

# A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS: RESPONSE TO SELEOANE

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For the first time, we have (through the Rustenburg conference and declaration) condemned the system of Apartheid together with those who supported it in the past. We have confessed the sins of our past together to our Lord Jesus Christ and to one another. [emphasis mine] (Frank Chikane)

The above statement somewhat illustrates, at least how from certain quarters of the ecumenical fraternity, February 1990 has bewitched South Africans variously but fundamentally. The question is, in my opinion, the real significance of February 1990 to the black struggle against dispossession and oppression. Is it or is it not a watershed? Who spoke in February 1990? Why has Nelson Mandela been released? How are we to interpret the "mass political conversions and baptisms" that are currently taking place? And finally, how are we going to move forward? If our socio-political analysis must make us weary of rush conclusions it must at least lead us to meaningful attempts to answer these and many other questions. If it was possible to be thoroughly euphoric and contented about events since February 1990, at least the phenomenon of violence has closed that possibility. There are of course other causes for worry.

Instead many of us have and must become both vigilant and sceptical of the significance of February 1990 for the Black people of South Africa. Violence is of course, in and of itself, not new. Apartheid is violence. Yet since August 1990 a new kind of violence has erupted. The kind which cannot be explained either in terms of crime or liberation struggle. Its sheer scale and volume sets it apart from any other violent phases ever experienced in

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South Africa. Yet a significant fact is that it is confined exclusively to the Black community. For the South African white community, it is by and large a matter for academic interest and journalistic research. The numerous media and government "explanations" of the violence are most unhelpful. The violence is not ethnic. There is absolutely no ethnic war among the black people of South Africa. Nor is there evidence of that potential. The Vendas, Tsongas, Zulus, Xhosas, etc. are neither mobilising for war nor engaged in wars. The violence is not Black party-political rivalry. Most of the dying are members of neither the African National Congress nor the Inkatha Freedom Party. In fact most of the dying are what you could call "apolitical" persons. It is important that the prophetic ecumenical formations such as the South African Council of Churches be very vigilant in analysing what exactly is happening in our country.

## **APPROACHES TO ANALYSES**

Socio-political analysis is an effort to obtain a more complete picture of a given human situation in its totality. Seleoane has made an excellent attempt to do this by surveying both the historical and the contemporary standpoints of some major political formations in South Africa regarding the goal and process of liberation as well as their perceptions of the present negotiation project. Current political negotiations have become not only a process but a project whose sustenance has become important for the participants and interested observers alike albeit for various (sometimes even contradictory) objectives. One of the most fruitful ways of analysing the South African socio-political situation today is the one that Seleoane adopts, namely, that of a historical analysis of some major political formations and analysis of present positions (vis-a-vis the Negotiations Project). This approach basically attempts to answer two questions: Where is the liberation struggle coming from ? and where is it now? Once these two questions have been attempted the deductions are made and alternative (new) directions are suggested. At one level, this approach is "typical" of Black politico-academic reflection on the struggle for liberation. It is important to realise that in terms of analyses, this is only one of many possible approaches. One could reflect upon the socio-political situation primarily in terms of arts, economics,



white politics, church struggles etc. But Seleoane's approach is, while in and of itself not new, by no means a "traditional" Black (political) style of reflecting on the struggle. Seleoane's style suggests a dynamic yet rigorous appreciation of the burden of history on black struggles against colonial, racist and economic oppression in the hands of Whites in South Africa. As Black people we cannot begin to influence what is happening or what will happen tomorrow unless we have this keen sense of history. Yet historical appreciation and appropriation, I want to suggest, must be comprehensive and rigorous. Seleoane's paper makes a good start in this direction. However, even within the parameters of one given approach to analysis, there are differing degrees of space allocation, emphasis and biases.

