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POST-CORONA: TOWARDS A NEW NORMAL

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**In the time of
Coronavirus, the
need to build a
mass united global
people's move-
ment for socialist
change has never
been more urgent!!**

In a recent discussion, a group of scientists agreed that "there almost certainly" is life in other parts of the universe. The question then arises, "why haven't they yet discovered us here on planet earth?" The discussion led to an interesting conclusion: "Just as intelligent life on earth is destroying itself at the same time as its people's intelligence and capacities are growing – so intelligent life forms in other parts of the universe have completely destroyed themselves before they could develop sufficient capability to send live exploratory missions out into the universe."

It would seem that we – humanity here on earth – are locked into a pathway that is leading inexorably to our doom, and possibly with it, the doom of all life-forms on this planet. In addition to certain power elites having access to weapons of mass destruction these same elites control the global economy that is relentlessly driving up carbon emissions which in turn are the cause of

devastating global warming.

And now we have SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus which causes the disease COVID-19. All indications are that the impact of this "unseen enemy" is in the early stages of wreaking havoc equivalent to or greater than that of the Second World War.

And this virus, too, is widely regarded as a result of decisions by those same power elites to promote their own self-interest.

We are talking about the capitalist class and the capitalist system. We are talking about how control of the economy serves the narrow self-interest of the owners of capital, even as the system proves ruinous to the vast majority of the world's inhabitants, human and non-human.

Several prominent experts (for example, epidemiologist Rob Wallace) have identified the spread of Agri-business, which has extended the boundaries of capitalist-for-profit farming way into previously uncharted forest regions, and has

A world where caring is foregrounded

“From each according to their means, to each according to their needs”

thereby increased the “interface” between ourselves and deadly new pathogens (i.e. viruses or other micro-organisms that can cause disease) which were previously “locked away” in the deeper reaches of forest-lands.

So, we have nuclear weapons, global warming and now, COVID-19 - a toxic mix indeed!

What is to be done?

As so many current social media articles and comments have suggested: we, the working people of the world, must UNITE. This is not a new call, nor is the idea of unity foreign to us. Across the world, in every country, there are hundreds, thousands, probably millions of “people’s organisations” of every description - trade unions, movements for socialist, feminine, gender liberation, anti-war movements, civics, sports clubs, religious groups, student and youth movements, cultural

collectivities . . . the list is endless. We as social beings certainly know how to organise - and to do so democratically. The challenge is: how do we galvanize these various small focused groups into a mass democratic movement for global (socialist) change? How do we marshal people’s power on an unprecedented scale that ensures when the coronavirus pandemic is under control, we don’t go back to “business as usual,” but that the working masses of the world have significantly strengthened their power and broken the shackles imposed on them by the capitalist elites so that we are in a position to rebuild the world along socialist lines. We need a world that is built on new ethical foundations - one for all and all for one, a world where CARING is foregrounded - “from each according to their means, to each according to their needs” must (in our life-time!) become the new normal going forward.

Dr. Abe Mohamed

We are saddened by the passing of Dr Abe Mahomed on 11 April 2020. We extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to his sons, daughters and fellow freedom fighters.

He will certainly be remembered by thousands of grateful patients as a skilled, kind and compassionate surgeon and by most in the medical fraternity for his humility, good natured-ness and his role as a founding member of the Health Workers Society that played a pivotal role in opposition to the apartheid health system from 1980 onwards.

We, however, will remember him as a loyal supporter of the principles and policies of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) and for the role; he played in bringing about the formation of the New Unity Movement (NUM) in 1985.

He played an active role in affiliates of the NEUM like the Gleemore Cape Flats Civic Association and the Cape Flats Cultural Society (CAFEF) where he was a regular public speaker. He was also part of the CAFEF ‘Marxist Reading Circle’ that met at Dullah Omar’s house. In the 1970’s the CAFEF had Public Meetings/Gatherings, a Members Group that planned events, as well as an Inner Marxist Reading Circle. He participated in all three levels.

Together with Dullah Omar he went on to play a leading role in the establishment of the NUM in 1985 which was the culmination of exploratory meetings, some of which took place in his house in Athlone in the early 1980’s, that were held to discuss the necessity of bringing about the re-emergence of the Unity Movement.

Although we lost direct contact with him in the late 1990s, we are convinced however that he remained committed to seeing the establishment of a socialist democracy in this country.



