

YReds: All systems go for National Congress 2010!

November 2010

Voice of the South African Communist Party

Unsebenzi

RED OCTOBER 2010

Making the banks – *and* the public sector DFIs – serve the workers and the poor!



ANC NGC

A clear line of march from the President – and from thousands of ANC branch delegates!

RED OCTOBER 2010

We call for a national summit on financing development

Development finance institutions must prioritise development that contributes to changing the lives of the workers and the poor

SACP General Secretary cde Blade Nzimande has called on the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) to convene a national summit on financing development early in 2011.

He was speaking at the closing rally of the Red October campaign held in Ashdown, Msunduzi (Pietermaritzburg), attended by about 4 000 people.

Nedlac is South Africa's statutory social dialogue forum where the government, labour, business and community constituencies meet.

"A summit will also give stakeholders a chance to assess progress in implementing the 2002 Financial Sector Summit agreements," cde Nzimande said. "We can work out how all development finance institutions should contribute to government's five key priorities.

"All development finance institutions must prioritise development for ordinary people. There is an estimated R3,3-trillion in their coffers. How much of this is used to help communities who use these institutions? This Red October campaign is in line with the ANC and Alliance's demands that the people must have a say in the development that takes place in their areas."

He called for a radical review of BEE (black economic empowerment) to benefit the workers and the poor. He said that the score-card for deciding on suitable tenders should give high priority to



Cdes Blade Nzimande, Malusi Gigaba and Joyce Moloi-Moropa at the final Red October 2010 campaign rally

The people must have a say in development in their areas

skills development.

"Young people are keen on tenders now, but there's no better tender than an education. No one can take that away from you."

The rally also served as a launch of the SACP's Local Government Election Campaign to the ANC decisively won the elections.

"The ANC is a good organisation, but there are bad people who want to steal



YCL National Secretary, cde Buti Manamela: Free education

and hide in it. We need to get rid of these people through the local government election campaign.”

He said the majority of councillors are good, but some are bad. The task of the ANC-led Alliance was to listen to the community. He welcomed the ANC’s proposal that the community in a ward should have a say in the processing of ANC nominees for ward councillors.

He also expressed the SACP’s opposition to the Msunduzi council’s decision to destroy a soccer stadium to make way for a wall. “What sort of World Cup legacy is this? We need to build sports facilities for the poor, not destroy them!”

Also speaking at the rally, Cosatu president cde S’dumo Dlamini stressed: “Under the leadership of the ANC, the Tripartite Alliance remains the hope of the nation. I am here to say this on behalf of the workers, that there is no way that this Alliance will break. Under the leadership of Cosatu, there’s not the slightest

In all the struggles the SACP leads, the ANC will be there – cde Zweli Mkhize

possibility of an alternative force to the ANC from the workers. The workers love the ANC.

“We will be with the ANC in the local government elections. We will be there in Ulundi, in Nongoma, in Vryheid to sweep clean the IFP municipalities.

“When we select candidates for the elections, let’s choose those who will be easy to campaign for,” he said.

ANC KZN Provincial Chairperson and Premier cde Zweli Mkhize assured the rally: “In all the struggles the SACP leads, the ANC will always be there. When you fight against poverty, we’ll be

there, when you fight against fraud and corruption, we’ll be there with you ... no amount of anger and disagreement will break the Alliance apart. We are different structures, so we’ll have our differences. It’s out of debates that we will arrive at better policies.”

He stressed the need to ensure that “councillors with integrity” should be nominated for the local government elections.

YCL National Deputy Secretary cde Khaye Nkwanyana pledged the YCL’s full support for the Red October campaign. “If you are talking about development finance institutions investing more in development, it is the youth that have the most to benefit. And if you think of the high levels of unemployment among the youth, as the youth we have no choice but to actively support this campaign.”

He also pledged the full support of the YCL for the local government elections campaign. ●

RED OCTOBER 2010

It's time for laws to force banks to serve the people

Banks, insurers and investment managers remain driven by maximising profits and on the whole resist transformation – cde Nzimande

BY MALESELA MALEKA

Thousands of residents of Mpu-malanga braved the early morning heat on 3 October to attend the launch of the 2010 Red October Campaign at the Kwagqafontein Stadium.

Launched 11 years ago, the SACP has campaigned around a different Red October theme each year. This year saw the return to the theme of the 2000 campaign, which focused on making the banks serve the people – with a broader focus this year to include public development finance institutions (DFIs). They too must serve the people!

Under the clarion call “Financing development - with and for the workers and the poor,” the campaign focuses on stimulating national dialogue on how public DFIs and private financial institutions contribute to the funding of our five national development priorities – decent work, health, education, rural development and fighting crime.

