

# Clash of Cultures Part II

(Continued from FRANK TALK, Volume 1 Nos. 2 & 3)

## THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Because the conqueror had created the situation where he dictated what was right and what was wrong, he caused the development of an inferiority complex in the black people.

Over the three hundred odd years that black people have been oppressed and exploited white people have come to symbolise for black people — the masters, the superior beings.

This superiority has inculcated in the blackman a sense of intimidation; a feeling that he is, in the presence of the whiteman, a second class citizen. This inferiority complex prevents the blackman from articulating his aspirations and determining his future.

This is why the black consciousness philosophy (amongst other considerations) believes that the whiteman cannot directly be a part of the process in which black people map out their destiny. The presence of the whiteman within the ranks of the black people has a negative effect.

Further, the whiteman unconsciously or sub-consciously brings his superiority complex to bear upon the blackman. In other words the whiteman manipulates his position of superiority to dictate to the blackman how he should seek his freedom.

We find that the white liberal — who pretends to be a friend of the blackman — in fact, has the effect of rendering the blackman incapable of seeing himself through his own eyes.

This syndrome destroys the initiative of the blackman and entrenches the condition of a second class mentality within our ranks.

## THE MEA CULPA

The *mea culpa* syndrome simply means that black people always believe that they are responsible for all the ills that they suffer. In short *mea culpa* (a Latin phrase) means that we blame ourselves for all the wrongs that we experience.

If we cannot find a job — we blame ourselves; if we cannot earn enough money to buy food for the family — we blame ourselves. In every hardship we suffer we have, because of psychological oppression, come to believe that the hardship is as a result of our own mistakes; it is our own fault.

This self-blame results from the history of our oppression which leaves us with the impression that we are incapable of doing anything.

The reinforcement of stereotyping by the rulers makes us believe that we are lazy; we are stupid; we are ignorant; and because we think that we are all these things we believe that we are at fault.

## SUSPICION, MISTRUST AND FEAR

Within the oppressed and exploited people we find that there DEVELOPS A CONDITION ALSO WHERE WE BEGIN TO SUSPECT ONE ANOTHER. Because of our

feeling of inferiority and inadequacy and our self-blame we begin to look at one another with a degree of suspicion, mistrust and fear.

One does not have to look far to see to what extent the black community is riddled with this kind of attitude. In every ghetto in South Africa there is gang warfare, killings, and rapes which result from the attitudes that black people have towards one another.

Not only is this visible within the locations themselves, but also within and amongst different so-called ethnic groupings (Indian, Coloured, Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, etc.).

Suspicion, mistrust and fear govern our relationships with other people. And most of our fear reflects itself in our refusal to become 'politically involved'. We also have a great fear of policemen and whites who are in positions of control.

Because of the fear we suffer, and the frustrations we experience we tend to lash out at our own people, the innocent ones who are not directly responsible for the exploitation and oppression we suffer. I say, indirectly, because 70% of the oppression we suffer results from our acceptance of that oppression.

The oppressor cannot successfully oppress the people unless the people themselves are allowing themselves to be so oppressed. Somewhere in the subconscious recesses of the blackman's mind is the feeling that he is not responsible for his suffering. But because he cannot articulate his feelings, he reacts aggressively to the nearest opponent — who happens to be his neighbour.

## THE DIVIDE AND RULE SYNDROME

We have discussed how the ruling class organised the destruction of the history of a people that it has subjugated.

Having done that it must maintain its position of superiority. And that it cannot do by the continued use of violence alone. Therefore, it has to inculcate within the oppressed and exploited people a condition where the oppressed will maintain their own oppression.

Thus it encourages a policy and implements a programme that will keep the oppressed peoples divided in order that they may exercise greater control over the ruled. **What this, in effect, means is that the rulers maximise the conflict within the oppressed people themselves in order to minimise the need for control.**

**Against this they minimise the conflict within the ruling class in order to maximise unity within the ruling class.**

Thus the relationship between the various linguistic groups within white society (English, Afrikaners, Portuguese, Italians, etc) is developed to a degree where there is little conflict.

On the other hand the relationship within the various so-called ethnic groups within the black community (Indians,

Zulus, Xhosas, Pedis, Coloureds, etc) is developed in such a way that they are constantly divided and therefore do not act as a cohesive, united force.

## DISCOVERY OF THE SELF: A LIBERATING PROCESS

The preceding discussion might leave one with the feeling that nothing can be done about the condition of the black people. That is not strictly true.

Because black people perceive the situation as we have discussed above, the next step is to search for the kind of cure that will effect a reversal of the oppressive and exploitative condition in South Africa.

It is against this background (and also the analysis of the economic, social and political questions in South Africa) that the philosophy of Black Consciousness was born.

Black Consciousness seeks to restore the equilibrium in a society where the haves are white people and the have-nots are black people. This means that white society is the problem, and there is no need for black people to suffer any kind of complex for the woes that face them.

White society by virtue of its role in creating such an unequal society is guilty of the problems we suffer.

And because we must rid ourselves of the mental servitude that has bound us for over three hundred years, it becomes our duty as blacks to forge our own freedom.

In these circumstances BC calls upon the blackman to see himself as self-defined and not as defined by others. In order to do this black people must close ranks to thrash out their destiny and to organise themselves in such a way that they can stand up for the recovery of what rightfully belongs to them.

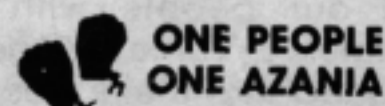
Thus white people cannot play a part in this programme. The best that white people can do is to work amongst their own kind and educate their people about the wrongs that they are committing and prepare them to accept that the black people will establish an Azanian nation.

In the South African context to answer the question "who am I" of necessity demands that you ask whether you are black or white?

If you answer that you are black then there is little alternative but to embrace the philosophy of BC as your guiding light in the search for total liberation.

## CONCLUSION

Psychological liberation and physical liberation go hand in hand. Without the achievement of the former we cannot rid ourselves of the chains that bind us economically, politically and socially.



ONE PEOPLE  
ONE AZANIA