A Tribute to MP Giyose

**Cde Pumi
on**

"Building Working Class Power for Socialism"

COMRADE MALLET PUMELELE GIYOSE: A SPECIAL TRIBUTE ON HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY 20TH APRIL 2020

The New Unity Movement issues this special tribute to our long-serving former vice president comrade MP Giyose popularly known as MP or Pumi to most of us, on the occasion of his 80th birthday in special recognition of the invaluable contribution he has made in the life of this organisation, not only in terms of his oratorical skills but more so in terms of his great intellectual contribution in helping in the formulation of the principles and policies of our organisation.

In congratulating him on achieving this milestone in his life, we wish him continuing good health and much joy and happiness together with his dear wife Lali, in the years ahead.

A BRIEF REFLECTION ON A LIFE DEDICATED TO THE POOR AND DOWNTRODDEN MASSES OF THIS COUNTRY.

His lifelong commitment to the policies and principles of the Unity Movement started at the age of 14 whilst a scholar at Lovedale Secondary School. This was when he joined the Society of Young Africa (SOYA) an affiliate of the All African Convention (AAC) and the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) in 1954.

After qualifying as a teacher in Healdtown he started his teaching career at the Nyaluza Secondary school in Grahamstown in 1961 where he single-handedly established a branch of the SOYA.

He subsequently moved to Johannesburg where his work in SOYA brought him to the attention

of the Special Branch there. As a result of his work in the SOYA, he was dismissed from teaching, and together with several other SOYANS was banned and placed under house arrest. This state harassment forced him together with several other SOYANS into exile in 1965.

He returned to South Africa in 1990 after living and working, first in Uganda for more than ten years and then in Botswana.

Whilst in exile in Gaborone, Botswana he together with many other comrades who swore allegiance to the principles and policies of the NEUM, participated in discussions with other formations from both inside and outside South Africa in the late '70s, early '80s.

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CUBA, CORONAVIRUS AND PEACE THROUGH MEDICAL SOLIDARITY

Peace is intertwined with human dignity and health is a recognised human right. The coronavirus attacks human dignity and ends human life. It creates havoc in personal, economic and global relations. The arbitrary nature of the virus and its blind assault on human dignity across the world, threatens humanity. In the face of this violent force of nature, the Cubans have emerged as global peace champions despite suffering illegal blockades and aggression. The American death rate will escalate and they have the most people in the world who have tested positive for the coronavirus. The American government must reach out to Cuba to assist in saving American lives.

Pope Francis, Raul Castro and Barack Obama, diverse as they are in ideological terms, have one enduring common factor amongst them. These three leaders contributed to the breakdown of one of the last relics of the cold war by starting a process of normalization between Cuba and United States of America. In March 2016, Obama became the first sitting president to visit Cuba since Calvin Coolidge in 1928. An article on 17 December 2014 (Washington

Post) stated that *"Barack Obama and Raúl Castro thanked Pope Francis for helping to broker a historic deal to begin normalising relations between the United States and Cuba...which brought a sudden end to decades of cold war hostility."* Tensions between the

United States and Cuba have re-emerged under President Donald Trump. Cuban mercy medical missions are under attack. On 17 February 2020, the Guardian stated that *"US secretary of state Mike Pompeo, depicted the deployment of Cuban doctors in countries from Venezuela to Brazil and Ecuador as sinister interference in their affairs"*. The deputy secretary of state, Michael Kozak, stated that *"the Castro regime sends...50,000 Cuban medical staff overseas to work in harsh conditions. Stories of abuses abound."*

Faithful to calls from the current rightwing American administration, Brazil expelled 8000 doctors in November 2018 but strangely no American doctors replaced the Cubans. Brazilians suffered and the coronavirus ravaged Brazil. On 15 March 2020, Secretary of Health, João Gabbardo, publicly requested the Cubans

to return. 5000 Cuban doctors responded as peace champions to go to the frontlines in Brazil.

There is something obscenely wicked in the actions of those who use structural violence to pressurise countries to abandon medical help from the Cubans. Structural violence can be defined as the violence that arises from those who are entrusted with public power but who

use that power in a way that is negative to the human dignity and rights of others. Structural violence is the mobilization of collective power in the hands of individuals who occupy leadership positions which they prejudicially use to exercise political, economic and social power.



When Hurricane Katrina devastated the United States in 2005, the Cuban government offer of *"1600 medics, field hospitals and 83 tons of medical supplies to ease the humanitarian disaster"* was not accepted (Mary Murray - 14 September 2005). This was a missed opportunity to forge human solidarity across ideological divides and to elevate human lives and dignity above all else.

