

AFRICAN PEOPLES' PARTY'S SOLIDARITY STATEMENT FOR PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE
PRESENTED BY MUNTU MATSIMELA AT A MEETING IN PARK SLOPE, BROOKLYN, JAN. 31, 77

African Peoples' Party as a revolutionary nationalist, Black internationalist, anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly capitalist formation, firmly supports the legitimate and just demand by the Puerto Rican people for self-determination and national independence. We see the scheme U.S. imperialism has had in Puerto Rico as a colony and also presently in their recent attempts at pushing for statehood for Puerto Rico as another example of expanding their hegemony and control over the freedom and wealth of a struggling people.

Historically, U.S. imperialism has always used this method for strangling and distorting the national will of a people to have self-determination and national independence.

Right here in the citadel of imperialism, Black people who had been enslaved for over 300 years were tricked into U.S. citizenship immediately after the Civil War. The 14th Amendment which made Black people citizens was similar to another illegal document, the Jones Act of 1917 which made Puerto Ricans citizens of U.S.A.

The reconstruction period brought with it many reactionary and fascist laws, such as the Black codes; also brutal acts of repression and genocide against Black people. Tens of thousands of lynchings and murders were recorded, starting from the period of reconstruction into the 1900's. We see that the scheme of illegally making millions of African people captured from their homeland into becoming citizens was a successful attempt by U.S. imperialism at transforming and camouflaging the form of their exploitation of Black people in this country; simultaneously retarding and stifling the development of our struggle for national liberation. Similarly, we see the scheme of U.S. imperialism in southern Africa; and Puerto Rico is in the same vein.

In Zimbabwe, the Kissinger-Vorster-Smith maneuver to liquidate the revolutionary nationalist forces, representing the just demand for total and complete

sovereignty over the homeland will not succeed.

The attempt by U.S. imperialism to liquidate the just demand of the Puerto Rican people for total and complete independence by calling for statehood will not and must not succeed.

A.P.P. as revolutionary nationalists, believe that in organizing Black workers at the point of production and in our fight to end the domestic colonialism of Black people in solidarity, strategically, and tactically with all other oppressed nations and working people in this country will achieve self-determination and national independence. We believe this is the most concrete contribution we can make toward the world-wide struggle of oppressed people against U.S. imperialism and monopoly capitalism.

And although we do not pretend to believe that we can determine the strategy of any struggling oppressed people, we feel that anti-colonial struggles for national liberation create pressure on imperialism and weakens the ability of imperialism to maintain reactionary state power for their bourgeois ruling class at home; thus allowing the domestic struggle of oppressed nations and the working class to advance one more step against the racist monopoly capitalist ruling circles.

Also we must see the attempt to make Puerto Rico the 51st state is an attempt to create a genuine U.S. bastion in the Caribbean, strategically legitimizing any military offensive in the future, under the guise of securing their "domestic" borders; thus, allowing them to check advances by Caribbean nations toward socialism.

In conclusion, we want to repeat our most genuine solidarity with the struggle of our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico for self-determination and national independence. The unity of our struggles is clearly based on political, social and cultural ties that cannot be denied.

With Unity-Struggle-Unity! We will win!

Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!