

**THE PHILOSOPHY,
TENETS AND
TRADITIONS OF
THE
NON EUROPEAN
UNITY MOVEMENT
BY
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A NON EUROPEAN UNITY MOVEMENT PUBLICATION

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED At the Ninth Conference of The Non-European Unity Movement

This, the ninth conference of the Non-European Unity Movement has convened at one of the most crucial moments in the history of the Oppressed people of Southern Africa. The rulers stand poised to deliver what they intend to be a shattering blow to the aspirations 'of the Non-Europeans, one from which they hope, we shall not recover for at least generations to come. We meet here today at a time when the forces of reaction are firmly seated in the saddle with their serried ranks presenting the appearance of an impenetrable wall thrown across the road to freedom. From their position of apparent strength they make repeated sallies against the liberties of the people, goose-stepping over all human decencies and attempting to rob their victims of even that which is the birthright of every person human dignity.

It has been suggested that this is perhaps one of the most important conferences of the N .E.U .M. If comparisons have to be made we may throw ourselves back in mind to the All-in Conference held in Cape Town in 1945. At that conference the country had placed before. It is the Ten-Point Programme which would enable it to embark on the road to freedom on a principled and programmatic basis. In that year the oppressed were invited to adopt this as a framework within which to unify their struggles, for the Ten-Point Programme is' not only a rejection by the Non-Europeans of the position, of inferiority to which they have been relegated by the rulers but is also a statement of their aspirations, not only does it assure all layers of future South African society a, position of dignity but imposes on everyone of the oppressed millions, the honourable task of building a Nation where all, without regard to race, colour or creed, shall have equal opportunities to bear the responsibilities of citizenship, to contribute, each according to his innate ability „to the wall-being of the county and to ensure to each person an equitable share of the fruits of the labours of the society to which he belongs.

In 1945 the oppressed were invited to set out on a new road. They were presented with a set of ideas and principles that were to raise the struggle for liberation on to a new level. There was implicit in these principles a break with the past attitudes which manifested themselves in the acceptance by the Non-Europeans of the political tutelage of the rulers. There was to be no co-operation with any one section of the ruling class except on a footing of complete equality.

This attitude of independence, this rejection by their former wards of the standards created by the rulers of necessity sharpened and deepened the inevitable conflict between those who rule without consent and the victims of their rapacity. Today the rulers, conscious that they have lost their ideological hold on the people despite the fact that they still have control of the material means in the situation, are now using physical violence and all the other methods which State Power gives them in order to prevent the Non-Europeans from coming together to discuss their problems and plan appropriate political action.

The importance of this conference therefore lies in this that it is probably the last one that we shall be permitted to hold for a very long time to come. In fact the greater part of the country no longer enjoys the luxury of meetings. We then at this conference, have to work out methods of keeping the people's feet firmly on the road mapped out for them. We have to devise means not only of keeping the struggle going but of actually accelerating its pace despite the harrying tactics of the oppressor. That should be the main task of this conference.

With this possibility in mind, it has occurred to me that the most fitting subject that could be selected for a presidential address at this particular time is ***The Philosophy, Traditions and Tenets of the Non-European Unity Movement.*** This would be very suitable indeed especially as there are among us many who are attending our conference for the first time and who may be denied the opportunity of repeating the experience or have their desires unfulfilled for several years to come. On second thoughts however, I decided it might not be in the best interests of conference to be subjected to a ponderous thesis and so even the more studious of you will have to be satisfied with a few snatches here and there, all, it is hoped, with a direct bearing on the Ten-Point Programme.

Even in dealing with that it is not the intention to take up each point, rather shall we consider the spirit in which the whole Programme was conceived though in doing so we may refer to particular points.

Before going into a discussion of any one aspect of our Programme we should bear in mind that the Ten-Point Programme did not spring from the fertile brains of some individuals. It had its origin in the material conditions obtaining in the country. It is not a dry-as-dust formula but a rapier, supple and live with which we parry and thrust in a real life situation. Without allowing ourselves to be carried away by this metaphor let us examine very briefly indeed the position of the Black man in South African society and see how the Ten-Point Programme is the only rational instrument that can be used to raise him from the degradation into which he has been sunk by the ruling class.

