Motiana’s “The Battle for South Africa”

(Editor's note: The following is the text of Dr. Nihutsa Motiana's speech The Battle for South Africa, the keynote address of the 7th Annual World Peace Forum, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 15th November, 1985. The speech was delivered by Dr. Motiana on behalf of the SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) at the request of the organizers of the forum. This is the full text of the speech as delivered at the forum.

Motiana's speech begins with an introduction to the historical and political context of South Africa and the struggle for liberation. He highlights the role of nationalism and the importance of education in the fight against apartheid. Motiana emphasizes the need for unity among workers and students and the importance of organizing and mobilizing for change. He calls for a comprehensive approach to education that includes political education and the development of critical thinking skills. Motiana also discusses the role of the media in shaping public opinion and the need for a free and independent press.

Motiana concludes his speech with a call to action, urging the audience to support the struggle for freedom and justice in South Africa. He concludes by expressing his hope that the forum will contribute to the ongoing struggle for peace and justice in the world."

The Black People's Convention was established by South African Students' Association as an all-inclusive Black Conclusions Movement. It did not have the support of the ANC had not had been hasted together with 17 other Black organizations in 1977. A year later, another Black Convention organized coalition named AZAPO was formed. It has not been bashed, though it lacked, and still lacks, the broad appeal that the African National Congress had. Both organizations are perceived by many people as bodies belonging to the intelligentsia — where only the highly educated debates philosophical issues in high-flying English. In 1977, at the height of the children revolt, a situation was organized in Soweto to look into the questions of creating an effective response to local government structures to control Soweto and other black communities. Let me remind you that South Africa has no respect on the level of government — whether local, state (provincial) or national for that matter Black South Africa.

At the local level, however, there has developed a system of organized crime — that partially existed — now fully erected. Community councils with little administrative or legislative power to advise the government. The local council of Soweto, for example, in 1977, was turned into a town council. The "township" used in this context has a peculiarly South African connotation. It is used to refer to those self-organized areas in which blacks live. These community councils lack legitimacy, and are above those created out of sheer necessity.

The symposium of June 1977 led to the formation of the Committee of Ten which made recommendations about the need for effective Black authority. The main features of these recommendations were:

1. The municipality to accept a Negro city council for Soweto, provided the residents of such a body be elected and be granted a five-fisted land tenure, land on which they could build houses and farm theft of the countryside.
2. The Minister in charge of black areas was stripped of all stamp duty powers.
3. That Soweto be given an impressive annual grant to improve facilities in the area.
4. That Soweto be granted a free press.
5. It is now history that the above recommendations were all rejected. Various explanations were offered, but it is clear that they were all detailed for a period of six months. I have here detailed the story of the White Paper on black areas, which is the most popular war essentially comprises the broadening out of the guerrilla operations. It is a way of life, as the guerrillas who would operate within their normal home sphere, that is, in their own communities, and work for their own people. Besides the more dramatic headline catching events detailed above, what is equally significant is the feeling among workers and students that the status quo cannot be allowed to continue. There were 15 attacks so far. Dr. Tom Lodge, senior lecturer in Political Science at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, who was in Soweto for this period, stated that they were all detailed for a period of six months. I have here detailed the story of the White Paper on black areas, which is the most popular war essentially comprises the broadening out of the guerrilla operations. It is a way of life, as the guerrillas who would operate within their normal home sphere, that is, in their own communities, and work for their own people. Besides the more dramatic headline catching events detailed above, what is equally significant is the feeling among workers and students that the status quo cannot be allowed to continue. There were 15 attacks so far. Dr. Tom Lodge, senior lecturer in Political Science at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, who was in Soweto for this period, stated that they were all detailed for a period of six months. I have here detailed the story of the White Paper on black areas, which is the most popular war essentially comprises the broadening out of the guerrilla operations. It is a way of life, as the guerrillas who would operate within their normal home sphere, that is, in their own communities, and work for their own people.