Analyses of the Black South African struggle against Apartheid are confronted by the fact that this struggle has been long, enormous and multi-faceted. In these days of FW De Klerk's February 1992 euphoria (and all that has come with it) this simple fact has not been properly appreciated. No single struggle-tradition or ideology can either possess or exhaust it. As Seleoane points out, it goes far beyond 1912 - and we may add, far beyond the confines of "leading" (black) political formations. It belongs to rural women as they plough their fields having been robbed of the company of their husbands by the migratory labour system. Poets, playwrights, authors, students and many others have and continue to wage the struggle against Apartheid. We may, for "economic" and pedagogical purposes, focus on isolated issues, different players, policies, structures, as well as the histories, implicit in the issues. We must, however, not be found guilty of jettisoning the weight and variety of the praxis of liberation among Black people.

In an analysis of our social reality, we explore a number of elements. Among them are: (1) the historical dimensions of the situation; (2) its structural elements; (3) the various divisions of society; and (4) the multiple levels of the issues involved. (HOLLAND, HENRIOT, 1980 p.21)



No analysis is value-free. All analyses are predicated by prior commitments, interests, and biases. Commitment to issues such as, "power-sharing", majority rule, "federalism", "separate nations" etc. are quite influential in one's social analysis. This explains why Dr. Treurnicht sees South Africa as "multi-national" country with a place for the Boer nation, while the ANC sees South Africa as a unitary state. Despite appearances, socio-political analysis is not an esoteric activity exclusive to social and political scientists. All people, in one way or another, constantly engage in it. When people in the township say: "Re lwantsha ke maboro" (The Boers are making us fight amongst ourselves) they are offering a conclusion of their analysis of their situation as they see it. Finally, in and of itself, analysis does not provide a cure. This caution is important lest we think by offering a particular analysis of the situation we have pointed out the answer. Even if our analysis was the only analysis possible, in and of itself, it would not provide a cure but only a diagnosis. By analysis we point to broad parameters within which policies and strategies towards a solution may be worked out. In other words, diagnosis and not prescription is the aim of social analysis.

My own point of insertion and bias in the analysis of the present stage of the struggle against Apartheid is the present Black experience. We shall elaborate further on that below. I believe that we need a forever fresh sense of the history of the struggle and a pertinent point of "insertion" in our analysis of the present situation. History is the battleground of the struggle, that is why different histories (of the struggle) exist. Different points of insertion are possible. FW De Klerk inserts his "struggle" against Apartheid from the point of view of White experience. Other players such as big business have their biases and points of insertion too.

## **HISTORY**

The struggle against "Apartheid" has characterized Black relations with white people ever since white settlers resolved to make South Africa home. The concept Apartheid is therefore a characterization of white-black relations whose roots and extent cannot be confined to 1948. What happened in 1948 (and continues to happen in



more subtle ways) was the naming, refinement and baptism of a centuries-old evil battling for legitimation and respectable expression. Apartheid, and the struggle against it, did not begin in at the turn of the century the formation of White South Africa's Union and the establishment of the (African National Congress) ANC. The so-called "Kaffir Wars" between the Xhosa and the settlers, the Khoi-Khoi and the settlers, the San and the settlers are all part of this struggle. Descriptions of the Xhosa and the Khoi-Khoi as "bands of thieves", "lazy heathens", etc. are indicative of a struggle that had commenced. Deliberate programmes of genocide, such as the introduction of European diseases such as Smallpox and massacres are all part of the early history of white settlement. That is why the San and the Khoi-Khoi have almost disappeared from the face of the land. The early disproportionate trading between the Khoi-Khoi and the Dutch has today been perfected by De Beers and Anglo American. Initial native resistance against conversion to Christianity must also be viewed against the background of this struggle.

Even the Great Trek must be understood as an off-shoot of this struggle. Native people were making their discontent felt in various ways, and some Dutch under the leadership of Retief resolved to go into the interior away from the "plundering bands of vagrants" whom they felt were being protected by some people "under the cloak of religion". The somewhat belated introduction of Christianity to the indigenous peoples, the role of mission schools, the relationship between missionaries and the colonial authorities, as well as the role of missionaries in the "struggle" seem to testify to Christianity's ambivalent influence of South African society.

