
THE CALL · SIYAZENZELA

11 Theses on the Call for Batho Pele Convention

A National Disputation by Mbuyiseni Ndlozi

THESIS 01 / 11

THE DEATH OF THE COVENANT AND THE RISE OF THE NEW CLERGY

The "Batho Pele" (People First) principle, once a sacred covenant of our Constitution, is dead. A new Secular Clergy of bureaucrats and political elites put themselves first, whilst looting the state they swore to serve. This is all the while they rely on a terrifying culture of impunity. This is not merely a failure of individuals, but a predatory state machinery that treats public funds as private property. The time for petitioning this "Cathedral of Capture" is over. Through direct collective Self-Sufficient Action, the people must resurrect the sacred covenant and make alive the constitutional self-promise of freedom.

THESIS 02 / 11

THE IDOLATRY OF THE BALLOT

The promise that elections alone would bring freedom has proven false. The rising tide of voter apathy is not a sign of indifference, but a profound disillusionment with the political elite and ballot party menu. The people have realised that a choice between various versions of failure is no choice at all. Election manifestos have become prayer books of the beggar. We do not need another manifesto or another political party. True democracy is not an event every five years; it is the constant, material exercise of power by the organised masses. The age of the "beggar-voter" should come to an end. The age of Citizen Agency must begin; the Constitution is the property of the people. It must be the everyday manifestation of the people, by the people, for the people.

THESIS 03 / 11

THE RESURRECTION OF AGENCY -- FROM PETITIONERS TO ARCHITECTS

All can identify the Great State Paralysis not as a lack of resources, but as the calculated destruction of the people's will. For too long, we have been conditioned to be Professional Petitioners, kneeling before the 'altars' of failing municipalities and departments, begging for the rights we already own.

Therefore, we must form a Batho Pele Convention (BPC), as a Reclamation of Self-sufficiency and Citizen Agency. A transition from 'those who wait' to 'those who act'. This is a call for Siyazenzela -- not as a slogan of desperation, but as a Revolutionary Practice and way of life. The 'True Crisis' is that we forgot we are the source of all value. We must cease to be 'clients' of a failed bureaucracy and resolve to become the Architects of our own Survival. Batho Pele Convention must therefore be our 'Exodus' from the desert of dependency.

THESIS 04 / 11

THE SHACKLES OF FUNDED ACTIVISM

The Industry of Activism must be denounced. Much of civil society has become a vassal of foreign donors or state grants, trading its prophetic voice for a seat at the table of the status quo. In the end, this industry of activism wittingly or unwittingly, conspires to produce a lean state, replacing the historic dream of a revolutionary developmental state that meets the needs of the people.

Moreover, Funded Freedom is an Oxymoron. A movement that does not eat from its own soil cannot fight for its own land. We must return to Material Autonomy -- a membership-funded, self-sufficient Batho Pele Convention accountable only to the hunger of the people it serves. If we do not fund our own liberation, we are merely renting our chains.

THESIS 05 / 11

THE DEATH OF THE CAREERIST AND THE RISE OF COMMUNITARIAN STEWARDS

We should denounce the Cult of the Professional Politician -- a class of 'mercenary leaders' who view the suffering of the people as a ladder for personal enrichment. The current political culture is a Feudalism of the Party, where loyalty to the Party is rewarded while the cries of the community are ignored. We must build a Priesthood of the Common Good, where authority is earned through Batho Pele, not bought through the 'Patronage' of the party.

We must reject the politics of occasional charity meant to patronise the electorate, misleading the masses into thinking that political careerists care about their suffering. Charity that builds dependency is equal to slavery.

We must declare the End of the Messiah Complex. We do not need 'charismatic' saviours or 'strongmen' to lead us into the light; we must raise Communitarian Stewards who are rooted in the very soil they serve. Leadership is not a career; it is a Sacrificial Stewardship. The era of the 'Big Man' is over; the era of the Organised Self-Sufficient Community has arrived.

THESIS 06 / 11

THE GREAT ABANDONMENT AND THE SHADOW STATE

All can testify to the Great Abandonment. The state has deserted its post, leaving our communities open to the "Shadow State" of extortion mafias, gangs and organised criminal cartels with powerful international foreign networks. A state that cannot provide hope or protect the weak from the parasitic political elites, mafia gangs and cartels, has forfeited its moral right to govern.

Each project meant for the advancement of a developmental state is ripped apart by the heartless pack of bribery vampires within the ranks of councils, legislatures and bureaucrats, embedded with organised criminals. Whilst a pack of capitalist sharks auction public properties in their endless pursuit of profit for profit's sake.

The halo once radiating with the selfless sacrifice of many a generation of freedom fighters has been profaned. Rampant political party entrepreneurship and radical lumpen populism have fractured the unity of the masses, rendering them incapable of meaningful united action to survive this great abandonment. Batho Pele Convention shall be the tree under whose shadow a network of self-sufficient communities will rebuild critical mass power without narrow party loyalties. And win back the state for the people.

THESIS 07 / 11

THE PARALLEL MACHINE -- RECLAIMING THE MANDATE OF LIFE

We must declare that when the state abdicates, its mandate returns to the people. We must build a Parallel Machine of Service, not as a substitute, but to survive and hold the powerful accountable. Wherever a community fixes its own school, clinic, road, secures its own water, or builds its own solar grid, it is exercising Direct Agency. We must build our own guilds of engineers and artisans, and our own circles of protection. We must prove that quality and dignity are possible without the permission of a corrupt centre. This is not a call for secession -- but a performance of Collective Direct Agency. The machine we build today will be the skeleton of the new society we shall inhabit tomorrow.

