



STEVE BIKO AIRPORT, FOR A CHANGE

The Eastern Cape Province of AZAPO has dropped its submission on 5 June 2018 to the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) towards the renaming of the East London Airport to Steve Biko Airport. AZAPO is the custodian of Biko and the flagbearer of Black Consciousness. It is therefore right that AZAPO is continuing to ensure that Biko's name and legacy do not evaporate into thin treacherous air.



AZAPO has showed political maturity in how it approaches the various liberation heritage days and events. It is BCM that kept the Sharpeville Massacre alive by commemorating it every year since 1971 through SASO, and BPC took over as from 1973, while AZAPO kept the legacy since its formation. It did not matter to AZAPO that the organisation behind Sharpeville Day was the PAC. What mattered was that the day marked the bravery and hunger of the Azanians for the reconquest of their land and liberation.

It is for the same reason that AZAPO is not pushing for the naïve line of wanting all airports to be renamed exclusively after the leaders of the BCM. This is because AZAPO has the presence of mind to acknowledge that it is not the only political force that fought for our liberation. The ANC, PAC, Unity Movement and many other forces made their contributions and sacrifices, which deserve recognition. Any totalitarian attempt to seek to reduce Azania to a dynasty where everything must be renamed after one family must be rejected with contempt.

Similarly, political organisations should acknowledge the fact that a wide range of forces contributed to the liberation struggle. They range from cultural activists, faith organisations, labour movement to sports organisations. That is why AZAPO insists that Afrikan warrior Kings like Sekhukhune, Hintsa, Shaka, Makhado, David Stuurman, Ngungunyana, should also be honoured. Artists like Mazisi Kunene, SEK Mqhayi, Miriam Tladi, Tiyo Soga, JJR Jolobe, Ellen Khuzwayo, deserve equal attention when it comes to honouring and remembering.

Steve Biko is one of the least honoured of the leaders of the Azanian Revolution. It makes a whole lot of sense to rename the East London Airport to Steve Biko Airport. Indeed, there is already a Steve Biko Bridge that leads to the (Steve Biko) Airport from the city of East London. This airport is where Biko held some of

his interviews with world leaders, and it is located only about 50km from his home of Ginsberg and his Grave, which has since been declared The Garden of Remembrance and therefore a heritage site.

In its submission to ACSA, the Eastern Cape PEC makes the point that:

AZAPO believes that the Steve Biko International Airport name will unravel and expose a lot of cultural and liberation heritage by drawing the attention of the people and the tourists to the name of one of us who suffered and died in humiliation for our liberation. Picking up Biko's name and immortalising it by renaming the Airport should ensure that Biko did not die in vain; and that his name would not be lost to posterity as his murderers had wished.

Our Comrades add that:

As a matter of fact, the "East London" amounts to a ridiculous copying of everything that is western. "East London" can only be in relation to London, which we don't have in South Africa. The Steve Biko Airport renaming would also help relieve the over-used names.

OUR COUNTRY DESPERATELY NEEDS BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

The latest developments at the Charlotte Maxeke Hospital in Johannesburg where health workers trashed the hospital premises, vandalised property and stopped other health workers from rendering essential services to the sick, including those in theatre, is another piece of evidence that this country desperately needs BC.

BC teaches us to love ourselves, to respect ourselves and to take pride in what we do. The philosophy of Biko also teaches to have an undying love for Black people, and work towards improving their lives. Clearly, a health worker who sees nothing wrong in trashing a hospital and even put a life of a patient at

risk has no love for themselves and the patient. The acts by the striking workers, which the Health Minister described as hooliganism, could not have been committed by people who have self-respect.



For the record, AZAPO condemns the behaviour of the government, which had promised health workers certain bonuses only to renege. After the trashing of the hospital and the threats to human lives, the government committed to settling the payment. That should not have happened that way. A government that respects the lives of Black people would not have waited for the hospital to be trashed before acceding to the workers' demands.

At the height of apartheid repression, the ANC called on the masses of the people to render the country ungovernable. This was a legitimate call because the regime was undemocratic and racist. But in the post-apartheid era, where the country is under a black led administration, aspirations of the people should not be realised only through "rendering the country ungovernable". The government should be more responsive to the needs of the people in general.

There is an unfortunate culture that is taking root in our country. People believe that for them to be listened to, they should resort to extraordinary measures to attract the attention of an unresponsive state. We saw this in Vuwani where the people burnt schools to make their point that some of their areas from Thulamela be incorporated into Malamulele. The government that had earlier dismissed the call, caved in after a protracted struggle that saw the destruction of schools and a sustained boycott by the learners and teachers.

We live in a democracy. Those who are not happy with the government should use the power of their vote to change the government. The government that claims to govern on behalf of the people should be more responsive to the development aspirations of the people. Of course, some of the demands that the people make may be impossible to fulfil, but a legitimate government should be able to be honest and tell the people what is possible and what is not possible.

But we are addressing the symptoms of the problem. The real problem is that the government shows no respect for Black people. Similarly, the workers have little respect for the government. If we were to be blunt, many of our Black people hate being black. That is why Black people treat each other with disdain.

