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**THE LIBERATORY EFFORTS OF THE
OPPRESSED MASSES**

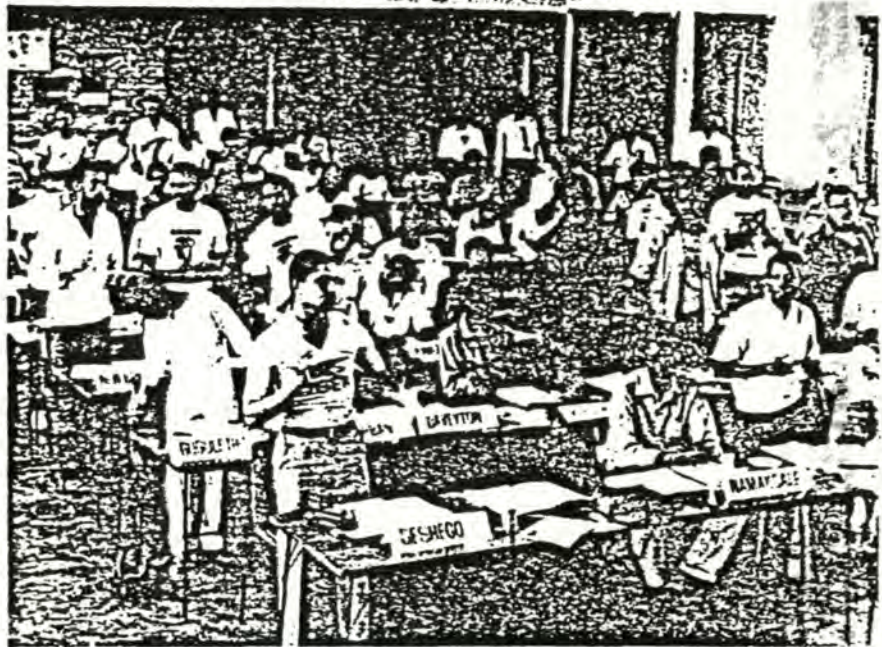
3rd Annual Congress held at the Lay Ecumenical
Centre, Edendale. 4th-6th February, 1983



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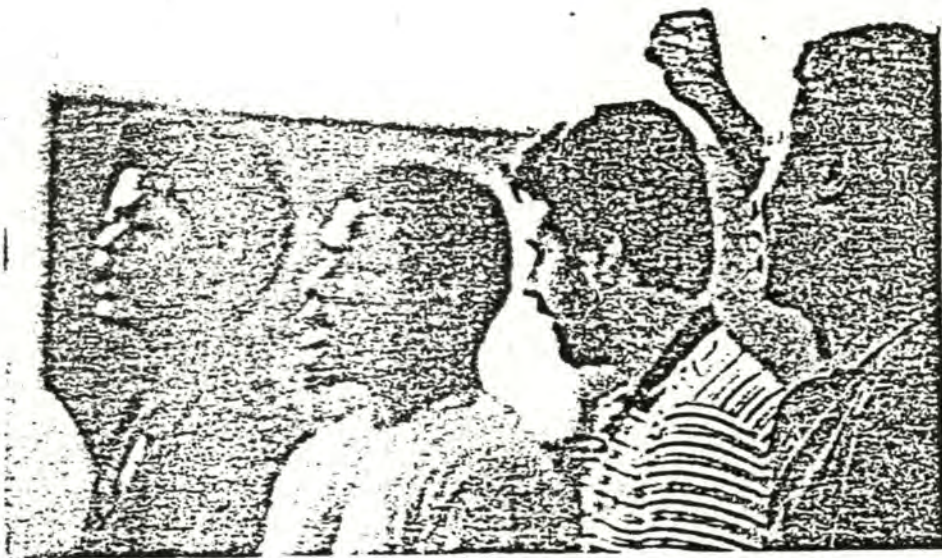
Azanian People's Organization
3rd Annual Congress , Edendale ,
4th-6th February , 1983 .