All the wars of resistance in the interior, regardless of the results, are evidence, facets and stages of the same struggle. The formation of the ANC, the Imvo Zabantsundu Newspaper, the beginning and growth of Ithiopianism and secessions from the white church structures were forms and stages of the same struggle. The Defiance campaigns of the fifties, the formation of the PAC, Poqo, and Umkhonto Wesizwe, the making of South Africa a Republic (1961) despite Sharpville and resistance, the freedom charter, the Robert Sobukwes, Nelson Mandelas, Oliver



Tambos, the Sisulus, the Hector Petersens, Tsietsi Mashininis, Bishop Tutus, Allan Boesaks, and the Steve Bikos are symbols of the same struggle and counter-struggles.

## MEMORY

We live during a period when everybody makes mileage of being against Apartheid i.e. struggling against Apartheid. There is therefore, today, a sense in which the phrase "struggle against Apartheid" is dangerous. All the nineteen parties (parties?) at CODESA have each a version of their own "struggle" against "Apartheid". To call for a comprehensive memory should not mean a blanket blessing of each and every claim to the "struggle". The struggle against Apartheid has always been a struggle against dispossession - land dispossession, exploitation and discriminatory legislation that has left indigenous people without dignity, work, land and without a vote.

From the point of view of the Black people, our memory of the struggle must be thorough and comprehensive - otherwise all claims to the "struggle" will be taken at face value. Unless our hindsight is thorough, our foresight will be clouded. There is, for example, a notion floating around that interprets the present political state of affairs solely in terms of February 1990. Even the liberation movements have given tacit acknowledgement to this premise. Massive reformations of "images" in some of our liberation movements, the suspension of armed struggles, the intriguing chorus against Winnie Mandela by a strange set of bed-fellows, etc. gives one the impression that they too think there is a big difference between the 2nd of February and 3rd of February 1992. One sometimes get the impressions that CODESA is built mainly on this premise. To put it simplistically, the real struggle against Apartheid is supposed to have started in February 1990. From February 1990 onwards, every "good" thing in South Africa can be attributed to FW De Klerk, and every "bad" thing to the fact that Nelson Mandela is out of prison. (One "scientific" research poll indicated that black witch-burning had increased since Mandela came out of prison!). For a while the Government could answer criticisms by checking the date of the issues in question. If the issues belonged to happenings prior to February 1990 (e.g.



the Inkathagate scandal) - the standard response was, "that happened during a different era"; if the issues could be dated after February 1990, the standard government response has been to refer it to a commission for investigation. Either way the criticisms were essentially dismissed and removed from the government's lap. Another interesting aspect of this February 1990 premise, is how "Black and White have become one" in spite of the recent exclusively white referendum, the continuing violent assault exclusive to the Black community and the recent playing of the white national anthem at an international rugby match blessed by some liberation movements. I do not wish to minimise the importance of February 1990 to many South Africans, but to indicate the dangers of a dwarfed memory. Similarly others allow their memory not to go beyond June 1976, others begin only with the Freedom Charter in the mid fifties.

A similar tendency has been an attempt to divide the memory up in terms of liberation movements and liberation ideologies, as if each liberation movement had waged a unique struggle independent and unconnected to any other struggle and ideology by any other liberation movement. Even black people are culprits here. Apart from "promoting" individual movements, this tendency has generally bewildered ordinary black people. These instances of dwarfed memory would not be so bad if they at least acknowledged connections and linkages to (other) earlier traditions of the struggle. Dwarfed memories are not only unhelpful but also insensitive to both comrades and ancestors in the struggle.

I sounded enough warning about the precarious nature of the meaning of the "struggle against Apartheid" today. The nature of analyses is usually determined by their goal. I state from the onset that we must declare that our purposes is beyond mere academics. As a minister and theologian my interest in analysis is kindled by pastoral interests.



