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RACIALISM PREACHED AND RACIALISM CONDONED

INTRODUCTION

Lakela Kaunda, a journalist, wrote in the "Echo" of 9 August 1990:

"Natal President of the United Democratic Front, Archie Gumede, is in trouble again . . ."

This statement referred to the blatantly racialistic attack made by Mr Gumede against South Africans of Indian descent who are commonly called the Indian people. The attack was made in a television programme presented by the SABC TV. The whole programme was a disgusting piece of racialism which grotesquely distorted the values and aspirations of the Indian people.

OWN AFFAIRS APPROACH

In accordance with a practice which has developed over the years, matters affecting the Indian people are dealt with by Indian members of the UDF. A sort of "own affairs" approach. Expectedly, therefore, only Indian members of the UDF responded to Archie Gumede's racialism. The rest of the membership apparently did not regard the racialism as any of their business. One wonders whatever happened to the unifying slogan of "an injury to one is an injury to all"? It appears that the use of the slogan is reserved for chanting at rallies and in meetings and *not* for application in the real world.

RACISM — A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

The whole world regards racism as a crime against humanity. It was in the name of "race superiority" that millions were killed. The killing was justified on the grounds that the victims belonged to a sub-human group. During and after World War II the words "Aryan" and Herrenvolk became amongst the most hated words in the world because they were soaked in the blood of six million Jews who were murdered mercilessly by the Nazi juggernaut.

Racialism is a product of racism and we are no strangers to it. This sick and cruel prejudice has permeated the whole country and has bedevilled the population living in it. We have lived with racialism since birth and have undergone indescribable suffering because of it. Hence, while the basis of our oppression is economic exploitation, the most powerful rallying force is the struggle against racialism in its myriad manifestations. The UDF itself was formed to fight against the Tri-cameral system which is *par excellence* racism in action.

The entire liberatory movement has publicly committed itself to seek and destroy racialism in any shape or form. The last thing one would expect is for a member of the liberatory movement, let alone a President of its largest segment, to mouth racialism. And yet that is precisely what happened. Mr Archie Gumede, one of the Presidents of the UDF did the unthinkable. His unjustified attack on the Indian people came as a severe shock. The people ask: *Is this the man who is part of the ANC's negotiating team?*

RESPONSES TO GUMEDE'S RACIALISM

More shocking than racialism has been the response of Mr Gumede to criticism and of persons who regard themselves as champions of non-racialism.

Mr GUMEDE'S RESPONSE

According to Mr Gumede:

"If I said anything offensive about the Indian people, it is contrary to my personal and political views . . . It was unintended and I retract it unconditionally and apologise to all who might have been offended."

(Tribune Herald: 5 August 1990)

OUR COMMENT

- a) **WHY** the conditional apology: "If I said anything offensive . . ."? There can be no IF about it. The remarks *were* clearly offensive.
- b) If his anti-Indian remarks were contrary to his personal and political views, Mr Gumede has yet to explain *why* did he make them in the first place? How can a seasoned politician like Mr Gumede make blatantly racialistic statements and *not intend them?*

2. Dr FAROUK MEER'S RESPONSE

Dr Meer is from the Natal Indian Congress. He considered Mr Gumede's anti-Indian remarks as "unfortunate", but gives him credit for apologising.

3. Mr STRINI MOODLEY'S RESPONSE

Mr Moodley is from Azapo. He also regards Mr Gumede's remarks to be "unfortunate", but goes on to state that the people should be grateful because Mr Gumede had retracted his remarks.

4. Mr BENNY ALEXANDER'S RESPONSE

Mr Alexander is from the Pan Africanist Congress. He too regards the racist remarks of Mr Gumede as "unfortunate". He believes that Mr Gumede should be forgiven as he still had a contribution to make to the struggle.

OUR COMMENTS TO THE ABOVE RESPONSES

- a) The choice of the word “unfortunate” to describe racialism is clearly incorrect. It is *unfortunate* if the battery of one’s car is run down; it is *unfortunate* if you miss your bus to work. To spout racialism is just not unfortunate. It is downright *criminal*.
- b) We do not recall the liberatory movement or any section of it ever describing the racialism of the ruling class as “unfortunate”. As for being grateful for his “retraction” or apology for his remarks, we must stress that the retraction has no meaning. Racialism from a man like Archie Gumede is not a thing of impulse. He must have believed his remarks to be true. How then does one retract racist remarks?