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Foreword

It is the desire and the hope of the Executive Committee of the Azanian People's Organization that the papers put together in this publication, the resolutions emanating from Congress will serve as a ray of light in this hour of political gloom in the Country. The mood of the Congress shall not be captured in full particularly with the exclusion of numerous fraternal greetings, in word and in writing, from fraternal organisations. It would have been a serious omission on the part of the Organisation, however, not to have made this offering possible.

Delays and setbacks have been numerous with promises made and broken by printers. They have repulsed our papers from their desks for fear of police harassment or purely on ground of racial or ideological bias against the sentiments expressed therein.

This publication is an expression of a determination to be heard in an inhospitable world. It is not an unassailable contribution, but a piece which it is hoped shall foster some considerable amount of discussion and revolutionary reflection among those who love Azania, its offspring and its destiny.

AZAPO is indebted to the Conference participants some who had to work against odds at a short notice to ensure that Conference should be jerked to the challenges of the day.

Our special word of appreciation to our fellow-travellers, those who are still prepared to offer a hand of friendship and support. To those who urged us to continue with this project and thus patiently wait for it to see the light of day, we are grateful for the inspiration.

We dedicate these pages to those who have already paid the ultimate price in the cause. To all who have selflessly taken over from those who have fallen. To those who have parted with son, mother, daughter, father, sister, brother, and all the shining examples of Nkrumah's vision of an emancipated Africa.

Mobilise and Consolidate the Liberatory Efforts of the Oppressed Masses

Muntu Myeza

There are millions of Black people who would have loved to be at this third congress of the Azanian People's Organisation. Many of those people cannot be here because some are trying to eke out a living for themselves and their families through these trying times. Some cannot attend because they have been forced to find shelter in distant lands by the oppressive white racist settler regime of South Africa. Others are unable to come to this Congress because they are restricted by the white laws to tiny portions of our land. A great number still is incarcerated and made to languish in the dungeons of oppression erected through the length and breadth of this our beloved country. These are the people we must think of today and through the duration of the Congress. A great responsibility is placed on our shoulders to interpret and articulate their true values and ideals. As the Congress progresses we must bear in mind the anguish, trauma and terror that our people are suffering at the heel of white oppression. We must assume the role of the father to the fatherless, the mother to the motherless. We must instil courage, fortitude and inspiration to those who have lost their husbands, wives, sons, daughters or beloved ones during the course of our lives under oppression. We must be a source of comfort and hope during the long hours of misery and loneliness. Best of all we must open up new horizons to a better life. We must offer a definite and feasible prospect of good life in freedom.

This is our duty as a people's Liberation Movement. We must bear this duty selflessly and unflinchingly. We must remain forever vigilant against attempts to frustrate and throw the focus of our perspective, out of direction. Our commitment to the liberation of our land and people must be tempered with iron tenacity and unwavering resolve. Through honest constant and consistent evaluation and assessment of our methods and progress, we shall be able to give expression to the true aspirations of our People. This is the duty that faces each and every committed person at this

time, during the Congress and afterwards until Azania prevails. Even when Azania is established, it shall remain our duty to guard jealously the interests and values of the new order because the forces of destruction are always relentlessly at work with their devilish manoeuvres.