## **STRUCTURES**

South African society, like other societies, is held together by a network of structures, such as government, the "homogeneous" white community, homelands, homeland police and armies, (later also, Urban Blacks), police force, army, churches, the legal system, education, business, labour and family. Attitudes and behaviours are not unrelated to structures. Naturally the struggle against Apartheid has been and should always have been not merely a struggle against certain persons and personal behaviours but one against structures. Most of these structures combined their collective influence on society with one aim, namely that of Black oppression. The occasional appearance of "good" people in the structures of homelands, government, white community, legal system, business etc. does not erase the structural evils in these structures. This is one point that the Kairos Document made so powerfully. All the structures that kept Apartheid alive are all still intact. We must pause and absorb that statement, for there is a tendency to pretend that these are gone.

The extent to which these have been "transformed" is a matter for debate, but their existence is fact. What does it take to transform structures? Whatever it takes one thing is clear: structures do not transform the same way individuals do. It has proved more difficult for Judaism to have a road to Damascus experience than it was for the same to happen to Paul the apostle. In fact since the advent of the so-called New South Africa of February 1990 - some of these structures have received shots in the arm (e.g. the introduction of VAT and the "privatisation" of certain government departments). Revelations ranging from massive corruption scandals, massive defence budgets (this year the SADF will spend R11 million per day on the purchase of arms) [Challenge, August, 1992, p.5] to an ever rising incidence of deaths in police custody, seem to point to the fact that the structures (and not merely protagonists) of Apartheid are still intact.

The central problem of the present political process in South Africa is that an attempt is being made to pour new wine into old skins. The structures of Apartheid cannot be strengthened at the same time as a new dispensation is being worked out. The neglect



of structural transformation in the direction of democracy and the naive belief by some liberation movements that structural transformation can wait while more urgent issues are being attended to is proving to be a nightmare. This is especially true since the structure, namely government is still firmly in place.

The churches have an ambivalent history of the struggle. Best by denominational and racial divisions the South African churches have had their share of the struggle, that is if we include among the contributions of the churches; the witness of people like Bishop Tutu and Allan Boesak, the Kairos document, the concerned Evangelicals Witness document, The Rustenburg Conference<sup>1</sup>, Black Theology, Contextual theology, the National Peace initiative (although credit for this is contested by Big business and even the Government) and the recent Code of conduct during mass action document. But the role of the church remains ambiguous - even these contributions of the church are understood differently within the church body.<sup>2</sup>

The present process of transforming the South African Council of Churches from the role of prophet to that of mediator is as innovative as it is suspicious. The very fact that this dichotomy of prophet versus reconciler is even discussed as a viable option is

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<sup>2</sup>The Rustenburg Conference phenomenon is curious for a number of reasons. It is not incidental that it was the first, and quite unique conference of its nature since De Klerk's 2nd February 1990 speech. In fact, prior to the conference, De Klerk did call for a church conference of its nature. Officially, the SACC rejected De Klerk's call. Looking at the composition, theme and language of the Rustenburg conference one must concede that it was at least built on the premise of February 1990 and the notion of a new South Africa. The diversity of denominational representation was unprecedented. The language was one of forgiveness and reconciliation. The church was to review its position in the light of the New South Africa. Michael Cassidy, the first speaker at the conference declared:

Since 2 February 1990, we have been catapulted into history with the video of it all stuck on fast-forward. The political landscape, the dynamics of national life, the major players - all have changed. Even political language and semantics are in flux. And it is almost too overwhelming. But it would indeed be tragic if we failed to understand the significance of the moment. For history has walked our way and a divine opportunity, second almost to none, has landed in our laps. (CHIKANE, ALBERTS, 1991. p. 27)



worrying, to say the least. Concerted theological reflection on the present state of the struggle by the churches is either superficial or in-existent. Instead, the churches (or should we say church leaders) seem contented to duplicate either the Peace Accord Structures or some of the political structures. Some churches continue to go on with the business as usual. The question is whether there is real difference in role between the church, the national peace accord and the (some) political players, or even the Gold Stone commission. Let us take the question of violence to illustrate. Vogue perceptions of the violence have either been couched in the language of Inkhatha vs ANC or some other version of it. Alternatively violence has been seen as the state security apparatus versus South Africans.

