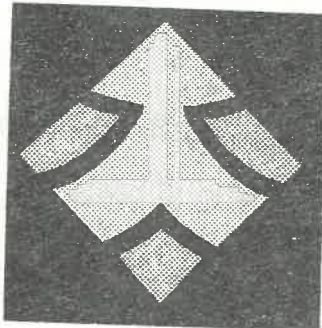


UNITED DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT



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**IS SOUTH AFRICA
WINNING THE BATTLE?**

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This unique historical feat generated such euphoria in our new democracy that we have tended to take our past for granted and believed that racism would suddenly disappear at the flick of a magic wand. It would not be, ours is a deeply divided society. All the elements of our history have conspired to reinforce a wide social chasm between sections of our nation that will require the type of wisdom and skills, the temperament and accommodation that characterised our historic CODESA negotiations, in order to bridge it and enable the weavings of a coherent and harmonious society in our nation. However, our achievement was made possible by the compromises reached at CODESA, which guaranteed the integrity of existing property relations and therefore the preservation of a status-quo (at least for the present) that would leave the White minority an economically and socially dominant class. It was hoped that the new democratic order would have removed the racial barriers that prevented social and economic advancement of the disadvantaged Black majority.

REVERSE RACISM

The advent of democracy and the social and political opportunities created by this dispensation for blacks have ushered in a new milieu and terrain within which our racist legacy manifests itself. Policies and strategies advanced by the state for the transformation of our society, re-ordering of historical imbalances evokes protest of **“reverse racism”**, and discrimination against the former privileged white minorities. This section of our society still enjoys economic privileges and their loss of political power tends to crystallise white economic

exclusivity which to date has incorporated a token of black elite and rented black surrogates while retaining the basic class/race structure of white economic domination over a largely impoverished and increasingly ^{un}employable and least educated black mass who vent their frustration and disillusion at unfulfilled expectations in crime, emasculating and energy dissipating internecine conflicts. These complaints are exacerbated by the present government who practises cronyism and nepotism when appointing people in various positions. At the same time, there is a tendency by the government to shun responsibility and apportion blame for failure to a historical past. There is a growing perception that the black leadership has not begun to grapple with the nation building challenges head-on. It is believed that our psyche is still trapped in the past in which we lament our historical misfortunes rather, than turn these into strength with which to conquer the future for posterity.

We are therefore faced with a situation where there are subjective perceptions about race on both sides of the social divide. What we need is an objective appraisal of our society, which will place it in its historical perspective, that approach will distinguish those structural features of society which nurture racism and devise ways of removing them. It is universally agreed that race was exploited to engineer an oppressive social order which resulted in acute socio-economic disparities between black and white in South Africa. Nothing short of an economic revolution will rid us of racism. A radical economic transformation has to occur within acceptable time-frames that can avert the type of a social explosion that the CODESA negotiations succeeded in avoiding. The creation of our economic egalitarian society cannot be left to the vagaries

of the market forces only that are inherent in government's GEAR policy. Nor can we tolerate the ANC, COSATU and SACP Alliance political massage and collective posturing by them, while the country 's economy is sliding.

NEW ECONOMIC REVOLUTION

We need a creative state intervention, which recognises that artificially created impediments to social advancement of the disadvantaged majority are removed and a programme of accelerated wealth and land redistribution is implemented without delay. None of the current economic strategies of para-statal's privatisation and selective black empowerment can achieve that objective. A transformed economic order will give impetus to other social and educational programmes that are designed to truly integrate our society and create a new democratic South African ethos.

We should not forget that we emerged from a regime that was characterised by state intervention in the economy. It is not practical to make a right-about-turn and plunge into a Western-type free market economy and in the process render a whole nation unemployed. We should look at a middle course that will cautiously transform our production relations, in a manner that will incorporate a social programme that brings relief to the millions who are beginning to believe that they lived better under apartheid where the state was not shy to intervene albeit under the separate development policies. The present economic policy is incomprehensible when implemented by a Black former deliberation movement government. It is difficult to understand why a government which has been carried to power on the crest of the wave of mass support should be shy to

intervene constructively in economic reconstruction on behalf of the very disadvantaged people who put them in power. In 1948 the Nationalists did it for their own people.

For example, the membership of COSATU alone at that time was close to three (3) million, today it is estimated at 1,3 million (take note of the fact that we had economic sanctions during this period). If unemployment is this country's public enemy number one (No 1), then our strategies must be geared towards elimination of unemployment and creation of sustainable quality jobs. There is also a need to balance the interest of the employed and the "majority" unemployed.

