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Diverse positions held on the 'Isolate SA Position'

The AZAPO View

The diverse positions being held by components of the liberation movement as regards the isolation of the system of government under which black people continue to live, is indicative of the complicated ballet of talks about talks, in which the contending partners that have so far emerged are still locked in criss-cross courtship of their respective positions in order to solemnize what may hold as a 'transitional stage'. In this debatable transitional stage as presented by these wrestling positions, the liberation movement finds itself summoned to repent from its sinful liberatory stances in terms of: (i) sanctions (ii) disinvestment and (iii) the sports as well as the cultural isolation the of system currently in place.

Azapo as a liberation movement, has found no cause to repent from these liberatory positions. The organisation continues to believe in the good intentions of the spirit behind these positions. It is disturbing that the good intentions behind the spirit of these liberatory stances, are now deliberately misunderstood.

Azapo regards sports and cultural boycott, disinvestment and sanctions as components to the Isolate SA Position. This position was adopted as a weapon of struggle against an oppressive and exploitative system which is currently in force and for the liberation of black people. The solidarity actions of the international community were enlisted with this dilectical view in mind. To Azapo, the issue has never been whether or not to isolate the system, but to clarity in no uncertain terms against whom and in favour of whom were such measures decided upon. For as long as oppression and exploitation continues to characterise black existence, there can no be doubt about the wisdom to pursue the liberatory cause of black people.

Even in the face of evident international interests switching allegiance to the oppressor camp, it would not make sense for the liberation movement to abandon its positions and also become active participants to the defeat of these liberatory positions, solely because, the international community now thinks otherwise about the liberation of black people. The choices to be made are simple: it is either the system or liberation. Azapo stands for liberation.

It is this firm stance which Azapo continues to hold, which makes it to regard all arguments advanced for the revision of these liberatory positions, as not only exhibiting the impatience of those who have not only grown weary with the protractedness of our struggle, but also reveal, a low regard for the oppressed and the exploited who are now conjured as unreasonable, for consistently holding on positions which are complimentary to the true quest for genuine liberation.

Even before February 2, 1990, Azapo had foreseen the conflicting interpretations that were going to be brought to bare on the appraisal of the situation by all interested parties as to the direction that our struggle should take. It was with this view in mind, that Azapo saw the crucial need for the holding of a Consultative Conference at which liberation movements could confer and co-determine future directions to be pursued. It is regretful that the liberation movements have not afforded themselves the earliest opportunity to address themselves to this need and continue to be at cross purposes with each other.

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To Azapo, February 2, 1990, did not legitimise liberation but treed political activity as a survivalist option by the system to negotiate its reform and continued existence by co-option of credible structures of the oppressed people.

It should be noted, that the difference between the Nationalist Party (NP) government pre February 2, 1990 and the NP government post this date, lies in the leadership styles of two men, P.W. Botha and F.W. De Klerk. The former was a fixated conservative whose alarming dependency in the army and the police had misguided him to pilot survivalist objectives of the NP through the involvement of discredited leaders, while the latter, is a flexible liberal, who has found that the system can adapt and truly survive by the involvement of credible leaders.

The difference between Botha and De Klerk therefore, lies in the choice of people that the two leaders have chosen to travel with in their endeavours to make the system to survive. Azapo sees no cause to find fellowship in travelling with De Klerk for purposes of liberation.

This is where Azapo parts company with anti-sanctioneers and the sports and cultural boycott busters to the isolation of the system. It grieves us even more, that bodies such as the I.D.C. have gone so far as hastening oppressed sportspersons to the abuse of seeking companionship with establishment sportspersons only for SA to hoist its flag. Suddenly, black people are assumed as hopeless sinners for insisting on sanctions and are otherwise esteemed as saints for displaying favourable wisdom in this regard. This is how the struggle for liberation has been forced-landed into being a turn-the-other-cheek revolution by factors which are not consistent with genuine liberation.

Added to this disadvantageous turn of events, friendly governments which were once allied to the cause of the oppressed, now suffer the pious compulsions which deny them to walk the liberation struggle an extra mile by their continued indulgence in the sins of abiding with pro-sanctions'positions.

All this is motivated for in the name of confessions made by apartheid practioners and declarations of intent which have brought no smaterial deliverance to black people since the acclaimed February 2.

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To Azapo, February 2, has brought no change in power relations. It has not reddressed social imbalances, nor, has it delivered the black working class and the homeless of our people. It has brought no liberation to the oppressed and the exploited people of this country. Even those governments which had legislated against apartheid (the United States in 1986 and Sweeden in 1979) were prudent enough, not to legislate for liberation. This was pricesly because, the impulse ior liberation could not be confined to the walls of these government's respective parliaments, as it dicisively resides within the ranks of the oppressed and the exploited people. Thus, the haste to rank entertainment above liberation, stands opposite to exigent positions at the oppressed people to maximise the liberatory process. The international community including artists and sportspersons, can bluntly be either for liberation - by retusing to confuse our struggle for liberation with entertainment, sport and reform - or against liberation by perfoming to the desperate public relations antics of the system for it to survive . The order of priorities to Azapo is: our people's liberation first and then all other interactions desired by the community of free nations in terms of sport and culture may tollow and not vice versa.

Therefore, it the international community were to use February E as a passport to switch their allegiance to the oporessor camp, it is fraudulent trickery to enlist the oppressed people and their representative organisations to act contrary to liberatory imperatives.

Azapo believes that 1991 is a year in which the line of demarcation between liberation movements - which are motivated by the desire to and political parties whose firstmost preoccupation is to liberate -

govern, shall be more discernable. Those who stand impatiently opposed to liberation, shall reveal themselves by their calls for the lifting of sanctions as well as their haste for cultural co-operation with the reformist manoeuvres of the system to survive.

There is definitely no reason for the oppressed people to dispense with their international front of the struggle - by urging the international community to end the isolation oi the system. Let it rather be the international community which deserts the oppressed than \$or the oppressed to abscond from their liberation.

The decision whether to end the struggle or not, cannot be left in the hands of these who are external to conditions of oppression and exploitation, but it is for the oppressed people to make. Like David Diop, Azapo would have the oppressed people to remember, that 'every generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it'.

It would be a tragedy if the oppressed people of this country were to depend on the advice of factors external to their material conditions to shape their destiny.

It is on this basis that Azapo believes, that the oppressed and the exploited people are their own liberators and that they should not rely on the caprice of international community interests which may desert them in their hour of need as it is demonstrably the case now.

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