This is no cause for celebration on the part of all those who loot state resources and cripple state institutions. We must pursue every last one of them through people's organs of legal and forensic units, including through private prosecution. We must recover all stolen resources from those who render people's institutions into decay, bring all who left unfinished public projects into justice. This is therefore an unapologetic reclamation of the state for the people.

Batho Pele Convention must therefore be a home of the Alumni League of Public Schools to build infrastructural, cultural and intellectual dignity for the education of the youth. Through community based missions, we must declare war on all potholes on our roads, broken street lights, sewer, water and health systems, and all those mountains of waste that suffocate our environment -- let self-love, self-pride and self-sufficiency reign. Above all, we must win back our streets from criminals, drug lords, gangs and looters. This Parallel Machine of Service shall be the last defence of our constitutional order.

THESIS 08 / 11

THE ECONOMIC BASTILLE AND FALSE THEOLOGY OF SCARCITY

We must denounce the Economic Bastille that walls off the majority from the fruit of their own land. Our economy is a machinery of exclusion, guarded by "High Priests" of Finance who preach a false theology of scarcity designed to keep the hungry in a state of perpetual servitude. Youth unemployment has become a crime against humanity -- to leave millions idle is not just a 'statistic'; it is the systemic slaughter of the soul of the nation. It is the intentional creation of a permanent underclass that must fade into the silence of poverty.

Our economy is not 'broken'; it is functioning exactly as it was designed -- as a machinery of exclusion and racial humiliation. If the 'Lords of the Economy' cannot provide a seat for everyone at the table, then the people have the right -- and the duty -- to rebuild the table. We must no longer be prisoners of a market that values debt more than lives. We must reclaim our right to produce, to own, and to thrive. Batho Pele Convention must therefore be a home of the self-sufficient networks of Consumption and Production Hubs to eliminate poverty, create jobs, produce, and secure our economic freedom.

THESIS 09 / 11

BATHO PELE CONVENTION -- RENEWED SOVEREIGNTY

Batho Pele Convention is not a congress of elites, but the Grassroots Machinery of the Dispossessed. To the failing powers we must say: "Here we stand; we can do no other." It is time to look to our own. It is the moment where the 'Parallel Machines' of a thousand communities merge into a single, unstoppable Engine of National Renewal. We must gather not to 'advise' the old lords, but to supersede them.

The current Municipal Councils, Legislatures, Parliament and their executives have become a 'Tomb of Promises' where the will of the people goes to die. Therefore, we must convene a New National Table, built not on the shifting sands of party loyalty, but on the solid rock of Localised Power. The Batho Pele Convention must be the Network of the Guilds -- the union of those who actually build, teach, protect, and heal. It must be the proof that South Africa is not its government; South Africa is its Organised People. The dreams enshrined in our constitution shall be realised through renewed organs of people's power; for the people are the true Sovereign.

THESIS 10 / 11

SIYAZENZELA -- THE INEVITABLE DAWN

This must be our Ultimatum to History. The era of waiting is over; old structures are collapsing under the weight of their own decay -- this is the Midnight of the State. We must not fear this darkness, for we are the ones lighting the fires of the new. We must declare Siyazenzela; not as a choice, but a Destiny. To 'do it ourselves' is to reclaim our humanity from a parasitic cult of elites that treated us as statistics, beggars, voters, and victims. We are no longer a population waiting to wait, as a permanent state of being. We must be a Communion of the Capable and Self-Sufficient. We must ask no permission to survive, to prosper, or to lead.

To every technician, every mother, every worker, and every youth; now is the time to defect from dependency. Take your skills, your tools, and your hope, and bring them to the Convention of Agency. The old world was built on our submissiveness and our waiting; the new world shall be built on Collective Citizen Agency. The 'Social Contract' is dead -- long live the Covenant of the People.

THESIS 11 / 11

THE VOW OF PRACTICE

As a nation, we have reached cross-roads between an abyss of dystopia and the dawn of a renewed utopia. This is the final hour! We shall either collapse into an abyss of dystopian rule defined by neo-colonial enclaves, hunger-games, totalitarian mafocracy, kakistocracy, or kleptocracy, all embedded in imperialist humiliation. Or rise to the utopian 'liberation dream' of our ancestors defined by Equality, Ubuntu, Self-Sufficiency, Citizen Agency, and Pan-Africanism.

Long have we interpreted our misery -- from broadcasts to podcasts, think-shops to talk-shops -- the point is to change it; one pothole at a time, one classroom at a time, and one production hub at a time. We shall interpret no more! The hour of PRACTICE has come -- all here and now!

With selflessness, fearlessness and integrity we must secure the utopia of our ancestors; and refuse for the sun to set on so glorious a human achievement -- a democratic constitutional order! These truths are hereby nailed at the door of the failing state. Let us not recant. Let us not retreat. The Age of Siyazenzela Generation has come! Freedom practitioners, to all South Africans: take up these theses in your homes, streets, workplaces and places of worship. Let us discuss, let us organise, and let us build the movement of our time -- Batho Pele: Both First and Forward!