Since its transition to democracy, South Africa is undergoing a path-breaking struggle to achieve structural reforms. Evidently, academic economic analysis and debate needs to move on to the development of a detailed and far-reaching policy agenda capable of tackling the inheritance of apartheid and radical enough to turn around the South African economy and society. It is not enough to draw on international evidence only without addressing the peculiarities of the South African situation. For this country, we still need a regulated, state-led growth and development strategy that offers the possibility for economic change sufficiently deep and sustainable to address the problems of poverty and inequality, and to strengthen democracy. It is too early and immoral for government to throw the fate of South Africans to the performance of the market forces without any form of government intervention. Instead, the present economic policy has opened floodgates for over R50 billion to leave the country without prospect of getting them back.

Although the partnership between business, labour and government is often emphasised it is clear that there is confusion about the political basis of economic policies. Government must accept its responsibility in social and welfare spheres even in the context of economic strategies based on GEAR. Ideologically, the widespread acceptance of economic orthodoxy, from stabilisation to trade liberalisation and privatisation has been the key reason for lack of progress in the delivery of social and physical infrastructure.

POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

We would like to note that there is a strong opinion that the transformation process cannot be confined to the economic sphere only and that in the political arena transformation is also needed. South Africa has a painful history in which racial divisions and social inequalities have co-incided with party political formations. The resultant antagonisms and mutual suspicions will continue to mar our society for sometime yet, because they cannot be easily wished away by the constitution that highlights the non-racialism and unity in diversity. Today, South Africans are still voting along racial lines, e.g. Blacks vote for Black political parties and Whites vote for White political parties.

Proponents of this view suggest that such a transformation will culminate into the emergency of two major political parties in the centre stage of national politics in our society. Experiences in established democracies elsewhere give

credence to this view. Britain, France and USA are examples that come to our mind. The economic and political stability of these countries is common knowledge.

We are convinced as a party that such a process will need the support of and acceptance by the majority citizens of this country. Such support will not only give legitimacy to these developments but most importantly will prevent them from degenerating into tendencies wherein appeals to racist and narrow class interests are utilised as a vehicle for the mobilisation of followers in pursuit of short term gains. The 1994, 1999 and 2000 election campaign by some political parties is a living testimony

A two party system that is anchored on a commitment to the transformation of our society provides the best prospect for democratic consolidation in South Africa.

Our analysis of the changing socio-political order in South Africa indicates that there will be discernible political shifts along interest group divides distinguished by common concerns and aspirations and not along racial lines as we witness today. This process will move towards the crystallisation of two major political streams, which express the ethos of the beneficiaries of the established order, on the one hand, and the aspirations of the emerging major social groupings that are marginalized on the other hand. This will necessitate the emergence of two political formations representing these interest groups.

I once said that, the tremors of social change have dislodged people, and groups from familiar traditional positions. Five years ago one in his wildest dreams could have visualised top Afrikaner academics, businessmen, the likes of Derrick Coetzee (who murdered ANC's Mxenge in Durban), Chris Fisser and Pik Botha campaigning for the African National Congress, their erstwhile mortal foes, urging their Afrikaner volk to take the great trek into the ANC. We encourage these trends, because they defuse racial political polarisation.

NARROWING OF THE GAP

After seven years of democracy the rich become richer and the poor regressed to unparalleled levels of poverty. Consequently the racial divide has been consolidated and entrenched the racial antipathies because of the suffering that has ensued. The diminishing of resources occasioned by the economic policies pursued by the government has inflamed xenophobia among South Africans who feel threatened by the flood of migrants and refugees who have swarmed our borders in search of better opportunities.

The historical inequalities are exacerbated by lack of access to capital by the majority. Past apartheid policies confined 80% of the population to 13% of the land surface of South Africa. They could not acquire title deeds on that little land in which they were crowded, save a few from the homelands. As a result, seven years after Uhuru celebration of 1994, Blacks in the main do not have the collateral with which to borrow from the commercial banks. These same institutions have demonstrated a marked resistance to liberalise their lending policies in a way that can facilitate greater black economic empowerment.

This situation is aggravated by the present government's housing policy in terms of which people still do not have title deeds to the residential units being built. It is difficult even to talk of a housing policy where people are allotted poor quality rooms euphemistically described to as houses. Even, had these units been freeholds they would not qualify as security to obtain bank loans.