AZANIA

The Azania which we have given to our land does not and is not merely a geographical and historical meaning. It is also an expression and embodiment of the values and ideals of the society we envisage and are struggling for. The name Azania marks a decisive severance of ties with the callous disrespect of humane values and ideals practised by whites in our country since their arrival. Since the advent of the white man on our shores the history of our land is littered with innumerable incidents of viciousness perpetrated against our people in the name of white supremacy. We refuse to be associated with the acts of naked terrorism such as slavery, the massacre of Sharpeville and the slaughter of our people during 1976 and afterwards. We reject utterly the legacy of the exploitation and racism that whites have visited on our people ever since their arrival. Our people have been, and still are, unwilling and bitter victims of this bloody and messy history. At best, we would dearly love to see racist inhuman statute laws and the accompanying sordid acts of cruelty rot into oblivion in musty archives. At worst, we are able and willing to work towards the obliteration of this sad phase in the history of Azania. This latter task we are willing to undertake as the people of Zimbabwe are doing presently. The humane society we are fighting for cannot afford to have, let alone practise, a satanic ideology of racism which has no place anywhere in the world. The choice rests on the proponents and practitioners of racism whether we shall allow it to die a peaceful, albeit dishonourable death, or we shall have to actively work towards its obliteration from the face of the earth.

The title Azania also defines the character and ownership over land. The Europeans dispossessed us of our land but its ownership has never been in doubt despite the futile attempts by their naive and dishonest propagandists and historians. Our land is one monolithic whole and we shall continue to regard it as such. We do not and shall continue not to reorganise the various areas which the white rulers have given to a coterie of yes-men as states. We regard this dismemberment as a desperate attempt at dividing our people with the view to maintaining themselves in a position untrammelled supremacy. The current so-called constitutional development is and a confirmation of this conclusion.

We reject equally strongly the attempts to assign us to various portions of the country and the labels that go with such compartmentalization. Black people are neither legal blacks, urban blacks, Indians, Coloureds nor are we citizens of any country but Azania.

All the people who belong to this country by birth or adoption have an equal right to live, work and stay in any part of the country that they choose. This, in a nutshell, defines the character of Azania and all the sane and peace-loving peoples of the world embrace this principle.

The People

The Azania People's Organisation restricts its membership to Black People only. Needless to say Black People in this contexts includes the so-called Indians, Coloureds and Xhosas, Pedis, Zulus, etc. This is the class of people capable of bringing about fundamental change in our country. This is the class that is oppressed by the white class — the white ruling class is composed of Europeans of various extractions like Italians, Dutch, Portuguese, English, etc. Analysed in the sociological terms the South African society defines itself into two classes with conflicting values and ideals, namely, the Blacks on the one hand and whites on the other. Various groupings are to be found on either side of the dividing line but race determines the class as a class in our economic and socio-political situation. The various groups or classes on either side of the divide, like intellectuals, students, workers, artists, do not, in themselves form a class. Only when they perceive themselves as forming a unit and become conscious of themselves as a class *for itself* with the requisite attitude towards the oppressive class do they become a class. In our context Black people do perceive themselves as a class for itself. Examples of this face are manifold, the events of June 16, 1976 and the aftermath being only one example, testify to this fact. It is a fact that some individuals from the oppressive class have labelled and reneged against their class. This does not however, in any way gainsay the fact that the oppressed class is incapable of a radical point of view from within its confines. The whites in this country are incapable of a radical change of view point because they are satisfied by this situation within the capitalist system. If they are not satisfied for a time, there are reasonable prospects of getting satisfaction in time within the same system. Consequently, the possibilities of a radical change of view point are short circuited and they remain satisfied or likely to be satisfied by and within the system and therefore seek to perpetrate the system.

The same does not hold for the Black man. The Black man is conscious

that he is alienated and treated like a commodity that can be used or discarded as the situation demands. He is estranged from the goods he produces the work he performs and other men. The intrinsic human value that a man has is lost and he is no better from the commodities he produces or helps in producing. His value as a human being is relegated to a callous exchange value. This psychological phenomenon is crucial in understanding the reactions to change by either of the two classes. One writer puts it succinctly when he says:

The objective reality of social existence (being) is 'the same' in its immediacy for both proletariat and bourgeoisie. But this does not prevent the specific categories of agency whereby both classes lift this immediacy into . . . and through which the merely immediate reality becomes for both archical objective reality - from being radically different as a result for the differentiation of the two classes in the same economic process'

In other words the perception of one thing by both members of the two classes produces two distinct reactions governed by their class positions. A person charged under the Terrorism Act is viewed as a terrorist by whites and as a freedom fighter by Blacks. A policeman who kills or maims a child during an uprising is seen as a fascist murderer by the oppressed and as an agent of law and order by the oppressors. There are numerous real examples to confirm this assertion.