The coronavirus has hit Italy with deadly intensity and the country faces its worst crisis in modern history. The European Union and the American administration have been unable to send medical expertise needed by the Italians. Cubans have been openly welcomed by the Italian government and its people. The coronavirus sweeping the world has forced humanity

to refocus on peace as a transformative force to reshape human relations.

because human freedoms and lives are at stake. George Washington University, director of the Cuba Documentation Project at the National Security Archives, Peter Kornbluh stated that *"you have a leading European nation accepting support in the form of a medical team...And it goes to the history of Cuba's deep and long-lasting commitment to humanitarian solidarity. Cuba ...was on the frontlines of the fight against Ebola in Africa. They received the utmost compliments from former American United Nations Ambassador, Samantha Power... And it's a similarly awesome thing for Cuba to be sending doctors to Italy as part of a worldwide effort, really, to fight this pandemic."*

Italy is in a crisis but the current American administration has not sent their doctors to Italy and neither to any poor countries across the world. Cuba is tiny, the 'David' of the world that the government of Italy called upon during the worst crisis that it faces in modern history. They

placed the lives of Italians above ideology and elevated a principle of human solidarity to save lives. Italians and Cubans are the new peace symbols for humanity.

Peace and human dignity are at the centre of the medical missions of mercy undertaken by the Cubans across the world. The response to the coronavirus can help to unite humanity to reveal the best versions of ourselves.

Prof Brian Williams

Visiting Professor in Peace, Mediation and Labour Relations: University of the Sacred Heart, Gulu- Uganda

Chief Executive: Williams Labour Law and Mediation

Thought Leader Award Recipient for 2018 (Black Management Forum)

Article first published in the Cape Argus on 31 March 2020

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Those discussions eventually culminated in the formation of the New Unity Movement in 1985. As a member of the Gaborone Educational Fellowship (GEF) which had been established in 1987, he produced two seminal works, namely "Non-Collaboration: A Theory of Social Change" in 1988 and "Problems of Organisation" in 1989. His writings are imbued with his great insight and understanding of the world's literature in general and the Marxist canon in particular.

He became a leading member of the NUM after its formation in 1985, whilst still in exile in Botswana. After returning from exile, he lived in Cape Town for a few years before settling in Port Alfred in the Eastern Cape and working as he continues to do, in the Eastern Cape branch of the NUM.

He served on the National Executive, as a vice president from 1995 until ill health forced him to retire last year.

Comrade Pumi's intellectual prowess that can be easily discerned from reading the numerous ana-

lytical articles and commentaries he has written over the years is widely acknowledged, as are his oratory skills.

Comrade Pumi is renowned as a prolific writer, contributing numerous conference papers, contributions for our Bulletin and other occasional papers. We intend to publish a collection of his writings in due course.

Quite apart from his dedicated work in the NUM, his commitment to the struggles of the poor is reflected in several other affiliations. These are, amongst others: As the chairperson of the Board of the Alternative Information and Development Centre (AIDC), as the chairperson of Jubilee South and as member of the Unemployed People's Movement (UPM) and the Masifunde Educational and Development Project Trust

We salute him for having remained loyal and true to the founding principles and policies of the Unity Movement as embodied in the Ten-Point Programme of Transitional Demands, the policies of non-racialism, non-collaboration and anti-imperialism.

ARE WE READY?

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing - Arundhati Roy

The 1918 influenza pandemic was the most severe in recent history to date. Erroneously called the Spanish flu, the H1N1 virus, with genes of avian origin was the direct cause of the flu, spread worldwide during 1918-1919. It is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world's population, became infected with the virus. The number of people killed during the epidemic was estimated to

In South Africa as all over the world, the coronavirus has grabbed the headlines. SA, as are many other countries worldwide, is in lockdown. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) by 29 March, there were 703 876 confirmed cases of Coronavirus worldwide with 33 214 deaths and 149 219 recovered. **In SA on 2020/04/14 there were 2272 cases of confirmed coronavirus cases with 27 deaths.**

The world as we know it will never be the same in a post-Coronavirus era. Changes are going to occur. The health systems of countries, mostly unaware and unprepared were caught off-guard resulting in the catastrophe that is playing itself out.

Indications are that SA is heading for a depression, a condition far worse than the recession we are in at present. In the local communities, there is a groundswell of anger that will eventually burst out into the open. Now it displays itself as service delivery protests – housing and the land question, water and sanitation, tarred roads, joblessness, electricity provision, mining rights and increases in transport. Several organisations all over the country are leading these disparate protest groups, amongst the more prominent are: Amadiba Crisis Committee, Abahlali baseMjondolo, Anti-Privatisation Forum, The SA Unemployed Peoples Movement, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee and a host of others.