It is our view that a person who has engaged in racialism has to *purge* himself of this disease. And that is done with thorns and fire. The first step is for the offender to resign from all public positions. If he is reluctant to do so, he must be assisted by having him removed from all public positions. That must be followed by an intensive study of the origins, development and horrendous consequences of racism. When that has achieved the desired result, then there has to be a clear and unconditional public self-criticism. Having done that the offender then has to go into the field to educate the people of the dangers of racialism; the absolute need for the unity of the oppressed and the sharp vigilance required against the agents of the ruling class who sow racial discord among the oppressed.

It is only after doing all this that we can hazard the statement: “He has retracted” or “He has apologised.”

CONCLUSION

Demanding for anything less than the measures suggested above would amount to covering up and a condonation of racialism. He who condones, covers up or plays down racialism is himself guilty of racialism. In a new and truly democratic South Africa (not the nuwe Suid-Afrika of the Nat-ANC alliance) racism and racialism will be made a crime which will invite severe punishment on the offender who knows the difference between right and wrong.

ABUSIVE RESEARCH

Saths Cooper (an ex-radical of the '70s) and Fatima Meer (a liberal sociologist who recently called upon liberatory organisations to work with homeland leaders and other collaborators) conducted a survey under the auspices of the Institute of Black Research. The IBR is funded by the Ford Foundation (whose directors are, amongst others, Robert McNamara and Dean Rusk) and also receives moneys from other imperialist sources.

Besides assisting imperialism and the local ruling class in serving their interest, the survey can be castigated at a fundamental level as being a dangerous tool of research. We are not saying that surveys must not be conducted. What we are saying is that one must inform the oppressed of the shortcomings of such a method of research and of the ways it can be used to sell out the people. Surveys can be superficial reflections of the people's sentiment. Seldom can researchers take the time to obtain in-depth information about personal opinions and attitudes. Surveys, particularly political surveys, are unstable reflection of population characteristics, especially due to fluctuations of opinions of the people.

The researcher can use "loaded" questions in a survey. By doing this, he/she can manipulate the subject's responses and unwittingly cause the subject to answer the question to suit his/her interest. What sample did the researcher use? Was this representative of the oppressed? How many people refused to answer the question? This we do not know!

According to an article in the *Weekly Mail* (September 14-20, 1990), 3 275 South Africans out of a population of some 32-million were interviewed in respect of a survey on "negotiation and change". Less than 1% of the population were interviewed. In other words, the opinions of 99% of the population were not canvassed.

The "survey" came to the earth-shattering conclusion that the people "wants stability, peace and prosperity". Do we need a survey to inform us of this obvious desire of the oppressed?

One of the findings of the survey is that the "average South African" supports negotiation. How does one become an "average South African"? What yardstick is used to measure the "average South African"? Who is the average South African? Is it the workers, the rural poor, the landless peasants, the students? Or is the average South African your *petit bourgeoisie*? We do not know! The survey does not tell us who our average South African is.

The IBR says that “the survey is skewed in favour of the urban groups with higher income and higher education”.

This confession means that the wishes, the aspirations of the unemployed, the illiterate, the landless peasants and rural poor — the exploited and the oppressed masses — “the wretched of the earth” — were not considered to be important.

The dictionary defines “skew” as meaning slanting sideways, distorted, crooked, lopsided. In mathematics skewed means “lying in three dimensions”.

According to the IBR, the respondents to the survey were given “mainly open-ended questions”. This means that the 3 375 people questioned were asked sweeping, wide, general, unqualified, arguable, debatable, up-in-the-air questions which were deliberately designed to produce favourable answers.

The question we pose is this: *Why did “yesterday’s rebel” knowing that the questions were “open-ended” and that the questions were “skewed” publish its findings?* Those who conducted the survey are aware that through the passage of time the conclusion of this distorted, prejudiced and biased IBR survey will be used by the imperialist and their agents without any qualifications. The imperialist paymasters crack their whips. Their agents paid for and trained at their universities must obediently jump to conclusions to suit their masters.

