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GRIFFITHS MLUNGISI

Nov 21"

MXENGE

ASSASINATED NOVEMBER 19, 1981



... the struggle was his life.

HIS STRUGGLE FOR

1935 Born in King William's Town on February 27

1956 matriculated at Newell High School, Port Elizabeth

1961 Following footsteps of some of Africa's great leaders Tambo, Mugabe, and Mbeki obtained BA degree at University of Fort Hare.

1962 Entered University of Natal for LLB degree

Married Victoria Nonyamezelo Mxenge

1966 Detained under 180 day detention law



1971-1973 Served articles under Rabie Bugwandeen of Natal Indian Congress. Had problems about admission after articles because of his conviction in terms of Suppression of Communism Act.

1973 Served with a further five year banning order.

1973-1974 Worked with George Sewpershad, the banned President of the NIC.

Dec. '74 Admitted as an Attorney of the Supreme Court of S.A.

First son Mbase born while Griffith was in detention

Charged under Suppression of Communism Act for furthering the aims of ANC with co-accused Albert Dlomo who is presently in exile

1967 Sentenced to jail for two years. Served sentence on Robben Island. Known to fellow Robben Islanders as their Latin and English "teacher" and legal representative.

1969 Released from Robben Island. Served with a 2 year banning order and not allowed to enter University premises. With the assistance of the Dean of the Law Faculty, Prof Matthews, managed to get written notes to enable him to complete his LLB degree. Obtained his LLB degree and graduated in April 1970.

1970 Second son Viwe born

1975 Started his legal practice in Durban. Birth of daughter Namhla

1975-1981 Acted as attorney in many political trials including the Mdluli case, Mohapi, Nxasana, Bethal PAC trial. Involved in many community problems, including the Umlazi Water Accounts problem. Treasurer of Release Mandela Committee. Worked closely with Natal Indian Congress. Actively supported resurgence of trade union movement.

1976 Detained under Section 6 of Terrorism Act for 103 days. Refused to give evidence for State in Pietermaritzburg case. State versus Gwala and others now on Robben Island

When A Man Dies ...

If a man happened to be 36-years-old, as I happen to be and some truth stands before the door of his life; some great opportunity to stand up for that which is right and that which is just, and he refuses to stand up because he wants to live longer, or he is afraid his home will get bombed, or he is afraid that he will lose his job, or he is afraid that he will get shot, he may go on and live-until he is 80 ... and then the cessation of breath is merely the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit.

A man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is right. A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is true. So, we are going to stand up right here ... letting the world know that we are determined to be free.

MARTIN LUTHER KING

R DEMOCRACY

GRIFFITHS MXENGE, affectionately known to his comrades as GM was destined for greatness. No teenager in the 1950's could escape the influence of the Defiance Campaign of 1952, the historic Congress of the People of 1955, the Treason Trial, the Pound-A-Day Campaign or the State of Emergency of 1960. Like thousands of others, he became a member of the African National Congress while still a youth.

FREEDOM CHARTER

The Freedom Charter adopted at the Congress of the People at Kliptown on June 26, 1955 became his guiding light in the struggle of democracy. Until the very end of his active life, GM spoke about the message of the Charter and at the recent Anti-SAIC Conference, called it "a living document"

ROBBEN ISLAND

In 1967 he was jailed for two years on Robben Island for furthering the aims of the ANC. GM always regarded his stay on the Island in the company of our great leaders as the most important period of his life. Here he learnt that humility goes with leadership.

COMMUNITY STRUGGLES

He worked closely with both the Umlazi Residents' Association and the Umlazi Water Accounts Committee, helping to solve the day-to-day problems of residents. He believed that strong community organisation, founded and functioning on democratic principles, were the immediate solution to the day-to-day oppression of our people.



FRIEND OF TRADE UNIONS

He played an important part in the development of the trade union movement in Durban and the Eastern Cape. He encouraged and helped trade unionists and workers - his office was always open to them. GM often spoke about the need for the unity of workers and the vital role they play in our struggle.

RELEASE MANDELA

Together with Archie Gumede, George Sewpershad and Paul David he was a leading member of the Release Mandela Committee which mobilised thousands of Black and White democrats to demand for the release of all political prisoners. GM publicly acclaimed Nelson Mandela as his leader. During the Campaign he said many times that the Freedom Charter provided the only alternative to the present racist and exploitative system.



