

STRENGTHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Who Sondaha Sikhhipha is lucky to be alive. The community leader of Khubvi, about 20km outside Thohoyandou was brutally beaten, doused with petrol and was about to be set alight when police rescued him from a crowd of angry local residents.



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The residents were accusing Sikhhipha of being responsible for the disappearance of a 3-year-old toddler. In a radio interview, Sikhhipha said he was part of a community delegation that visited a sangoma who was to expose those who were behind the disappearance of the 3-year-old. He said he was puzzled by the residents who turned on him because his name was not mentioned by the sangoma. Residents suspect that the toddler has been murdered and mutilated to make muthi.

There are a few lessons to be drawn from the Khubvi saga. The obvious one is that the community has lost confidence in the ability of the law enforcement agencies to uphold the law. When a child goes missing, and the community suspect foul play, they should report the matter to the police.

The fact that the community feels compelled to play the role of the police is proof that they have no confidence in the police.

The police can only restore public confidence in the system if they act swiftly to solve reported crimes. It is not good enough for the police to plead with the public, saying “people should not take the law into their own hands.” There are several cases of alleged muthi murders that remain unsolved in Limpopo. The government is appearing to be unable to ensure that law-abiding residents are protected.

Early this week, Limpopo premier Stan Mathabatha expressed “concern” at the reported cases of armed robbery on the N1 highway, which resulted in a multiple accident that caused the deaths of several people. Thugs, armed to the teeth, are forcing motorists to stop on the N1, with a clear intention of robbing them. And all the most senior politician in the province can say is that he is “concerned”?

The state should carry its function of enforcing the law. Otherwise, our country will degenerate into anarchy, where people such as Sikhhipha are victims of jungle injustice.

LET THE PEOPLE ELECT THE PRESIDENT

In several of its past Election Manifestos, **AZAPO** has consistently called for the direct election of the President by the people. Even though some Presidents commit the mistake or ignorance of claiming that they were elected by the people, the constitutional fact is that they were never elected by the people.

The way it works in South Africa is that the people elect their 400 public representatives, who in turn elect a President among themselves in their first sitting in Parliament. In that regard, the President in South Africa is indirectly elected. In other words, South Africa does not use a Presidential System as does Zimbabwe, Uganda, Brazil or the US. Of course, a person so elected resigns from Parliament and assume their duties as Head of State and government.

In the present Proportional Representation and Party List system, the status quo is such that the majority political party practically “elects” the President in that it has the numbers to ensure that its choice prevails. This also means that the majority party can choose to defend or “fire” the President they “elected”. That is exactly what happened with Thabo Mbeki. The ruling party conveniently forgot that Mbeki was the President of the country. When its factional interests conspired that Mbeki was no longer relevant, the ruling party was able to stage a smart *coup d'état* that, in a sense, undermined the Constitution. The country was helpless. It just watched as its President became a victim of the factional battles of the ruling party. Jacob Zuma, who was the beneficiary of the factional battles, soon became the victim of the same ANC's factional battles.

That can hardly be good for a stable democracy. But **AZAPO's** main thrust is in the need for the people to have a direct choice in electing the President. In the present system, the electorate vote for a particular political party on the basis of a Party List. The voters are therefore not voting for the election of a President. **AZAPO** insists that the people must be given that express choice of electing their President, who will ultimately be directly accountable to them over and above the other authorities. Equally, and by extension, the people must have the right to directly vote in their mayors as that is the seat of government with which people deal directly.

In the present Constitutional dispensation, and subject to the Constitutional processes, a President who is technically “elected” by the majority political party enjoys a scary over-concentration of powers. She appoints and fires Cabinet members as she pleases. She appoints the Premiers. She appoints the judges. She appoints the National Director of Prosecutions and the Public Protector. She appoints the Commissions. Evidence flowing from the Zondo Commission tells us that this “majority party President” has the powers to influence the appointment of the Chairpersons of Boards and CEOs of the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). We also know that she has the power to influence the appointments of Directors-General of governments departments. She also has the power to influence the appointment of the Vice Chancellors of universities.

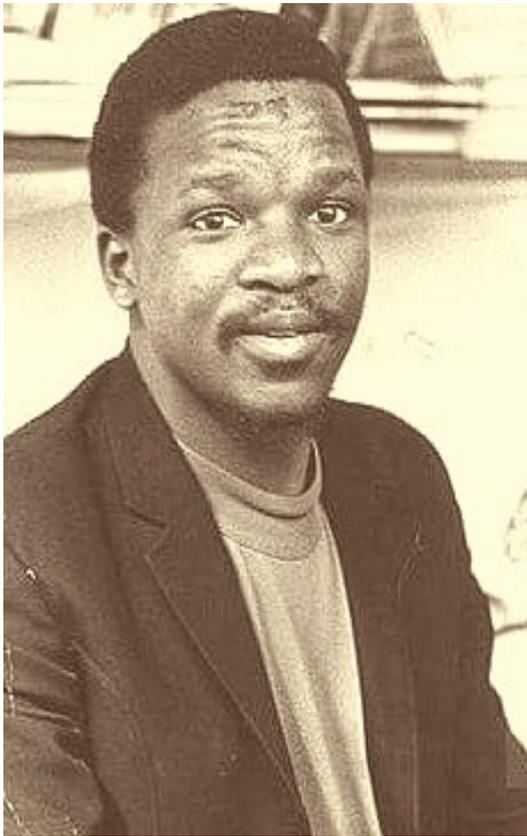


It will be difficult for any person of sound mind to disagree that such direct and indirect over-concentration of power in one person is a recipe for governance disaster. We may add that this “majority party President” also has the powers to influence the election of the leaders of her party's provincial leaders, and so forth.