We live in a country where the normal divisions of a capitalist society into classes have been obscured by considerations of the colour of persons. So well has the colour question been used to camouflage the basic class divisions that race has become an obsession, a mania that drives individuals and groups to adopt policies and embark on schemes that are nothing short of suicidal. This flood of racial

emotionalism which is automatically unleashed at the mere mention of colour has bedevilled human relationships and clouded issues. But it has done worse than that; it has bred on the one side of the colour-line that scourge of humanity: Herrenvolkism.. As a result those white persons who should by reason of their position in the process of the production of wealth make common cause with the overwhelming majority of the exploited masses have ganged up with the ruling class to throw the millions of Non-Europeans outside the body politic and to keep the doors effectively barred against their entry. It is enough for their masters to raise the scare cry of the Black Peril for them to lend their support to the protagonists of the most reactionary policies. So drugged. are they by this toxin of racialism that they will blithely vote for the creation of Bantustans even if this means the disruption of the country's economy and the endangering of the living standards of the working man. They, the white working class, are as enthusiastic as their masters in throwing up dykes against what they call the "flood of colour". Indeed they react to their black fellow-workers as did the workers to the machine during the Industrial Revolution - they recoil in fear from them and seek their destruction. The upshot of all this is that in this geographic entity that is South Africa, in this economic unit, there live the herrenvolk on the one hand and the pariahs on the other. There is no South African Nation.

The two groups occupying the southernmost tip of Africa have nothing in common. So wide is the gulf separating them that the one group can be placed, as is the case at the very present time on a war-footing against the other and be very enthusiastic about it too. So wide is it that a de Wet Nel can stand up in the white parliament so and spin fairy tales about the overwhelming majority of the population and have these inanities accepted as the basis of a serious parliamentary debate. But it is not necessary to regale conference with the many anecdotes of that rare type of person, the unconscious humourist, the inimitable de -Wet Nel, great White Chief of the "Bantu" to show how the Whites and the Blacks could on some very good grounds be taken for immigrants from different planets accidentally thrown or together in a land where the normally accepted standards of conduct and judgment do not apply.

Not only does the white group depart from the normal standards of conduct when dealing with their black compatriots, they go so far as to attach unknown meanings to words when these refer to the black man.

So wide then is the gulf between us and the herrenvolk that the very thought processes of the two groups appear to be different, even concepts differ. Thus when they speak of "good race relations" they mean "acceptance by the black man of his position of inferiority". While to us the word African connotes everybody whose home this continent is either by birth or by adoption; to them it exists only in its Afrikaans version and is applicable exclusively to the descendants of the bearded Voortrekkers. "Tribesman" to them does not denote a member of a certain kind of society but applies to every active African irrespective of where and how he lives. Penury in the Reserves has somehow come to be synonymous with prosperity ever since the Bantu Authorities allowed themselves to be manipulated like puppets in the macabre dance called "self-government in Bantu areas." While the very existence of the N.E.U.M. is testimony to the non-existence of a nation in South Africa, they go on speaking of a nation when in actual fact they have in mind the

handful that has taken government in its own violent hands and holds it by sheer force of arms. Even our male offsprings are not boys but "picannins" until they reach manhood when then they become boys. The homestead of a black man is a "kraal".

It would be the height of folly to laugh these away as mere symptoms of mental aberration. In any event madness on the part of those in positions of authority is a very serious thing. These examples of the misuse of words by the overwhelming majority of Whites have been given because they demonstrate not just the extent to which the white electorate are determined to keep us out of the body politic but also their steadfast refusal to accord us the dignity due to us as men, as human beings

A combination of this mental attitude and the dictates of economic necessity (within the peculiar S. African milieu) has resulted in the drawing up, and, enforcement by the rulers of a mass of degrading legislation such as the Pass Laws which are the bane of the lives of the black man.

All sections of the ruling class have given their support to these laws. Differences among themselves over their application have arisen only in so far as their implementation proves injurious to the one or the other sector of the economy. To us however the Pass Laws are objectionable not for the sole reason that they are an instrument of our economic exploitation but for the further one that they constitute an affront to our status as human beings. It is not necessary to recount to this gathering how this body of laws has been so devised as to render every native African a homeless wanderer whose stay in anyone place is merely tolerated. Yes, even in his so-called homelands he cannot remain as of right. An outcast socially, in the economic sphere he is not recognised as a worker but simply as a storehouse of labour-power. Worse even than the days of slavery when mothers were allowed to remain with their babies and young children on their owner's premises, the Pass Laws make it an offence for a baby to "remain with its mother on her employer's premises- even babies can become criminals. A baby cannot supply labour power and this is considered sufficient justification to bring into action the whole state machinery to secure its separation from its mother.