Not only have the churches acquiesced to these perceptions uncritically there has been neither enough outrage at this De Klerk era blood-letting nor recognition that the victims of these violence are all South Africans equally continue to be used. The truth is in white South Africa the violence is academic except insofar as it may affect the economy. White South Africans stand to gain from a diluted democracy and black South Africans stand to lose from it. The marchers who marched alongside church leaders suddenly discover that church leaders now prefer high-level mediation roles that will not commit them to any (party) "political" line other than justice, democracy and tolerance. The continuing assault of the black communities while the churches have switched gears is disturbing. One should briefly point out that tacit legitimation of the South African legal system in the general respect offered judge Goldstone is equally instructive.

Apartheid societal divisions remain in place. The major divide remains primarily racial i.e. black and white. Homelands, generally speaking, continue to play the role for which they were created namely to perpetuate and consolidate black ethnic Apartheid. It is amusing that Homeland leaders (even discredited ones) have been invited to take part in the discussions about the future of homelands. All statistics in South Africa, be they of literacy, matric pass rate, unemployment etc. continue to go along racial lines. Some would argue for a more thorough analysis.



A class analysis can be made by asking three simple questions. Who makes the decisions? Who benefits from the decision? Who bears the cost of the decisions? (HOLLAND, HENRIOT, 1980, p.28).

My point of "insertion" in the analysis of the present stage in the struggle against Apartheid is the present Black experience. This experience is characterized by number of disturbing realities. Violence, continued disenfranchisement, poverty, unemployment, unfair-working conditions, confusion, poor education and high levels of illiteracy. Of these I shall discuss the most potent of them all, namely, violence.

## **VIOLENCE**

Violence against black people has been a feature of Black struggle against Apartheid. This is what the "Kaffir Wars", Blood River, Sharpeville, June 1976 etc. were all about. It has been said that more black people have died since FW De Klerk came to power in 1989 than have died in 40 years of National party rule. This reality is a stumbling block. Black people die at points of their struggle for a living, i.e. at Taxi Ranks, Buss Stops, in trains at funerals, or as they sleep at sights of their struggle for land i.e. in squatter camps. How can so many Black lives be lost in the hands of the most liberal White leader in fifty years? This question has generally been answered in two ways. One way has been to attribute it to the white government. After all there is overwhelming evidence, growing by the day, that elements in state structures have engaged and continue to engage both directly and indirectly in violence. Trust Feed, the Goniwe affair, Dr Gluckman's revelations about deaths in prison (which incidentally seem to have increased since his revelations) and many others. The other approach has been to "blame" these to the "government's permissiveness" in having unbanned the liberation movements, unleashing the terrorist element into the township streets and opening way for unprecedented violent political jockeying and rivalry in the black community. This is what the government generally mean when they argue that the "causes of the present violence are complex".



All sorts of tags and typologies of the violence have appeared. In Natal it was called UDF versus Inkatha violence, even when women and children who did not know what the letters UDF stand for. Some of it is called "taxi-wars", even when only women and children and people who have no hope of ever owning a taxi are killed. In the reef, it has been tagged Inkatha versus ANC, Zulus versus Xhosas and many Sothos and Tsongas have died, sometimes Zulus killed by Zulus and even Hostel inmates versus Township residents. These tags have been floating around and we have almost accepted them at least tacitly. In almost all of these "types" of violence, in one way or another, the police have been implicated. The standard police response has been either denial or "we are investigating" (it took the Police more than 24 hours to begin to investigate the Boipatong massacre).

Responses to the violence have been varied but instructive. We have sighted standard police responses. The government has "solved" the problem of violence. Other than say that its causes are "complex", and being protective of the police and army, it has established a standing commission - the Goldstone commission to investigate controversial incidence of violence. People are therefore asked to suspend their responses and feelings until the commission has finished its investigations. It seems that even the National Peace Accord structures are being used for the same role by the Government. In the final analysis the problem of violence has been peripheral in the government's programme and outlook, except insofar as it may affect investor confidence and the stock exchange. It is interesting how the government's concern for violence and victims as violence heightens during mass action campaigns. Violence has rightly been linked to the overall "intransigence" of the Government. I find the suggestion that the Government has lost control of the security forces implausible. There is no evidence that the Government is either terribly disturbed about the behaviour of the security forces or divided about its role.