It is the duty and responsibility of the popular people's movement, AZAPO, to analyse, assess and articulate the peoples aspirations truthfully and realistically. We must determine clearly what our goals are, the method through which we want to achieve those goals and whether there is a reasonable probability of our methods succeeding. These three aspects are important in the mobilisation of the people for liberation.

In the Azanian context, particularly, the Black Consciousness outlook, taken as a philosophy or ideology has neither better nor equal in its ability to analyse, interpret and articulate the aspirations of our people. A more viable, more dynamic, more vibrant, more forthright ideology as firmly embedded in the circumstances that nurtured it has still to emerge in our country. Black Consciousness has served and shall continue to serve the people well in the quest for true humanity. There is no need for us here to enumerate the many successes that Black Consciousness has had, nor is there a need to count new fields that we have broken and the heights we are yet to reach. That we leave to our historical monitors and political commentators.

The aspect which is important in the methods we embrace towards the

attainment of our goals is the process of bargaining. The most important principle to observe in a bargaining process is strength — to bargain from a position of strength. It is an exercise in futility to bargain from any position but that of strength. Ours is a strong and vicious enemy and any thoughts to the contrary are a mere delusion. Any consideration which involves revolutionary change in South Africa must take into cognizance the absolute disregard for human feeling and morality by the racist regime. Hence, even when considering the bargaining process with the whites, their siege-mentality must be taken into account. Bargaining in this context does not mean the cap-in-hand, tail-between-the-legs variety. On the one hand, bargaining power can mean the absolute, utter and complete failure by those in power to meet the proposals they are presented with as was the case in Cuba, Iran, Mozambique and Angola. It can also take the form of failure to meet most of the proposals as was the case in Zimbabwe. On the other hand bargaining can take the form that we see in Italy and Portugal presently. At the bottom of the scale we have the form of bargaining that plagued our country until the advent of the Black Consciousness Movement. Our opponents are in the habit of asking whether the means we seek to employ in our quest for freedom are violent or peaceful means. Rightfully such questions belong to the place like John Vorster Square, Compol Building, and other such dens of human suffering. If this question of 'peaceful means' has to be answered at all, then one can rely on the answer given by one of the well-known revolutionaries who, when answering a similar question said,

Where the forces of oppression come to maintain themselves in a given situation, peace is considered already broken.

When we consider the method and direction towards the attainment of our liberation, focus must be brought to bear on those areas which add to our strength and those which diminish our efforts. We must realise that we are not dealing with a static situation. The oppressors are constantly trying to absorb, divert and thwart our efforts. It spares no effort, money or time, even in embarking on clandestine, cloak and dagger actions which cannot bear even a cursory moral scrutiny. Consequently, the revolutionary of today must learn to 'fly without perching' because the enemy has learnt to shoot without missing.

In this regard we must adopt the principle of principled selective acceptance or rejection. This means that the liberating phenomena should, after careful scrutiny be adopted and conversely, those that are critical to our liberatory efforts should be rejected. The persistent efforts to divert

the struggle from its true course must be rejected as vehemently as possible. The present form is that of trying to deceive our people and the international community that there is some real change occurring in this country. This is presently done through the so-called Constitutional reforms. It is not our function in this discussion to analyse these so-called reforms as such. What we must be wary of is the danger that those people who are drawn from our midst as Black people present to us. These people are deserters and political spies. Their conduct is not anything new in the struggles of oppressed peoples. Ours is not an exception. They must be viewed for what they are and treated accordingly. They help the system to build a shaky credibility for itself in return for juicy crumbs from the master's table. This, of course includes all the veteran sell-outs and arch-collaborators who have grown rich at the expense of our people.