The basic problem of the Liberation Movement in South Africa is none other than the securing for the black man his rightful position in society as a human being on a footing of equality with everybody else. And it is a fundamental right of every normal member of society to participate, through the exercise of the franchise, in the shaping of the destiny of the country to which he belongs. It is for this reason that the Ten-Point Programme demands, first and foremost, universal adult suffrage. It is because it emphasizes the right of the individual to determine, or at least influence, the course of contemporary events; that it nowhere attempts to tie the hands of posterity by going into such details as the length of the working day desired but satisfies itself with a demand for the acquisition by the workers 61 the right to organise themselves into Trade Unions with the legal right to use the strike weapon as a means of enforcing their demands. It does not lay down a minimum wage, because such things will be settled when the workers are such in the fullest

meaning of the word and when they can send their own representatives to parliament. That is why we of the N.E.U.M. HAVE NOT in the past given, nor are likely in the future to give, our support to campaigns whose aim it is to rally the masses of the workers on the basis of specific wage demands. We consider this opportunistic. Workers' Organisations are free to make whatever short-term demands they may choose, but a national political organisation cannot demand a minimum wage in a currency of whose value they have had no share in deciding. Any amelioration of the economic plight of the people is welcome but the N.E.U.M. can be satisfied with nothing less than the Ten-Point Programme, the whole of it.

Nothing would be further from the truth than to construe this as meaning that organisations affiliated to N.E.U.M. are not to engage in battles for specific objectives or try to repel specific attacks. Far from it. This has never been our policy or practice. What is said is that every campaign has to be seen as fitting into the entire war. After all we were first in the field against the Rehabilitation Scheme, and by the rulers own admission it has not been such a success. We were first again against the Bantu Authorities system.

Who does not know that our teachers, basing their opposition on the Ten-Point Programme, were the first to come out against, not just bantuisd schooling, but against the very principle of differentiation in education. In the course of these struggles people learned to appreciate the basic tenets of the N.E.U.M.

Had the people not learned to reject both emotionally and for ideological reasons all laws in whose making they had had no share the failure of the Bantu Authorities Act would not have been so spectacular. We dare make this assertion despite the apparent position of strength of the government stooges serving on the Bantu Authorities Councils. If we take a second glance at the façade we find that the isolation of these puppets is almost complete. Even the few who appear to support them are mere time servers who are impressed only by the might of the State. This rickety structure is bolstered up with bayonets and saracens, and the ruler has had to have recourse even to such cheap trickery as the cooking up of "tribal criminal law" (which does not vary one whit from tribe to tribe) in order to protect these creatures from the overt contempt of the people. This situation has arisen because the people reject not just a particular chief, not just the Bantu Authorities system but the very moral standards of the 'herrenvolk' who are architects of these laws. Basically this is the philosophy behind the Policy of Non-Collaboration. This, the setting up by the oppressed, of their own morality will contribute in no small measure to the collapse of the entire herrenvolk edifice.

We of the N.E.U.M. HAVE FAITH IN THE ability of the people to learn. It is for that reason that we have always shunned cheap popularity and political stunts. It is not necessary to create ersatz situations so as to condition the people's responses. Our faith has not gone unrewarded. Even in a country like South Africa where the dice is heavily loaded against the Non-European, where to be born on the "wrong side of the colour line means insults and contumely, the concept of equality which we deliberately set out to inculcate in the people and which is inherent in the Ten-Point Programme, has over the years taken ever firmer root in the political thinking of the people that it has now become impossible for anyone to

organise any appreciable number of people to support any segregatory institution. That there are to-day hardly any people who could be said to be unconscious collaborators is further evidence of what we have said. This is a far cry from the South Africa of even twenty years ago when to be a member of the N.R.C. or a Bhunga Councillor carried with it a position of social status, when budding political leaders felt they had to serve their apprenticeship at Joint-Council meetings and conference of the Institute of Race Relations. These are achievements.

But the political education of the people is far from complete. To this day they have not rid themselves of the idea of messiahs. To this day they are ready to give their allegiance to persons who create the myth that they can bring freedom to the masses and that all the latter need do is to applause as the would be St. George digs holes into the herrenvolk dragon. Up to this very day the masses of the people are still ready to accept as their own leaders persons who owe their position to the publicity given them by the enemy Press. This matter of making and unseating leaders in the columns of newspapers has reached such lengths that one paper purporting to support the liberatory movement could, only a few months ago, declare "So and so is now the recognised leader of the African people." Thus enthroned, the new "leader" began to pontificate about this and the other phase that the struggle had now reached and promptly called upon his brothers in the Bantu Authorities to resign forthwith. The tragedy of it is that not only he himself took himself seriously but quite a few other people as well.

The N.E.U.M., approach to the matter of leadership is much more serious than that of any other organisation that we know of. In the first place principles and policies come before persons. Loyalty and allegiance is not to persons but to the organisation. There can thus be no question of following leaders but recognition of adherence to policy. This immediately rules out Messiahs. Yet another thing. It is accepted in our organisation that he whose actions beneficial 'to the enemy cannot be acting in the best interests of the people, that in fact he ,does harm to the struggles the people.