The liberation movements have generally responded in three ways. One way has been small scale retaliation e.g. APLA came close to admitting a policy of violence towards the police, the ANC's withdrawal from CODESA, Defence Units, and rolling mass



action. The second has been the appeal for international (specifically UN) intervention (something the Government has only now grudgingly acknowledged and agreed to). There remains lack of clarity (and perhaps consensus) on the nature of international intervention. The third has been rhetorical attacks on the government the security forces by the liberation movements. But these responses are not merely responses to the violence, but to the cul de sac in political process.

While the White Community has responded by arming itself to the teeth, and worrying about the economy as well as the academic implications of the violence, the Black community is at its most vulnerable. The hope for a vote and a chance in the market place is fast becoming an illusion. Fearful of violence they continue to wage the struggle in the work place, (there are several strikes on at the moment e.g. the Metal Workers, the Hospital workers and others), and in the squatter areas for land and livelihood. Several controversial symbolic acts such as the burning of the South African flag, the mock trials, the kill-a-cop-a-day placards at marches are indications of the level of feeling towards the state and perception of the present legal system. The multiplication of illegal gun possession, rise of crime and general degeneration of life in the Black community is attributable to the violent assault on it.

Three things bewilder the Black community most at present: the lack of co-operation between the liberation movements, fluctuating and conflicting directives in the liberation movements sometimes within one and the same movement, and some movements' naivete about White insensitivity to black aspirations. The build-up to the recent two-day national stayaway was most instructive in this regard. Up to three days before the stayaway one could no get a clear directive from the movements about whether the stayaway would go ahead or not. While one appreciates the fluidity of the present political situation, the basic tenets of the Apartheid are still in place.

It is therefore incomprehensible why De Klerk can be "wanted for murder" today and tomorrow be a "man of integrity" who is now negotiating to bring the PAC to the negotiation table. Also the



rigorous separation of the "regime" from the "(white) community" seems to assume that as many white people are discontented with Apartheid as black people are. According to this manner of speech what is wrong in South African society is the government and the security forces and everybody else is fine. But this is far from the truth. The flippant disregard of a moment of silence in honour of the victims at one of the first International rugby match in Johannesburg as agreed upon by the Rugby authorities and the ANC is instructive. Could it be, that the truth is simply that white people simply do not care about "black-on-black violence"? Why should they care? What justification do we have to assume that they might care about the thirty-nine people who died at Boipatong on June 17 this year.

## **BEYOND ANECDOTES**

South Africa's socio-political issues, although some appear to be broken pieces, are interrelated and linked. The question therefore is not whether they are linked but how they are linked. In order to make projections and progress we must move beyond mere anecdotes and descriptions. We must proceed on to ask why. Why in the reign of the most "liberal" (?) white leader, assisted by a conciliatory church fraternity, a National Peace Accord, willing Liberation movements, some of whom have suspended the armed struggle, renewed sports contacts, crumbling sanctions; so many black people are dying. In other words we must search for connections between these realities and the concrete Black experience. Malcom X liked saying: "Nothing happens by accident". What are the connections between the violence bankruptcy of political innovation, CODESA, National Peace Accord, the Role of the Churches, the reality of Dr. Gluckman's revelations, corruption scandals, suspension of the armed struggle, revelations about the shadowy Hammer Unit's connection to the Goniwe murder, the government's call for a general amnesty etc.

