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MESSAGE BY W.M. SISULU (32)
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

J.M.K. 18

I have been ordered by the Minister of Justice, Mr. C.R. Swart to resign from the African National Congress and consequently to give up my position as Secretary-General. I was elected to this position by you in 1949, since when I have endeavoured to the utmost of my ability to serve my people and to be worthy of the confidence you placed in me.

I am now forced to resign from the organisation but I wish to assure you that I shall be entirely at your disposal and will not hesitate to answer any call that may be made by the African National Congress. In my message to the African National Congress members and to all oppressed people, I wish first of all to remind you about the statement of the A.N.C. and its allies on the Suppression of Communism Act 1950 in which we stated that the primary aim of the Act was to silence all opposition against the tyranny of the Malan's Nationalist Government, especially from the non-European organisations. The correctness of this statement cannot be denied today even by those who did not believe us then. The wisdom of the leaders in the liberatory movement was shown by their swift action when for the first time they called a nation-wide political strike and brought about unity of the democratic front as an answer to what they correctly believed to be the first step in the establishment of a police state.

The ruthlessness of the Government in the use of this fascist measure has affected even those who feared to participate in a positive struggle against the Nationalist onslaught. Whilst we cannot deny the effects of these bans on the national liberatory and workers movements, we feel confident, placing our faith in the invincible spirit of the broad masses of the people, that the Government shall not succeed in the oft-proclaimed intention to crush the movement. The crippling effect of these bans on the leading, most energetic and unwavering champions of freedom in this country must not be minimised. The Peoples' Leaders have been forbidden from attending any gatherings whatsoever, they are being removed from their places of employment, some have been exiled. Almost the entire National Executive of the African National Congress has been removed from office. Some of the Provinces and Branches have also been affected. It is clear from what has already taken place, that our organisations are going to be effected in all the Provinces and all the Branches.

Let me remind you once more that these bans have affected gallant and beloved leaders of the people with outstanding records in the liberatory struggle, such as Moses Kotane, Marks, Mandela, Tloome, Njongwe, Molema, Bopape, Matji, Tshume, Matthews, Ngwevela, Motshabi and many others of the A.N.C. This also applies to other organisations such as Dr. Dadoo, Cachalia, Nana Sita in the Indian Congress; Fischer, Williams, Kahn, Bernstein, Watts, Bunting, Hodgeson in the South African Congress of Democrats; and such as James Phillips and others in the Coloured Organisation; Ray Alexander, Andrew Kunene, Reddy, Mamakwe, Du Toit, Eli Weinberg in the Trade Union Movement. These banned leaders belong to you. They will remain your leaders because they still believe in our liberation struggle and still find some way to make their contribution. They have not been rejected by us but forcibly thrown out by our enemies.

What should be our answer to this? The only way whereby the oppressed masses of this country can express their implicit faith and confidence in their elected leaders and prevent the effectiveness of these bans is to carry out unreservedly the policies of the national organisations as enunciated from time to time by these leaders and many others. To carry on more effectively the work they have been engaged in. To be loyal to those principles and ideals to which/.....

JMK 18

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ideals to which they have pledged themselves. To prevent the opportunism, sabotage and to expose ruthlessly the reaction tendency and the reactionary leadership and to fight vigorously the penetration of spies and Government stooges planted in the organisation by the Government. You are called upon to intensify your campaign in the fight for freedom; to build the most powerful organisations and to produce even more effecient leadership, even more illustrious Sons of the Soil than those I have already mentioned. You are called upon to recruit our fine youth and women to the struggle in a manner never before achieved. You are called upon to defeat Apartheid, the Removal of the Western Areas, Bantu Education, the Anti-Trade Union Schoeman Measures, Group Areas and many others. You are called upon to make the greatest sacrifice in the preparation for the great Congress of the People, in the building of a united South Africa by which means you can crush finally and for all times the reactionary rulers of the present day.

That is how you can make easy the tasks of those who still remain, the task of Chief A.J. Luthuli, a beloved Peoples' President, the tasks of Dr. Naicker, Dr. van der Ross, Beyleveld and Masina and all those who work and stand with them. In this you can be guided by the rich literature our organisations have produced, especially from the first-nation-wide political strike in 1950 up to the present day of the great Congress of the people.

This can only be useful and appreciated when you use it as a guide in your practical work so that your understanding is clear at all times and especially in the hard days which lie ahead of us. Honesty, Selflessness, vigour, determination, initiative and faith are some of the qualities you require. The Government has already been shaken, the time has past when they could rule the country as if we, the people, did not exist. The time is against them, the world is against them. We, on the other hand, are encouraged by the great spirit of the people of South Africa by the growth of the National liberatory movement, the unprecedented political consciousness and by the fact that the truth is with us, we enjoy the confidence of the entire world in this noble just task for which we are pledged to fight until the dawn of Freedom.

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