TRUMP – THE EVIL FACE OF IMPERIALISM

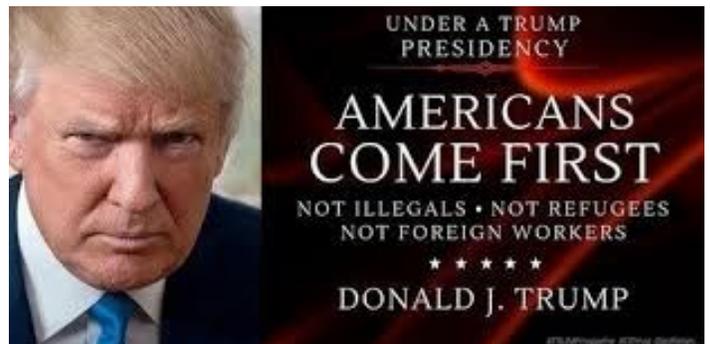
For a long period, the United States of America has mastered the art of manipulating public opinion to dupe the world into believing that America is a leader of the so-called “free world”. America has forcefully positioned itself as a leader of democracy so much that it has appointed itself as the international policeman with the authority to unleash wars and enforce peace when it is convenient for America.

Through instruments of indoctrination such as the media and films, the USA appears to be the ideal land of the “free” which offers equal opportunities to all. In that country, capitalism is misleadingly portrayed as an effective system that improves the lives of the people. The American model creates an impression that if your country wants to attain its maximum potential for development, it should be democratic and embrace capitalism to engage in fair trade with other countries across the globe. What a façade!

While America has generally fooled the rest of the world, sometimes less sophisticated leaders such as Donald Trump expose what has been concealed to many – that America cares for Americans and nobody else. With his announcements of punitive tariffs in

the steel industry, Trump has unmasked the evil face of imperialist America.

Trump has showed that he would protect American industries without regard to the rest of the world. In the mainstream media, Trump is projected as a lone ranger who seems to act without a mandate from the broad administration and other lawmakers. But let us get something correct. Trump was elected by the American voters. He is actually delivering for them. The only problem could be that he lacks the finesse that other American leaders before him had to create an impression that America cares about the rest of the world.



The man is a bad politician only because he is honest. While other American leaders massaged the concerns of the world, pretending to care, Trump is blunt. Since its founding in 1948, Israel had been getting support from the USA. Various American leaders have been talking about a peace plan with the Palestinians when in actual fact, they were siding with the Israelis. But not Trump. He is brave and honest. He moved the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to display his open support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Trump is a public relations nightmare for the Americans and imperialism. The proponents of capitalism have been trying to prove to the world that capitalism is the only economic system that creates jobs and fights poverty. All that should happen, according to the disciples of capitalism, is that countries must manufacture goods and engage in fair trade as per the World Trade Organisation’s treaties. But Trump has undermined this by openly advocating protectionist policies that favour Americans at the expense of other players. We may not like him, but Trump helps us to understand that America is an imperialist country that acts in the interest of its people. Period!

CLEAN GOVERNANCE AND A COMPETENT PUBLIC SERVICE

On 16 May 2018 we witnessed on live television the disruption of the Tshwane Mayoral Committee meeting hosted by the Executive Mayor Solly Msimang by the EFF. This organisation demanded the immediate suspension and resignation of the appointed Chief of Staff, Ms Marietha Aucamp. Her academic qualifications were said to be questionable.

The Executive Mayor refused to take direct responsibility for the appointment of Ms Aucamp. His Spokesperson, Sam Mgobozi, defended him by stating that the Mayor would not be part of the recruitment process of any senior manager. But the subsequently provided evidence appeared to confirm that the Mayor was part of the Interview Panel that appointed Ms Aucamp.

The Ms Aucamp saga is worrying in that it suggests that in the City of Tshwane due process of appointing a suitably qualified candidate is not followed to the letter. It makes you wonder how many candidates evaded the process like Ms Aucamp. That uncertainty warrants a qualifications audit of all public officials. We should be worried even more because the DA got votes on the promise of fighting corruption and nepotism, which it now seems to be guilty of.

On the strength of the 2016 judgement of the High Court of Kwazulu-Natal Division in the matter between Westwood Insurance Brokers (Pty) Ltd and Ethekweni Municipality and others (Case No: 8221/16), the City of Tshwane officials (including the Executive Mayor) who participated in the process that led to the appointment of Ms Aucamp, should be held jointly and severally responsible.

In the 2016 Local Government Elections (LGE), the EFF decided to support or vote with the Democratic Alliance (DA) in the City of Tshwane, Nelson Mandela Bay, Johannesburg and other Municipalities. The residents are now witnessing the consequences of what

their support or voting with DA has caused. The City of Tshwane is currently under the DA as a result of the EFF's vote and/or support. AZAPO finds it odd to support a political party that is traditionally white and predominantly liberal; more especially at these critical times in our history when we have no option but to boldly confront the failure of the ruling party's failure to return the land to its rightful owners and achieve equitable distribution of the wealth among all Azanians.



AZAPO stands for the appointment of competent, qualified and experienced officials at local, provincial, national government; including in all State-Owned Companies (SOCs) and Public Entities. We remain adamant in our resolve to have public service at all levels immediately de-politicised and professionalised. AZAPO supports creation of a single public service that will bring standardisation at local, provincial, national government; including in all State-Owned Companies (SOCs) and Public Entities.

Further, AZAPO believes that the waiver option for candidates who do not meet the requirements as provided for in the Local Government Amendment Act by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) must be scrapped from the Act as it is only meant to favour particular candidates, promotes incompetence and is open for abuse by politicians at local government level. We have more than enough University and University of Technology Graduates in South Africa across the political spectrum and there is therefore no reason for the country to drop the standards whilst in pursuance of excellence.