The world in general and South Africa situation in particular, has progressed so much that tribal clique-ism and ethnicism as a socio-political determinant has become obsolete. In this day when man is literally reaching for the stars, it is disgusting to see grown up men trying to perpetuate an impossible social structure. When mankind should be coming together in even greater conglomerations it is only the usual racists that seek to turn the wheel of history backwards. We all need each other as men in the world to do battle against new phenomena to open new frontiers of knowledge, to combat the famine and poverty that is rampant in the world. Only sick irridentists fail to see the advantages and absolute necessity for the unity of Black people for liberation in our country in particular and mankind in general.

It is time that at some stage in our history Black People did regard themselves as separate and distinct ethnical units. This might have been justified because of the circumstances existing then. Nevertheless society is not static. The change in circumstances necessitates a corresponding change of consciousness. It is not surprising that the white rulers encourage and actively promote the ossification of our people's conception of themselves. This practice is in persuance of their notorious and nefarious policies of divide and rule.

It also not a secret that some of our own people have at various stages in our history, regarded themselves as distinct 'National groups'. To this end some of the old organisations of the people thought it proper to galvanise and organise the people on the basis of tribalism and ethnicity. They even felt it correct to encourage and advise certain individuals to participate in the fraudulent government institutions. Today those individuals, after tasting the nectar of collaborationism are using that ill-advised and short-sighted piece of non-advice as a lever within which to jam the

wheel of change.

The reasons for such massive blunders and political monkey-jives lie in the absence of an analytic perception which comes with a thorough-going, uncompromising ideology. This look of ideology is engendered by a consuming love of sensationalism and a heavy reliance on the dubious virtues of the white media. The strangest thing is that some people and organisations fail to recognise the obsolescence of their ideas.

Black Consciousness has proved itself as the ideology which interpretes the situation of our people most accurately. It is here that the Black Consciousness Movement has its greatest strength, i.e. its ability to analyse accurately, galvanize and mobilize the people for the final decisive victory we all aspire to.

However, the Azanian People's Organisation, as the only popular political organisation in the country must work tirelessly to shoulder the task of carrying the hopes, prayers and desires of our people to fruition. Azapo does not need to prove its credentials to anyone but she does need to come forth more forcefully as the only liberation movement capable and willing to achieve the liberation that has so far eluded the Black People. Consequently, Azapo must organise, mobilise and consolidate the whole Black population in its various formations and locations under her banner. Our organisation must not only be heard but must be seen and felt by the people wherever they may be. Our presence must be experienced in the places of work, in schools, at universities, in sport, in religion, in the buses, in the streets, in the farms and all other places where Black people are to be found. We are fighting for complete and total liberation hence our efforts must be complete, total and unsparring.

We must delineate clearly between what our priorities are and the matters of lesser importance. It is the responsibility of AZAPO to take the lead in charting the course towards liberation. At the end of this congress the people must be in no doubt as to what our priorities and programmes are.

LEADERSHIP

Unlike some organisations, the Black Consciousness Movement embraced the principle of an extended and collective leadership. Each Black person who is true to the aspirations, values and ideals of the Black people must feel represented and having a recognised say in our movement. Our concept of leadership is not the type of leadership that comes from the top downwards only. Our idea of leadership is one that travels both vertically and horizontally. Azapo must assume its rightful position as the central

co-ordinator of all decisions and policies of our huge movement.

It is only through selfless commitment that we shall be able to consolidate the forces we mobilise. Persistent and consistent hard work is the staff which true revolutionary movements are made of. We must not fall short of this task. The blood and tears of the Azanians who have suffered, the anguish of the living and the dead Black men and women must be a source of inspiration to spur us to further heights. We must bear in mind constantly that men and women have died and multitudes are suffering and carry the scars of sad encounters with the vicious white racist regime. The pain and misery we see about us, which we ourselves experience must be enough to put fire in our blood and ice in our minds; to give us courage and fortitude to carry our struggle forward

Our struggle is a true and just one. We have suffered endless trials and tribulations and yet liberation has always eluded us. It is our task to make the freedom of our people from white bondage a living reality. Not only do we of the Black Consciousness Movement desire and hope for liberation but we are also willing and able to work for its achievement. We know we can overcome oppression and we shall vanquish the enemy. Azania shall be free because the time and truth are on our side.