There are growing perceptions, that the CODESA compromises can no longer be ignored or sustained as they continue to haunt us. A democratic order cannot endure on the foundations of a society with social and economic disparities. The preponderance of education, and technological skills among a privileged minority and the absence of these among a disadvantaged majority ensure the perpetuation of the racial-cultural divide and economic inequalities that have been handed down by history.

The Ministry of Education is not helping the situation by closing down Black teacher training institutions and tertiary institutions while preserving the historical White institutions, which have been the bastions of White privilege and continue to treat Black students with patronage and condescension.

Instead of spending scores of billions of rands on armaments during peace time, the government should be strengthening the former Black Colleges they are now closing, and building more among the disadvantaged communities. Government should be financing educational programs that will empower our Black youth with technological skills such as information technology, science and mathematics and mastery of the language of international communication.

It baulks imagination, that at a time when there is so much to be done to correct these historical imbalances, we have a government which retrenches teachers and closes down black teacher training institutions and universities in a country with approximately 80% illiteracy. The UK, the founder of South Africa's literary tradition, a first world developed country, which has long overcome illiteracy, is currently recruiting teachers and medical personnel from South Africa. The South African government on the other hand would rather import teachers and doctors from Cuba than employ its own.

Government should be spending more money on job creation (infrastructural programmes), accelerating the transfer of land from the landed minority gently to the landless who have been systematically dispossessed by colonial and apartheid regimes.

There need to be a commitment by South Africans who currently enjoy the monopoly of skills and wealth to be willing to take significant steps, of their own free will to reverse the situation of social and economic disequilibrium. Reconciliation is a two way reciprocal process. We must all be prepared to part with something and give to our fellow countrymen that do not have. Equally the disadvantaged must also have the responsibility and generosity of spirit to work harmoniously with their erstwhile privileged fellow countrymen to build a better society for posterity.

Government has a central role to play in the transformation of our society into one in which all share its resources and work with comparable commitment to build a secure future. Our empowerment policies have been gravely flawed. Government has not restructured public enterprises in such a way that the

primary beneficiaries are the poor and unemployed. Instead they have enriched offshore companies and their own party cronies and relatives.

They must rearrange their order of priorities so as to place the interests of the poor and disadvantaged at the top. The reordering of priorities is reinsurance against land invasions resulting from homelessness. It will inhibit chronic industrial stoppages, rampant unemployment and retrenchments, escalating crime and xenophobia.

ETHNICITY, DISCRIMINATION AND CORRUPTION

Our patriotic duty requires that we spell out the truth and not delude ourselves into thinking that all is well when the contrary is the case. Ordinary South Africans are experiencing more hardships now than before. More people are walking the streets without the prospects of getting employment. Vast expenditure on overseas trips by the President, his cabinet, nine Premiers, countless MECs and their senior officials and advisors, purporting to attract foreign direct investment has not been matched by foreign investments' inflows into the country. Economists recently expressed their concern at the lack-lustre performance of our economy as a result of decline in investor confidence and sluggish growth. The government is insensitive to workers opposition to the kind of restructuring of state enterprises that has been embarked upon, which renders tens of thousands of workers jobless.

This pattern of total disregard for the interest of our people is also reflected in the developments, which followed the Defence Review of 1998. That Review's budget was estimated at R9.7 billion and was subsequently approved by

parliament up to 2005/6. The aim of the Defence Review was to reduce personnel costs through demobilisation in order to free funds for capital expenditure. The R30 billion budget, which has now escalated to R51 billion, has not been authorized by parliament. The investigating agencies will have failed in their task if they do not establish the source and reason for the departure from the original mandate. That original budget had taken into account the socio-economic demands of our society, hence the conservative figure. President Mbeki has echoed these social considerations in his discourse on the AIDS pandemic debate. How do we explain this surreptitious escalation of the arms budget to R51 billion when these socio-economic conditions have not changed? There is no sign of the promised massive employment creation, instead we read in the media how MPs, ex-minister of Defence and some military personnel in the command structure of the SANDF, being unable to account how did they end up owning mansions, flashy cars and even shares worth R40 million by an individual etc. etc. All these "sweets" being paid for by companies who won tenders in the arms deal.