AZAPO calls for the direct election of the President and the overhaul of the over-concentration of powers in the President.

WE REMEMBER TIRO

As the Zondo Commission is progressing, we learn every day about how the ruling party has turned South Africa into a Mafia State. The Commission is helping the citizens understand the schemes and methods used by the ruling party and its leaders in Capturing the State whose negative results have, so to speak, plunged Black people 100 years back into poverty, inequality and under-development. As the ruling party politicians are sinking one another deeper into their corruption mud at the Commission, the public is enjoying the benefit of knowing the extent to which the ruling party is ruining Azania.



Onkgopotse Ramothibi Tiro ✨ 09 November 1945 - 01 February 1974

While the ruling party politicians are urinating and relieving themselves on the sacrifices and contributions of the Azanian Martyrs, we remember that Ramothibi Onkgopotse Abram Tiro would have turned 73 on 9 November. We remember the one who warned and armed the Azanian Revolutionaries that there was “no struggle without casualties”. His assassination by the white settler colonial regime in Botswana on 1 February 1974 became a tragic fulfilment of his own “prophesy”. He became a casualty of the Azanian Revolution.

When you look around today and see how to make nonsense of the spilling of the blood and the loss of lives of the Azanian Revolutionaries, you need to listen to **BC** Stalwart Prof Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu and hear how the Black Consciousness Liberation Warriors lived in exile. Listen to Cde Nengwekhulu talking about the life they lived with Tiro in exile:

“We looked at alternatives that could be used to kill us. One of them that we considered was the issue of being run down by the cars while walking on the streets. We then devised a lot of strategies; one of them was that when we walk in the street and see a car coming towards us, we should protect ourselves by walking parallel to the electric pole. We never thought that someone could be killed by a letter bomb or a parcel bomb because it was not a common thing”.

Today the politicians who are playing a surfing game on the blood of Tiro and all the Azanian Martyrs do not walk on pavements and avoiding cars. If they are not flying to Dubai, they are being chauffeured around in luxury German sedans oblivious to them that Black militants had to die for them to taste that life. Let Comrade Nengwekhulu remind the corrupt politicians how an Azanian leader died for them to swim in their riches and stinking luxury:

“A man called Mr Erickson received a parcel from the Post Office and realised it was not his; he then told the messenger that it is going to someone called Mr Tiro. The parcel which contained a bomb that killed Tiro on February 1, 1974, was taken back to the Post Office and transferred to Joseph College, in Kgale where Tiro was staying. According to the report from the School, a learner was sent to deliver the parcel to Tiro. Certainly Tiro didn’t open it immediately because this young girl would have died. I think he opened it immediately after the girl had returned to the classroom because upon her arrival, they heard an explosion. The bomb killed him by ripping part of his stomach, his hands were never found”.

In **1998** the Tiro family and **AZAPO** exhumed Tiro’s remains and reburied them at his place of birth in Dinokana.

Because Tiro died so that we could live, those of us who are fortunate to still have their hands, we raise our Black Power Fist sky-high and salute our Azanian Martyr.

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS AND SELF-RELIANCE

One of the most distinguishing features of Black Consciousness (BC) is the concept of self-reliance. As adherents of BC, we coined the slogan: “phansi na mabhunu asithandayo!” Loosely translated, the slogan means - down with the white settlers who love us.



“This slogan was not inspired by hatred for white people. It was a message to Black people, saying that we should not allow white liberals to hijack our struggle for the repossession of the land, political liberation and economic emancipation. The slogan was urging Black people to be the masters of their own destiny. It was alerting us to be careful, and not allow liberals to (mis)guide us in the struggle against white colonialists. For if we allowed white liberals to lead our struggle, they will determine the minimum demand of our struggle. They will also advise us on how we should respond to white racism. Architects of BC were acutely aware that Black people should be at the centre of their struggle, and not those whites who professed to love us more than they loved the benefits that were reserved for them by the virtue of their skin colour.

But our BC ancestors were accommodative. They advised those white liberals who were so consumed by the guilt of white privilege and wanted to participate in the struggle for Black liberation to focus their energies on their white compatriots; preaching to them about the evils of colonialism and apartheid instead of wanting to lead our struggle for liberation and the repossession of the land.

The infiltration of white liberals into our liberation struggle proved to be toxic to our collective struggle. They convinced a component of the liberation movement that the struggle was in fact not about the repossession of land, but was about equal rights and anti-Apartheid in character and form. They even convinced some of our struggle fellows that South Africa’s colonialism was a “colonialism of a special type”. What a lie! Colonialism is colonialism.

The lie propagated by the white liberals did not end there. A narrative was developed that our land ‘belongs to all who live in it’. The assumption of the leadership role by the liberals is the reason that the issue of the repossession of land took a back seat when the future of this country was being discussed in Kempton Park in the early 1990s. Those talks focused on everything else, except the one thing that gave rise to the conflict between the Black land owners and the invading European settlers who robbed the Black people of their land.

The lie continued. The liberals designed an economic system that ensured that Black people would depend on whites for their survival. That is why even today the concept of “mlungu” is equivalent to “boss”. Mlungu is synonymous for employer.

Black people will be free when we fully translate the aspiration and spirit of self-reliance into practice. BC is the only weapon that can make this possible.