A person's claim for inclusion in the leadership therefore is judged by the simple criterion, among others, of whether he is able to make a sharp distinction between herrenvolk ideas and ours, between their politics and ours. These are not mere platitudes. If that were so, we would not have witnessed the sorry sight of people's organisations being repeatedly embroiled in the internal struggles of the herrenvolk, to the extent, of their appearing to be used, we would have been saved the unwholesome spectacle of leaders of peoples' organisations publicly declaring their support for the Liberal or the Progressive Party. We make no distinction between these and any other party. We reject them not because they are white parties but because they are herrenvolk parties. To us whoever denies anybody else the right to participate fully and immediately in the running of the country on grounds of colour or race is imbued with a master-race mentality no matter with what sophistries he may attempt to conceal this ug1y fact.

We assert that whoever contributes however humbly to the creation of the country's wealth has an unquestioned right to participate in its government. We

raise again the old Slogan "No Taxation without Representation:" We must not be deceived by the slogan, "Merit and not race" for immediately after this has been said there is then talk of a civilisation test. a mere trick to keep the majority of the people voteless and therefore voiceless. Lest this last statement be construed as an admission that, the majority of Non-Europeans are not fit by civilised standards to participate in government, let us ask ourselves what is the essential difference between this vaunted Western Civilisation and earlier ones. It is this that this is an Industrial Civilisation, a Capitalist Civilisation. To say that a person cannot appreciate the value of Western Civilisation is to imply that he cannot appreciate the benefits conferred on the world by Science. What they are in fact saying is that the majority of the inhabitants of this country cannot enjoy the fruits of science and the wealth that is produced by the industrial machines operated by them. It means just that and nothing more. In their calculations this would coincide with colour. That is why the Progressives so strenuously deny that their policy is intended to lead to one man one vote.

It should be remembered that the people who create these slogans are the spokesmen of the industrialists whose aim is to reduce human beings to the level of the machines that produce the great wealth that distinguishes Western Civilisation from earlier ones, That is why they want to create first, second and third rate citizens. They realise better than the Broederbonders that the rising Non-European middle class must demand political rights with their economic position. By seeming to discard race as a basis of oppression they are in fact trying to decapitate the Liberation Movement by winning over to their side the small and weak Non-European middle class leadership and give them a stake in the exploitation of the masses. Be it remembered that as far as the capitalists are concerned the masses are regarded in the same light as the machines in their factories – mere means of production. The most effective way to maintain that position is to keep the masses voteless.

We must not underrate the, power of, this group to split up the liberation Movement.. Of necessity the liberatory struggle must be led by the middle class and the approach of the Progressive Party is not without attraction to them. In fact a Study of the different political stunts in the past will reveal that the middle class leadership has in all its fights against the Nationalists enjoyed the plaudits of the industrial class and in some known cases their covert support. It is not at all surprising that they have called for anti-Nationalist fronts. The choice of their prospective allies in these would-be fronts are revealing. That their stunts in more recent years have been made to synchronise with the so-called general elections is not without significance. Making these strictures is a painful necessity.

There is no doubt but that the industrialists will ultimately break the back of the Broederbond, and that of the United Party too, if it persists in its contemptuous attitude towards the Non-European middle class leadership for, as they see it, this will leave these gentlemen with no alternative but to use the masses who in the process will gain political experience and become conscious of their power. We must be on our guard to repel the advances of the industrial class, for when they have broken the backs of these two herrenvolk groups then will begin the full-scale

attack on the integrity of the Non-European middle class leadership. The weapon of the industrial class is liberalism and the greatest danger to the Liberation Movement will come from that quarter.

When the assault begins in earnest we may expect casualties even among our own ranks. In fact we can count a few already. We must set about hardening ourselves against such an eventuality so that sentiment and misguided loyalty and magnanimity do not enter in the least in our dealings with those who show the slightest symptoms of being infected with these liberalistic ideas. The Ten-Point-Programme does not envisage a society in which any one section will prey upon another and if we find any amongst us who cast longing eyes towards the ranks of the natural class enemies of the people, we must not hesitate to act against them summarily and ruthlessly.

Let me declare now that no discussion of the Ten-Point –Programme with a view to finding new interpretations to it will be tolerated. The situation that gave rise to it remains unaltered. The different sections have not abandoned their positions. The Ten-Point-Programme is not a bargaining instrument and there cannot even be talk of alliances of convenience. The place of those who want the type of society that we are working for is nowhere else but right here in the N.E.U.M. We therefore reject in advance any invitations to any conventions of any kind and any discussion of any such is barred.

