new determination to destroy the local Authorities and bring our struggle for freedom to a new height. As we join hands in our day to day struggles for freedom

- X ●
- let our leaders and youth who are incarcerated in the oppressors prisons, Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeke, Mhlangezi, Kathrada, Goldberg, Lutisi, Medigo, Manona and all the many others kindle the

the fires of freedom to burn more brightly in all our hearts

- Let our brave sons and daughters who had to flee from our country and who are being hounded from their refuge ignite the flames of freedom in the hearts of all our people.
- Let those who have been so cruelly robbed of life: Mahlangu, Magoerane, Moslodi, Motauung, Joe Qwabi, Ruth First, Griffith Mxenge and all the many others, always remembering those who fell in Cossiga, Maputo, Maseru, Manzini and elsewhere inspire us with new levels of courage, strength and determination to grasp our freedom and we see a new dawn of a free South Africa come shining through.  
Amandla!

I. J. Mohamed

Talk ~~to~~ given at Regina Maud  
Square at SCA anti-Local  
Authorities Meeting

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