Further, the SA economy has not recovered from

the 2008 crisis. The ANC government together with the world crisis in capitalism has led the SA economy into a cul-de-sac. This is the 9th consecutive year that the economy has taken a downturn. With global markets in recession and the electricity crisis at ESKOM, it is highly improbable that the SA economy will improve, even post-coronavirus. With the pandemic crisis not even nearing its peak and no sign of imminent flattening, the economic crisis will deepen. As a result, waves of retrenchments can be expected with an increase in poverty levels.

The time for a change to a socialist system of governance has arrived!!!

The only way the economic crisis can be solved under capitalism is to place the burden squarely on the shoulders of the working class. Government debt levels have increased to more than 60% of GDP. SA had a negative growth rate even before the coronavirus crisis. With the Rand/dollar exchange rate hovering around the R18 - R19/dollar, the Reserve Bank estimates that the SA economy may contract by between 2% and 4% this year. And, that there is very little prospect of a rebound in 2021 with growth unlikely to exceed 1%. The downturn in the SA economy is par for the course in most of the countries worldwide.

The "narrow" definition of unemployment states that 29.1% of the population are jobless – this translates into more than 7 million active work seekers. Besides, there are probably more than 16 million people in the 15 to 64 age group, who want to work but are regarded as economically inactive. In the rural areas of Limpopo,

Mpumalanga, North West and the Eastern Cape the unemployment rate is more than 45%.

Another scourge on the political landscape is that of racism. The Teachers League of SA first articulated the idea that racism and capitalism are two sides of the same coin. Although apartheid has been abandoned, the living conditions of the impoverished have hardly improved. The



majority of the masses still live in dormitory township or shantytown dwellings. Besides, with the crisis in the economy, these concomitant afflictions cause a devastating effect on living standards. This has major social consequences – criminal violence reaching unmanageable proportions with violence against women being a real sickness. 87 000 Cases of gender-based violence were reported during the first week of lockdown. Whilst ordinary crime is expectedly down during this period, it is certainly not necessary to list all the social ills that beset our country. What we have to ascertain is what gives rise to these ills such as the holocaust on the Cape Flats and the Northern Areas of PE.

During the 70s, 80s and even 90s protests were led by the advanced elements of the working class. Of late, working-class struggles have largely been mostly for better wages. Struggles for land, housing and living conditions by workers have been muted and short-lived. No unified revolutionary-led workers movement has emerged to posit an alternate view and plot the way forward.

What is needed is a stronger unified leftist force that can galvanise the working class, the rural and urban poor in SA and the world over. Revolutionary movements have already started in South American countries. SA is part of the

world capitalist crises – the problem is not the workers or South African society but the leadership of the unions. Revolutionary activists must cultivate a new layer of leadership that can advance the battle for socialism in a demonstrative way. Once this is done, the workers will be on the move again.

Capitalism-Imperialism is by its very nature a world system. Socialism is similarly also a world system. It, therefore, follows that socialism cannot be built in one country.

Let this be the year (*Carpe Diem*) that organisations of the left the world over, not only in SA but also across the world formulate a strategy to transform the world to socialism. In SA a United Front of all left-leaning organisations must be formed to plot the way forward. The path to genuine human progress lies along an agreed way of non-collaboration, anti-imperialism and a socialist revolution.

IB Tabata states in "Let us Rally" in 1956: *"The task before is an extremely hard one; the road is arduous and the obstacles are great. We can never reach our goal by each one travelling in a different path. There is no short cut to liberation. We must bend all our efforts in a united concerted struggle."*



Human Rights



Notice No.4 April 2,

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

COVID-19 and the Plight of Workers!

Everyone, everywhere people have been tracking the latest news on the coronavirus and how various countries are responding to it. It hardly seems possible to many of us that the world could have changed so much in a few short weeks. Things that seemed important a few months ago are irrelevant now. When it comes to this pandemic, no leader can deny the science, nor can they endlessly delay action as they have done on global warming. Like the climate crisis, the virus predominantly threatens all of humankind. In this situation, the Al Kaaf Human Rights Centre and the New Unity Movement believe that the working class is one of the sectors that is most vulnerable.