From certain quarters one has heard the charge that the South African government is not willing to "hand-over power". How naive. Perhaps our first projection should be the realization that the government will not "hand over" power. There is no such precedent either in mythology or in history. It is disturbing to



realise that some players in the political scene even thought that it was possible for the present government even to consider "handing over" power. Some continue to think this. This government intends and prefers not only to stay on as long as possible but to carve a permanent place either for itself or for white interests in a future government. If we view things from that premise we may view the government's agenda in all these wonderful structures from a different perspective. Thus far real power rests firmly in the hands of the government.

The strengthening and the undiluted inclusion of Apartheid structures such as overnight Homeland "freedom" and "progressive" parties in the negotiation process is simply a change of tactic but the perpetuation of the same fragmentation of Black people, and the struggle for voting cows. CODESA in fact reflects the Conservative Party's social analysis wherein South Africa consists of at least ten Black nations, one white nation a few aberrant so-called liberation movements.

We are therefore, at a stage where Apartheid is at its most sophisticated. It is prepared to lose both its clothes and name but not its soul and will. As the white government harnesses international opinion and backing, tacit church respect, the cooperation (albeit sometimes grudgingly) of the liberation movements, the multiplication of its ideology via the homeland parties, a newly-found concern for the economy, a moral legitimacy built on repeated allusions to "power hand-over" and the language of peace and democracy; the poorest among black people have never been more vulnerable and more alone. Already the vultures are hovering in the horizon. The democratic party is about to launch a campaign for black members. The National party has already gone multi-racial.

If ever there was a time when the poor and the Black needed prophetic leadership it is now. Now is the time for a liberation theology not a reconciliationist theology. Now is the time for rigorous reflection not mere political band-wagoning. Not mere change but real transformation is called for. Paulo Frere once put it thus:



Authentic revolution attempts to transform the reality which begets this dehumanising state of affairs. Those whose interests are served are served by that reality cannot carry out this transformation; it must be achieved by the tyrannised, with their leaders. This truth, however, must become radically consequential; that is the leaders must incarnate it, through communion with the people. In this communion both groups grow together, and the leaders, instead of being simply self-appointed, are authenticated in their praxis with the praxis of the people. (FRERE, 1972, p.100)

The tyrannised of this country together with the authenticated leaders must wake up to this reality. One of the most important needs of our times in this stage of the struggle against Apartheid is authentic dialogue among the oppressed and between the oppressed and their leaders. Dialogue is a continuing aspect of liberation. Sustaining good dialogue is very difficult; for the oppressors, and white media in particular, do not desire it. There are little signs of vigorous attempts at both intra and inter-dialogue amongst the oppressed and their leaders. Signs of lack of consultation and dialogue between black student organizations and liberation movements, civic associations and political organizations, labour organizations and other labour organizations etc. are increasing. In the same work quoted above, Frere cautions the oppressed and their leaders against the enemies of dialogue and the praxis of anti-dialogue. Ironically, Frere submits that the same methods of anti-dialogue practised by the oppressors can be practised amongst the oppressed as well as by the leaders of the oppressed. He calls these "oppressive cultural actions". These are, described by Frere as the "conquest" approach to the masses which is sustained by the perpetuation of myths designed to keep them dominated.

## **THE NEGOTIATIONS PROJECT**

The negotiations project has strengths as well as flaws. Recurring controversies about its "representativeness", "legitimacy" and "built-in vulnerability" are illustrative of its core weaknesses both in terms of its status but also in terms of its capacity to deal with the real



(all) issues comprehensively and authoritatively. Some of these weaknesses relate to the question of what different people and players perceive to be what has brought the project about. This consideration, in itself is perhaps insignificant, except insofar as it may have influence over the direction of the negotiation. Meanwhile the minority and illegitimate white parliament continues to fiddle with laws and all sorts of restructuring. The negotiations project has become quite significant insofar as it can (and for some has) become a forum where the precise nature and depth of liberation can be hammered out. Liberation is the key. If the negotiation project does not succeed in making liberation a reachable reality for all South Africans then God help us. It is not important merely to negotiate. (For some would prefer that to happen for ever). It is rather paramount to negotiate something that can reverberate in rural South Africa's mountains where black children die of hunger and disease.

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