On the other hand, the victims of racist apartheid regime are struggling to make the ends meet. This looting spree of our resources is no different from the strategy used by our former oppressors. Even former President Mandela has publicly complained about corruption in our government today "little did I know that some of our comrades are also corrupt".

South Africa, because of its history provides a fertile environment for the proliferation of discriminatory tendencies and ethnicist perceptions. In the struggle days, martyrs who fell were never characterised as African, White,

Coloured or Indian. They were freedom fighters who had paid the supreme sacrifice.

Today there are perceptions of "Xhosa-Nostra", "Indian hegemony" etc, etc in certain state departments. These are unhealthy sentiments, which have been thrown up by a less than fair culture of allocation of resources, which has tended to accentuate the latent ethnic prejudices of our past history. Deployment into lucrative positions in state enterprises and the private sector has been the exclusive preserve of the ruling party favourites. One of the mechanisms of dealing with these realities and perceptions is a robust and deployment of competent South Africans from across the political divide. Companies are reluctant to contribute donations to opposition parties out of fear of losing state tenders if such donations come to the knowledge of the ruling party. Discrimination breeds more discrimination until it becomes a vicious circle. We must all take stock of our attitudes and conduct in the public and private domain.

Work-seekers who do not carry ANC membership cards have little chance of getting employment at employment bureaus. Government contracts are awarded on a preferential basis to ANC supporters e.g. subcontractors in R51 billion Arms Deal. There are numerous complaints from NGOs and old age pensioners who have been discriminated against on the basis of political affiliation or sympathies.

We must not bury our heads in the sand by pretending that these inimical attitudes and behavioural patterns do not exist. Let us face them squarely and admit them where they surface in order to deal with them. On the other hand people should not shield their inadequacies behind accusations of racism and ethnicity

It will be seen from the above that racism and discrimination has a material basis. People do not simply become racists because they are bad people. It has evolved from a socio-historical process that sought to structure a society that would benefit a few at the expense of many. Government, business, education and all other stakeholders must join hands to structure a social environment in which democratic values can thrive and brotherly love and mutual support flourish in order to build a greater nation for our future generations.

Thank you!

CURRICULUM VITAE

BANTU HOLOMISA

Major General Bantu Holomisa co-founded the United Democratic Movement in 1997 with Roelf Meyer and currently serves as its President.

In 1999, within a period of 20 months since the United Democratic Movement was established in 1997, he together with 13 other members of the organisation was elected to Parliament. The UDM is also represented in no less than six provincial legislatures being the official opposition in the Eastern Cape and the Northern Province.

Previously, he was the Commander of the Transkei Defence Force and Head of the Transkei government (former independent homeland- 1987 to 1994) until the 1994 election.

He mediated in a conflict between Methodist of Southern Africa and United Methodist of Southern Africa. He also played a mediating role in solving taxi conflicts in Transkei and Cape Town.

He was chosen by the ANC's Election Committee to campaign nationally alongside Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Cyril Ramaphosa, Winnie Mandela, the late Joe Slovo and Steve Tshwete during the democratic election in 1994. In 1994 he received the most votes in the ANC National Congress.

He is formerly Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism of South Africa in the 1994-elected government of National Unity. In 1996, he was expelled from the ANC after testifying to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission about Transkei activities concerning Transkei issues. He refused to retract his testimony arguing that what he had said was of historical knowledge to all concerned.

Between 1988 and 1989, his government unbanned ± 33 organisations, which were banned by his predecessors. His government worked closely with the liberation movements. As a result, Transkei had a smooth

transition prior to National Elections of 1994; he also led Transkei delegation to CODESA negotiations, which led to 1994 elections.

He was one of the first two Black persons accepted by the South African Army College to do a one year senior staff course for officers in 1984. He is an able athlete, who has played rugby, soccer, tennis and was vice-captain of the Parliamentary Rugby Squad from 1994 -1996.

Since 1989, Holomisa has addressed forums around the world, including for example the United Nations Security Council (on the need for the UN to monitor violence in South Africa); the Confederation of British Industry; the Carnegie Endowment, USA; the Council on Foreign Relations, USA; CSIS, USA; African-American Institute (AAI), USA; addressed Prayer Breakfast meetings in USA, Zambia and Uganda; the World Tourism Organization; the World Travel and Tourism Council; Convention on Biodiversity and many other environmental international conventions and meetings all over the world. In 2000 he attended a Democratic Convention in Los Angeles, USA.

He is married with three (3) children.