So far, the worst affected regions are also closer to the centre of economic power: the industrialised North rather than developing countries in the global South. The danger however exist that we, in the South may suffer more due to weaker healthcare systems. The one exception is Cuba, although economically poor, has an outstanding healthcare system. Cuba has had a relatively low rate of infections (latest count 139 compared to 142 224 of the USA on the 30th March 2020). For nearly 60 years, Cuba has been sending healthcare professionals around the world. It does this in solidarity with those in need, but also as part of a concerted campaign of medical diplomacy. Based on the human rights concept that everyone should have the same opportunities in life, Cuba believed these ideals should be applicable at the global level. In 2019, more than 28,000 Cuban healthcare professionals were working abroad. And before the outbreak of the coronavirus, 59 countries were benefiting from Cuba's medical internationalism. The Cuban government recently confirmed that its medical missions will be maintained and that, where needed, the services provided by their doctors would focus on combating the virus. In line with this, it had sent a brigade of 53 doctors and nurses to Italy - a country with one of the highest infection rates.

As we follow the statistics, we witness the lost of lives of tens of thousands and infections of hundreds of thousands. On a daily basis, the numbers are increasing dramatically and there is no indication that the pandemic has peaked. The biggest concern is that once the disease hits shanty-

towns, slums, and camps all over the world, especially in Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and Latin America, where there are little if any healthcare and sanitary facilities, we might witness new heights of devastation. The number of infections could then be counted in millions.

We remind ourselves that initially, most international governments played down the epidemic. The primary concern of the capitalist ruling classes was not to preserve the health of the people, but only to keep production going at all costs. Their aim was not to save lives but to save the profits of big business. A case in point was the USA that now has the highest infection rate. The working class all over the world face the reality of how to survive this crisis, both physically and economically. In the weeks to come we will see increasing signs of this. Hundreds of thousands of workers are losing their jobs. Workers will still have to feed, clothe and have shelter for their families while struggling not to fall ill.

So while our country has gone into lockdown, like many others all over the world to one degree or another, we are told to avoid unnecessary movements and to self-isolate if we feel that we are at risk. In this situation, we realize that millions of workers (and unemployed) are left insecure with regards to their livelihood. Even when back at work after the lockdown, they will once again use crowded public transport and work shoulder to shoulder, thereby increasing the risk of infection.

This is putting workers' lives at risk. But they are also at risk of taking the contagion home and infecting their families. This will undermine all efforts to fight the virus. If social distancing measures are one of the tools for combating the spread of this virus, then this must apply strictly to ALL fields of life, and in particular to the workplaces. This should be a wake-up call where workplaces can be reorganised in such a way as to allow social distancing, as well as providing the workers with the necessary protective equipment when returning to work.

Workers must be at full pay during lockdown for as long as it is necessary. Big businesses are sitting on big stashes of cash that now should be used to look after those who have created the profits with their labour. Lay-offs must be out of the question!

The pandemic could not have come at a worse time for the world capitalist economy that has only been getting weaker for years with many people predicting another world recession such as in 2008. South Africa, being part of the world capitalist system, has been in a recessionary state for a while. They were put in an even deeper hole on the 27th March when the rating agency, Moody's reduced our economy to junk status. Much of this situation can be attributed to the ineptitude of the government to deal appropriately with the economy in the country resulting in us having the most unequal society in the world!

Its ability to guarantee the safety of ordinary working people, its ability to guarantee people jobs, its ability to give workers a wage to feed their families, is all being put into question.

As we came closer to lockdown day, we had scenes of panic buying and hoarding. What does this reflect? It reveals that people are terrified of the situation we have entered, but also shows that they do not trust the authorities nor "the market" to help them.

While no one knows how long the pandemic will last, all indications are that this crisis is going to have long-term economic effects, lower standards of living and increasing unemployment and poverty. This is what the capitalist system can offer even once the pandemic is over. While all efforts must be made to ensure that the most effective

measures are taken to combat the spread of the virus, we must not allow the capitalist class to exploit the present emergency to curtail the democratic rights of workers.

The profit motive is endangering the lives of millions of people. It is time to put an end to it. In its place what we require is a publicly-owned planned economy. Workers' democratic control and management should be the method introduced to oversee the productive process. In such an economy, resources could be rapidly shifted to cater for the needs of the moment. Production could be stopped without having to consider the loss of profits of the private owners. Workers kept at home could receive a regular income. In a nutshell, this means introducing socialism on a global scale. Genuine socialism is democratic, or it is nothing. Real socialism can only be achieved under a regime of workers' democracy, with a planned economy under the direct control and management of the workers. The alternative is society being plunged into the depths of barbarism on a scale far bigger than what we are experiencing.

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