



**ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF MANGAUNG LOCAL
MUNCIPALITY, HONOURABLE K. F. MORULE, ON THE
OCCASION OF LUNCHEON WITH THE
ELDERLY PEOPLE**

24 AUGUST 2009

Programme Director

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Religious and community leaders

Distinguished guests

The Media

Fellow Citizens of Mangaung

Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon. Dumelang bagolo.

I am privileged and therefore humbled to address such a distinguished audience of the Senior Citizens. Standing at this podium now I am reminded of the words of the Psalmist (psalm 125:2) who, when he assured the people of God about their security, he said: **“as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people both now and forever”**. Indeed, I consider myself surrounded by the mountains of experience and wisdom of our elderly people. Thus today we are paying tribute to people of advanced age.

Programme Director

It is becoming a norm in our modern society, of which I denounce, for our generation to celebrate the lives of the heroes and heroines of our struggle after their death. Such practice must be aborted at infancy stage, for it propagates the culture of self-centredness. Inversely, this nullifies the principles of Ubuntu, which objectively gives precedence to the needs of the collective. It presupposes our interest is particularly on the benefits accrued from their supreme sacrifice and not on our *Senior Citizens – the Elderly – Maqheku – Bagolo ba rona*. Our session with you must not be narrowly reduced to a mere feast. But this is a reminiscence of your echoed voices that shook the corridors of apartheid power and bore political freedom for all as well as new dispensation.

Yes, it is true that due to age, you have limited generative abilities and therefore more vulnerable to disease, syndromes and other sicknesses.

But you have mellowed and matured, your experience cannot be beaten.

Protagonists of the Holy Scripture can attest that our blessings and prosperity as a nation are premised on how we treat our aged people. For is written that “[g]ive honour to your father and to your mother, so that **your life may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.**”

Ladies and Gentlemen

I stand before you with pride and confidence that the ANC-led government pays special attention to the rights and needs of elderly people. In this regard, the government has put legislation in place – Older Persons Act, which amongst others provides for:

- Maintenance and promotion of the status, well-being, safety and security of older persons;
- Maintaining and protecting the rights of older persons;
- Shifting the emphasis from institutional care to community-based care in order to ensure that an older person remains in his or her home within the community for as long as possible;
- Combating the abuse of older persons.

The other essential legislation is the Social Assistance Amendment Act provides for social grants.

In an atmosphere of state repression, oppression and darkness our progressive seniors carried the baton of hope for free society. We did not stumble in darkness because these veterans stood firm and provided us with their shoulders to stand upon in order to see into the future.

As the Mangaung Local Municipality, we have set three IDP strategic objectives for ourselves:

- To ensure service excellence within and around Mangaung Local Municipality,
- To stimulate integrated and sustainable economic development,
- To improve and sustain financial and human resource excellence management excellence.

In our endeavour to achieve the forgoing strategic goals, we called for increased involvement of community in the affairs of the municipality. ***Maqheku a rona ke karolo ya bohlokwa ya sechaba se tshwanelang ho nka karolo tsamaisong ya mmasepala.*** We need your counsel on how to govern this municipality and the country. Whenever we convene community

meetings, we expect your attendance in great numbers, air your opinion and show us the way. Where necessary, reprimand us! For you are our masters and we are your servants.

Who are the veterans? The ANC Polokwane Conference resolutions define veterans as: “ **...comrades of advanced age, who have given unbroken and uninterrupted service to the movement and people of South Africa over several decades of struggle. These comrades embody the organisational experience and memory of the movement and the peoples’ struggle for freedom and democracy and they should play an important role in reinforcing the traditions, history, values and unity of the movement.**”

Amongst the calibres of these veterans, in accordance with the foregoing definition of a veteran, we are fortunate to have a remnant, **Shuping Cecil Dibe**. Today he is becoming an Octogenarian. He is turning 80 years old today – born on 24 August 1929. To him, this celebration is twofold: he joins the class of Octogenarians (age between 80 and 89) and he also celebrates 50 years in marriage with Mrs. Adeline Dibe.

While some men might disagree, from my personal experience, I believe in the saying “**behind every strong man, is a strong woman**”. Mama Adeline, I thank you for taking the trouble to celebrate this day with us today.

Malibongwe ingama la makhosikazi!

Shuping Cecil Dibe is one of the Free State stalwarts, who actively participated in the **Campaign of Defiance against Unjust Laws** (1952). He

was arrested at Hoffman square on 11 September 1952 and jailed for ten (10) days at the old Raamkraal Prison, Bloemfontein.

Within the galaxy of such distinguished stalwarts of Bloemfontein, who are now deceased, we salute **Elias Njoti, Caleb Motshabi, Lesley Monnanyane, Mamohlakwane, Mogothu Dichabe, G. J. Kgasane, R. S Molale, M. S Ngake, M. Mokhali, Dr. Matlhape, Medupe, M. S Bochebe, M. Moshodi, L. Khookho, S.S Kgabale** – the list is endless.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us stand to observe a moment of silence in memory of these fallen heroes and heroines!

I thank you.

Also, let us not forget Sam Wynn, also arrested in 1952, who can not join this joyous occasion due to poor health.

We call upon all other adults and youth in our society to submit wholeheartedly to the counsels and corrections of our Senior Citizens.

This is one of those rare opportunities in life – honour bestowed upon me, to celebrate successful life of our real hero.

I thank you all. Ke a leboha.

Clr. F. K. MORULE

Executive Mayor

Mangaung Local Municipality