APDUSA is on record as having said that imperialism first entices and then ensnares sections of the oppressed to do their bidding and their dirty work. Yesterday’s rebels who do not engage in principled programmatic struggle become the tool and servile agents of imperialism.

The conclusions of the survey give the impression that they are the absolute truth reflecting the people’s opinions when this is patently not so. Surveys are dangerous. Beware of abusive research.



ZAMBIA — BULLETS FOR BREAD

INTRODUCTION

It is not difficult to place under a spotlight and expose the obvious traitors to a people. Who can seriously and sanely slip in a good word for the mass child-killer Bokassa, or for Tshombe, who competed for notoriety with Quisling, or for Mobuto, the brutal dictator of Zaire, who when he is not busy murdering opponents, is busy siphoning his country's currency to his private accounts with the Swiss Bankers.

As we said these traitors are obvious.

Not so obvious are those traitors who have a history of struggle against the oppressors and in whom the people repose their trust to carry out revolutionary tasks in their interests. What the people fail to realise is that the leader they knew in the course of the struggle for liberation has undergone a transformation. Somewhere along the line he stopped serving his people. He now serves a small layer of privileged persons and works in the interests of imperialism.

One such person is Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia.

KENNETH KAUNDA — HUMANIST OR OPPRESSOR

Kenneth Kaunda does not like being called an agent of imperialism or oppressor. Rather, he likes people to think of him as a philosopher, an elder and benign statesman who sacrificed his country at the alter of Zimbabwean and South African struggle. He would also be pleased if you were to call him the leading peacebroker in Southern Africa. Nothing will endear a person more to him than for that person to ask him to expound on "his" philosophy of humanism.

But there is another side to the man which people don't know about and those who do, don't like talking about it. This reluctance to be frank and honest with the people about important things has always exacted a heavy price from the oppressed.

Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe, was one of the first to publicly expose Kenneth Kaunda. We quote an excerpt from an interview between Robert Mugabe and Robin White of the BBC which took place during January 1976:

"Mugabe: Well, I think President Kaunda has been the principal factor in slowing down our revolution. He has arrested our men, locked them up, and within his prisons and restriction areas there have been cases of poisoning, and there's also been murders.

White: By who?

Mugabe: By his men. By Kaunda's army.

White: You have proof of that, do you?

Mugabe: Yes, thirteen of our people were shot dead, cold-bloodedly. And one cannot regard this as an act conforming to the principle of humanism."

Kaunda never did treat all liberation movements which sought a base in Zambia with an even hand. He had his favourites in the African National Congress of South Africa and now the defunct or absorbed Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). The others were made to feel thoroughly unwanted. Action was taken against them on the slightest pretext. When Herbert Chitepo, leader of ZANU was assassinated, all the top leadership of ZANU within reach were arrested, detained and tortured. Not even Josiah Tongogara was spared the brutality. The purpose of the Nazi-like conduct was to extract confessions from ZANU detainees to the effect that they were responsible for the assassination of Herbert Chipeto. Kaunda did not stop at that. He set up a commission of inquiry with an express instruction that Zambia ***had to be found blameless*** for the death of Herbert Chipeto.

It should therefore come as no surprise when Kaunda ordered his troops to open fire on unarmed civilian protesters against a 120% increase in the price of maize. Thirty were shot dead, 200 wounded and over 500 detained. This was not the first time either. In 1986 Kaunda tried to increase the price of maize. Then too, the people resisted. Then too he had them shot. Thirteen were killed.

TRUE HUMANISM

The true humanism of a government is to be judged by the manner in which it relates to and treats the overwhelming majority of the people who create society's wealth. Food is a basic necessity. No government claiming to represent the interests of the people can ever make it difficult for the people to obtain staple food. Food, clothing, housing, medical care, peace and security are the basic needs for the well being of any society. And that is what a government claiming to be a humanist one will have high on the list of its priorities. When therefore a government attacks one of the basic needs of a people by increasing the price of a staple commodity to more than twice its immediately prior price, then there is nothing humanist about that government.