Let us work ceaselesly for

ONE AZANIA, ONE NATION

ONE MOVEMENT, ONE PEOPLE

AMANDLA!

Presidential Address

Khehla Mthembu

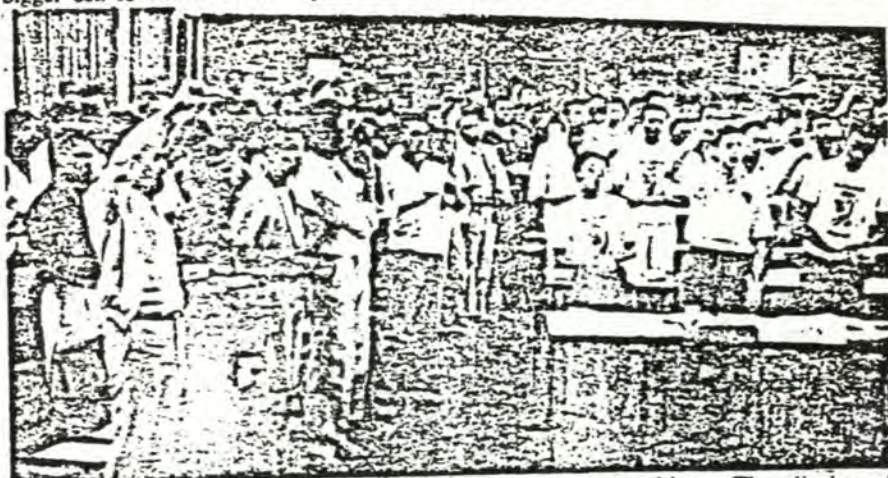
It is with mixed feelings that I address this 3rd Annual congress of AZAPO, the people's liberation movement. With sadness and joy I draw the attention of this Congress to the absence of Comrade Thabo Ndabeni, our gallant former National Organiser languishing in jail for refusing to connive with the system. This is the second congress that Thabo is not able to attend. It is with joy that our Comrades from our Robben Island unit have been allowed to join in this bigger cell to which we all

as one unitary and determined force in opposing all forces of evil and bring to an end this draconian system of rule.

The liberation struggles of the world are characterised by the oppressor, oppressed, the exploiter and the exploited. In our country the oppressor exploiter is gradually accepting the fact that his days are numbered but unfortunately he is bent on buying time with gimmicks like the President's Council, the granting of pseudo-independence to his

lies, chiefly America, is bent on destroying its neighbours and destabilising them. This destabilisation is done under the cloak of "destroying terrorists wherever they are". The arrogance this regime has shown in invading a foreign country to massacre helpless refugees and local people of that country is completely incompatible with the assurances their leaders preach.

South Africa has not convinced us yet about her innocence in supporting the reactionary MNR of Mo-



belong. Black Consciousness proponents and other lovers of freedom over the world are looking at this Congress to further guide the liberation struggle to greater heights. We meet today in the midst of all confusion perpetuated by both the system and other reactionary forces so let us emerge from this Congress

lackeys, the homeland leaders, the upgrading of collaborationist local management bodies, the importation of international mercenary sport crews and many other retrogressive and myopic strategies.

The white minority regime, fully abetted by the white electorate and fully supported by its western al-

zambique. The display of dead South African soldiers in Zimbabwe was a confirmation that the SADF respects no boundaries.

We are told that those soldiers were playing truant and wandered in Mugabe's territory. Surely it was too high a price to pay for delinquent boys. The earlier refusal of the SADF about

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