

Comrades! and Fellow South Africans, and all Fighters for freedom!!!!!!

We meet here to rededicate our struggle for freedom. June 26th means many things to many South Africans, but we, of the Liberatory movement, it means a glorious history of the past and a very searching look into the future. Each country and its peoples have their own ideas of what freedom is and the manner of applying that freedom in accordance with the historical background of that country, and we in South Africa also have a particular historical background.

The oppressed peoples of South Africa have fought the white invaders for more than 300 years. The first settlers from Holland met with resistance from the Nama. The 'little people' the Khoi who were nicknamed the Bushmen, fought back with bow and arrow. In the 18th and 19th centuries, as the settlers moved into the interior, they encountered the armed strength of the African chiefdoms - the men Zhoseni, Zululand, the Sotho, Tswana, Pedi and Venda. White supremacy took shape in the hundred of wars fought against our people for land, cattle and for the boer to exploit their labour power.

But I have come here to speak, not of this great and heroic resistance of warriors who were defeated only by fire and arms and military might, but of that other tradition of resistance of exploitation and oppression: the struggle of the working people. The beginnings of mining and industrial development witnessed also the growth of the conscious working class movement - first on the diamond mines of Kimberley, then in the mining regions of the Witwatersrand, and later in all the port towns and industrialised areas.

This was a struggle both for national liberation and against capitalist exploitation. It was a struggle in which all South African races were represented: Africans, Indians, Coloureds as well as Whites. Nowhere else in Africa has there been such a large determined and persistent movement of people of many races against class and colour oppression.

Today the lines are being drawn as never before between the Whites and the rest of the population. I recognise, as we all do, that the White working class (bribed, privileged and misled) has fallen a victim to the colour complex, has joined the ranks of the oppressor. Yet let us not forget that there was a time when the class-conscious White worker fought with arms against the ruling class. It is our work to create the conditions in which, he, the White worker, will

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once again realise that he can achieve real freedom for himself only by taking up the struggle with other members of his class - the African, Indian and Coloured worker in the mines, factories, workshops, and railway and dockyards.

How are we to create these conditions. First of all by destroying the myth of White supremacy, by developing such powerful movement of struggle as to undermine the foundations of the racist regime. As our struggle gains momentum, and to the extent that we deliver fatal blows at the citadels of White supremacy, will increasing numbers of Whites come over to our side.

This is the aim of the Congress Alliance. It proclaims to all South Africans that our goal is liberation from all forms of oppression, and the creation of a free society for all men and women.

I speak here as a representative, not of White South African, but of the working class. I recognise no colour distinction, my loyalties are to the working people of all races, and I look forward with confidence to the time when all workers of all races will unite against the oppressor.

For this reason I say that it is not enough for us to demand one man one vote!! It is not enough for us to demand an extension of the franchise to the 15 million Africans, Coloureds and Indians, who, today have no voice in the government of their own country.

We must go further, we must demand not only political power, but also economic power. We must raise the demand for the nationalisation of the mines, factories, banks, and the land. For only through a programme of socialism, can we hope to win the support of the working people of all races. And only by the socialisation of the means of production can we transfer real power from the rulers to ourselves.

Our answer to Apartheid, to the phony policy of 'separate development' is to claim for our people for the workers and peasants of all races, the wealth of the country which they have produced with their sweat and blood.

Tens of thousands of miners - black and white - have lost their lives in digging up diamonds and gold, in producing the wealth that is now being used to turn South Africa into the most formidable military power in ~~South~~ Africa. Millions of our people have been forced

to labour/....

to labour as serfs on white man's farms to create a rich and flourishing agriculture. We owe it to those who have gone before, to the victims of capitalist greed, to obtain control of the sources of wealth for the generations to come.

To our young freedom fighters, I hand this glorious history back to you, and given the opportunity I know you will not fail us.

AMANDHLA !!!!!!!!!

(Speech delivered in Lusaka, Zambia, 1969 June 26th  
by ..... V. PONNEN ...)