MR ARCHIE GUMEDE

STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

GM believed that students had the right to struggle for a better education by whatever means they chose. He stood by them during the 1980 school boycotts despite many attacks on him. He supported democratic student organisations like COSAS and AZASO and the SRC's at the universities in their effort to organise students.

COURAGE

GM was the symbol of a freedom fighter. Brave and fearless, he never gave up in the face of great difficulties. As a defence lawyer in the country's many political trials he showed his courage and ability time and again. No amount of harassment and threats could stop him. His political opponent feared his unbreakable courage. This fear drove them to butcher him. But his spirit lives on!

ANTI-SAIC

GM lived to see the fruit of his efforts in the Anti-SAIC Campaign. He will be remembered for his brilliant speech to the people of Merebank. He cut a defiant and inspiring figure at the National Anti-SAIC Conference in Durban, committing himself to the Declaration of the Conference.

Our struggle for freedom has many pitfalls. Puppets in government - created bodies will continue to divide our people. Courageous fighters for freedom will continue to be harassed, beaten and butchered by the enemies of the people.

But the ideals of the Freedom Charter will live on

DECLARATION

adopted at
NATIONAL ANTI-SAIC CONFERENCE
ON OCTOBER 10 and 11, 1981, IN DURBAN

WE SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRATS,

gathered in Durban on this day, recognising the unequivocal rejection of government-created ethnic institutions by the oppressed people and having experienced this directly in the Anti-South African Indian Council Campaign hereby declare for all South Africans and the world to know that the struggles of the past 25 years have convinced us that the only viable alternative to the present exploitative and repressive system is one based on the principles of the FREEDOM CHARTER.

Accordingly, this National Conference firmly believes that:

1. THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN

True democracy must be based on the will of all the people of South Africa in a unitary national state.

All adult South Africans shall participate in the political process and institutions at every level of government.

The present government, Bantustans, Presidents Council, South African Indian Council and local advisory bodies reinforce domination and exploitation by a minority and exclude the possibility of establishing a people's democracy.

2. THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT

The land belongs to all the people, whereas at present it is owned by a minority.

The creation and consolidation of Bantustans and the implementation of the Group Areas Act and similar legislation continues to uproot and dispossess settled communities.

3. THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED TO ALL

Separate education is specifically used by the State to perpetuate Apartheid. Protests in schools and Universities in these past few years has demonstrated quite clearly that this education has failed to satisfy the needs of the majority of South Africans who demand a system whose objectives are consistent with the achievement of a free, equal, just and democratic society.

Racist society distorts and destroys the culture of the people.

The free expression of cultural values and the development of an authentic national culture can only occur in a free and democratic society.

4. THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT

Decent housing at rents and prices people can afford, comfort and security are inaccessible to the majority of South Africans. The absence of these necessities, *inter alia*, has resulted in the destruction of family life. Democratic control by the people will guarantee the provision of these essentials and eliminate the mass removals of settled communities.

The disabilities that our people suffer in health and welfare are directly due to and exacerbated by the poverty imposed on our people.

These problems of the people can only be eliminated by a new social order which guarantees optimum health and welfare.

5. ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW

The law as it exists, is repressive, discriminatory and designed to entrench apartheid.

The law must not only be just but must be seen to be so.

This is only possible if it is based on the will of the people and accords with the people's concept of justice.

6. THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY

The majority of workers are still denied the right to free association and control over their own affairs. Continuing and ever increasing worker action reveals national discontent of working people who will settle for nothing less than full participation in free and democratic trade unions.

7. THE WEALTH SHALL BE SHARED AMONGST ALL THE PEOPLE

The natural and human resources of this country are being exploited in the interests of a privileged minority. Control of South African resources by the people will ensure its utilisation towards the benefit of the people as a whole.

In believing so, WE DECLARE,

that in the absence of the democratic freedoms outlined herein no constitutional schemes or dispensations are acceptable to us and that we will not participate in any constitutional arrangement that does not flow from a national convention representative of all the peoples of South Africa.

and that

the preconditions for a successful holding of such a convention are the release of all political prisoners, the return of all exiles and banished, the unbanning of all persons and organisations and the repeal of all unjust laws.

In the intervening period we hereby rededicate ourselves to fight side by side for these freedoms through genuine people's organisations and pledge that we will not rest until we have established a democratic South Africa based on the FREEDOM CHARTER.

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