

A Farewell Note to the Honorable Minister Jackson Mphikwa Mthembu 5 June
1958-21 January 2021
by Mr Hanief Ebrahim
23 January 2021

So, today, 23 January 2021, I break my sad, painful and self-imposed silence!
Mvelase, you made your mark, gave your contribution and served our people.
Thank you. Enkosi Nkakulu.
Now, rest in peace, Leader, Combatant and Comrade
I submit, in your memory, a short poem:

“Minister Mthembu:
There is a kind of deep sadness
That seeps through and into one’s very skin
It does allow one to breathe, inhale, exhale pretend to move on
And with some difficulty, even smile, too...
At all the joyous moments shared
The fun, the laughter and the hard work

But, when the dusk appears
At night-the shadows of one’s thoughts
When alone, all alone, in the crowds...
One let oneself go if only to pause, to be still and to reflect
To travel, perchance, through the mind’s eye
Into a soft murmuring

Then, a blurring of the blur
The fluttering flag at half-mast
The suddenness of it all
The tragedy unfolds
So much left unspoken, undone and unfinished
Leaving only that unspeakable void, the hurt and even anger...

In what greater cause can one’s life be snatched away?
Throughout you served; fear left you
You said: “ defend my people, protect our people our serve our people” now is the hour
Death...you are truly a charlatan...
You attack us when least expected
Not Mvelase, I have begged, not Mphikwa I pleaded, not now, not yet...

Hamba Kahle Mkonto;
Hamba Khakle, Mphathiswa
Lala Ngoxolo, Mvelase, Minister Jackson Mphikwa Mthembu