A RUINED ECONOMY

Zambia, a richly endowed country and once a land of promise, today, has her economy in ruins. Graft and corruption is rampant in every circle, beginning with the government and the civil service. There are many rackets originating in South Africa or Zimbabwe but have Zambia as their destination. Crime and lawlessness is endemic. Between the imperialists, the local capitalists, the civil service and the racketeers, Zambia has been milked dry. Instead of making the exploiters and racketeers pay for this terrible crime, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have instructed Kaunda to make the people pay! And Kaunda, the butler of imperialism, dutifully obliges. When the people resist, Kaunda kills them.

CONCLUSION

We, together with all the freedom loving people of the world, condemn the Zambian Government for the massacre of people who did no more than protest against the unconscionable increase in the price of a staple food. We take this stand because a vile crime has been committed against the poor of Zambia. We regard the poor of Zambia as the allies of the oppressed of this country and of the rest of the Third World in the global fight against imperialism and exploitation.

We, of the New Unity Movement, are Internationalists. We identify ourselves with the struggles and aspirations of oppressed and exploited people wherever they may be. Their struggle is our struggle; their victory is our victory and their defeats are our defeats. When they get killed, we "are diminished" and their mourning becomes our grief.

TWO SIDES OF A LEAF

The Daily News of 19 October 1990 carried two articles that throw into stark relief the disparate conditions of existence between the rich and the the poor.

The first article is headlined:

"Hospital's cash jab: King Edward VIII to get half of R50-m."

The health services as a whole in Natal are to receive R50 million rand of which King Edward VIII Hospital will receive R24 million. Of this R15 million will be used to pay off existing debts.

The government does not grant King Edward VIII the annual minimum of R200 million required to maintain an academic hospital. Last year it was granted only R600 000 for equipment while Groote Schuur was granted R34,7 million. And King Edward is a referral centre for a population of more than 8 million!

Overleaf is an article titled:

"Inflation Psychology must go."

It deals with the Anglo American Corporation's Quarterly (1-7-90-30-9-90) profits on 5 of its gold mines and its 1 gold recovery plant. The type of figures reported were a R139,2 million profit at Freegold, the world's largest gold mining complex; R151,7 million profit at Vaal Reefs and R83,4 million at Western Deep Levels.

Workers were killed recently in a rockfall at Western Deep Levels mine. How much was spent to ensure their safety and what compensation can their family expect?

The combined profits reported in *The Daily News* for just 3 months amounts to R429,6 million. In other words from 5 mines and 1 extraction plant in July, August and September of this year Anglo American made more than R400 million profit. This perspective reveals how paltry, in reality, is the R50 million set aside by the government to 'assist' a collapsing health service which serves one quarter of South Africa's population.

Anglo American and its partners in big business are busy drawing up blueprints for a 'post-apartheid economy'. Anglo and De Klerk's government (with or without its 'integrity') need to be stripped of their finery and exposed for the robbers they are.



HEADLINES THAT LIE

Headlines in newspapers have long been used by unscrupulous journalists or editors to mislead the unwary reader. Most readers assume that a headline correctly reflects the contents of the article. How, upon reading the article the reader will learn to his shock that the contents say one thing while the headline indicate something different. A recent example will illustrate the point we are making. *The Weekly Mail* of 25 June 1990 contained an article the headline of which read:

"IRAN BLAMES AMERICA FOR THE QUAKE"

The average reader who is fed with some of the extreme positions held by Iran, upon glancing at the headline, would say: "It's those crazy Iranians again. How can they possibly blame America for the earthquake which, after all is a natural phenomenon." The reader will pass on and in days to come will tell others about those "crazy Iranians". But if the reader pauses and reads the article in full, he will learn that the Iranians blame the Americans *not* for the quake but: "... **partly for the death of tens of thousands of people**" in the earthquake. The accusations against America is that it plundered the wealth of Iran. Part of that wealth, say the Iranians, could have been used to construct anti-seismic buildings. Perhaps *The Weekly Mail* would care to explain the misleading headline.

The Iranian newspaper *Jomhuri Islam* claims that people under the rubble chant "death to America" and pray to God to cut off the hands of America (punishment for thieves).

We cannot vouch for the accuracy of the last bit, but we certainly admire the uncompromising anti-imperialist sentiment expressed.