We have chosen our path and we are not going to deviate by a hair's breadth from it. We are not a Publicity Association and do not seek to hit the headlines of newspapers. We have our goal and must subordinate our means to that end. We shall not exploit situations merely for their publicity value. If it does bring this country any nearer towards the goal we have set ourselves, then we must shun it. I repeat – we shall not mix or change banners.

It has been my endeavour to avoid a discussion of anything that may more appropriately form the subject matter of the paper on the National Situation. Nevertheless I feel constrained to say just one word on the emergence of terrorism as a method of struggle. Apart from any other objections that may be raised against this there is this one that acts of terrorism are anonymous and do not involve the mass of the people. We believe, and correctly too, that there is no substitute for the political education and organisation of the masses. Let it be clear that here we are not discussing the puerile acts of blowing up of Post Offices and electrical installations. We refer to the individual killings of quislings and burning down of their dwellings and the general destruction of their property.

To those who believe in Messiahs who will bring liberation to the people single-handed this sort of thing might have an appeal. We believe in the people themselves engaging in a principled and programmatic struggle. Only the people themselves can win liberation for themselves. The killing of any quisling, however notorious, does not bring us any nearer liberation. It is in fact a sabotaging of the struggle. It sows illusions and retards the struggle by making the people pause while these play-boys occupy the stage. For the killing of one quisling many valuable lives are lost, much time and money are wasted whilst the hero's defence

ids being conducted and so the struggle is led along other than political channels. The objection to terrorism is not for tactical reasons but one of principle. No person in any of our organisations should be involved in such futile acts or give support to such in word or deed.

Earlier in this address it was said that the rulers are going to deny us the right to meet. I wish to discuss some of the responsibilities that this will impose on us and then close my address. In some areas this state of affairs has obtained for a long time. This has been a contributory factor to opportunists stepping into the leadership and directing people's opposition to oppression along channels that have benefited only the rulers. In this situation we shall quite often be called upon on our individual initiative and without obtaining the advice of others.

When acting as individuals or in small groups we must test each step we take against our Programme. This may bring us up against the people who because they perhaps do not see the struggle as a whole may want to call for a show-down. At such times it will be good if we remember the Ten-Point-Programme cannot be twisted to suit people's desires. It will be exactly at such times that the people will have to be made to understand our principles because it will be this that will save them from opportunists. In the absence of public meetings we shall have to learn to work through individuals. We shall have to learn to develop a nose for those people who have latent powers of leadership and ability to handle ideas and have constant discussions with them. Fortunately we have our own Press. Through it we should be able to reach a very wide audience. We should each consider it our duty to increase the circulation of the paper Not only that but we must make it possible for it to appear more often.

We are entering a particularly difficult time and we have not only to defend the principles of the organisation but also protect its very existence. This will mean that we do nothing that will unduly expose it to attack. Though precautions have to be taken to ensure the safety of the organisation care must be taken that the people know the banner under which they conduct the struggle. In one area where our people took the initiative to form Village Committees they have for the sake of unity not only included in these committees people who belong to an organisation hostile to us but have, for the sake of unity, selected not to claim the leadership of the local struggles for their own organisation. For the same reason though opposition is conducted on our own lines, and though the communities have been brought to have a clear idea of the policy of Non-Collaboration and use the boycott weapon most effectively a blanket of anonymity is thrown over the source of those ideas. Normally it would be highly improper for criticism of this nature to be contained in a presidential address. But times are not normal and bearing in mind the considerations of security might unduly influence us to camouflage our banner it was considered advisable to make mention of this matter. The curtain is going up for the final scene of the play, groups are taking their positions for the denouement and our own banner must be seen flying proudly.

You have been warned of the infiltration of the ideas of the herrenvolk into the politics of the oppressed. We have in our literature a by no means poor arsenal of

the right kind of ideas. Let us draw liberally from this. It is these ideas that will give us courage to bear the bannings and banishment, the imprisonment and privations that a desperate and maddened herrenvolk, conscious of its impending doom will inflict on us. I would ask you not to regard yourselves as pioneers but as heirs of a long tradition of all that is best. We walk in the footsteps of those who regarded freedom as dearer than life itself. If our lives have to be lost in the struggle to liberate millions of Non-Europeans throughout Southern Africa from the scourge of want and degradation, from ignorance and superstition, from humiliation and political oppression, then let us gladly die in the knowledge that our blood shall not have been spilled in vain but shall enrich the soil from which will spring the tree of freedom –

**For how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his father
And the temple of his gods.**

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