The launch was described as “a Red Festival” by one resident – a mixture of traditional dance, music by an upcoming local modern hip hop artist and an electrifying rendition of revolutionary songs like *Thetha Nzimande*, *thetha Komanisi haaa!* *Sithwele bu nzima*. The song paid tribute to SACP General Secretary cde Blade Nzimande’s fierceness, bravery and his outspokenness. True to the words of



Cde Blade Nzimande: Where is the DFIs' R3.3-trillion being spent?

the song, the General Secretary did not disappoint when his turn to speak came. Other speakers included YCL National Secretary cde Buti Manamela and ANC NEC member and Minister cde Malusi Gigaba.

Cde Manamela used the event to promote the YCL's campaigns on free education, the distribution of free sanitary towels to all young women, safe and accessible circumcision for young boys including those who undergo traditional initiation schools, and the membership drive of the YCL to grow a strong and vibrant Marxist-Leninist youth organisation.

Sanco and Cosatu followed with messages of support for the campaign. To the disappointment of the crowd, Cosatu General Secretary cde Zwelinzima Vavi was not able to attend the rally.

Next was cde Gigaba, who spoke in Zulu. His speech was littered with quotes from the late ANC President cde Oliver Tambo. Cde Gigaba reported on the outcomes of the NGC of the ANC. He lambasted the emerging tendency in the ANC to criminalise activists who served both in the ANC and the SACP by accusing them of “double parking”. He reaffirmed the centrality of the Alliance and the fact that communists belong to the ANC and that ANC nationalists must accommodate communists and not seek to demonise their involvement. This is in line with the SACP's historic emphasis that all good communists must participate in and build a strong ANC. He pointed out the failed attempts of the Gang of Eight, the PAC, and Cope to isolate communists from the ANC.

“This latest attempt will fail as well!” said cde Gigaba, evoking applause from the crowd.

The ANC derives its strength from two things, he said: its multiclass character and being a movement of the people. “The ANC is not an electoral political party like the DA, Cope, IFP and others, but a revolutionary tool in the hands of the people for radical social change.”

He also spoke about matters of discipline and militancy: “Militancy and discipline are two sides of one coin. The youth must not use the notion of militancy to imply ill-discipline and in the process damage the integrity of the movement of



Cde Malusi Gigaba: Communists belong in the ANC

the people. Militancy like military training underground, must be underpinned by a thorough political understanding of our challenges,” he said.

He acknowledged that there was a need to accelerate the efforts of both the ANC and government to create a more inclusive economic growth path. Cde Gigaba warned that we must not fall prey to hollow sloganeering around the issue of nationalisation. The NGC has given the NEC a clear instruction to investigate, conduct study tours and research on the issue, and report back to the 2012 Conference for a decision on nationalisation.

Cde Nzimande said the Red October Campaign’s main demand was that Nedlac convenes a summit in the first quarter of 2011 to “give all stakeholders the opportunity to assess progress in implementing the 2002 Financial Sector Summit agreements. We will also be able to formulate how all financial institutions, including DFIs, should contribute to government’s key priorities”.

We have not made enough progress towards making the banks serve the people

In relation to the agreements of the 2002 Financial Sector Summit, cde Nzimande pointed out that the sector has now “banked 6-million people through the Mzansi account but less than half of these account – about 2,5-million – are still active. The financial institutions have invested R64,6-billion in targeted investment (low-income housing, black-owned SMEs, resource-poor black farmers, transformational infrastructure). But this was below the target of R73,5

billion.”

One target was exceeded, remarked Nzimande. “The target for finance for BEE deals was R50-billion but the actual investment was R101-billion.

“We have not made enough progress to say we have achieved our goal to make the banks serve the people. Banks, insurers, investment managers and other sector players remain driven by maximising profits for shareholders and on the whole resist transformation that improves the lives of the workers and the poor.

“Our experience in 10 years of campaigning for a financial sector committed to our national development goals raises the question: can we transform the financial sector through voluntary agreements? Isn’t it time for our elected policymakers and lawmakers to use the power given to them by the people they serve, to pass laws to make the banks serve the people?” said cde Nzimande. ●

Cde Maleka is the SACP Media Officer

RED OCTOBER 2010

The NGC and Red October: platforms to further consolidate the national democratic revolution

A new growth path and the mobilisation of public and private resources to advance it

BY BLADE NZIMANDE

The outcomes of the recently held ANC National General Council (NGC) and the successful launch of our 2010 Red October Campaign are critical, interrelated events and platforms upon which to intensify the struggle for the deepening of the national democratic revolution. These are events that once more require us to focus and not be distracted, to mobilise our people behind the priorities of our revolution.

On the ANC NGC

At its first meeting after the ANC NGC last Friday, the SACP Politburo (PB) undertook a comprehensive review of the ANC NGC, and reflected on our participation. The PB was overwhelmingly of the view that the NGC gathering was a huge success, despite attempts by the media and other detractors to predict that the gathering was going to be a political showdown and a dress rehearsal for 2012. If it was a dress rehearsal for 2012, it showed an ANC that has gone a long way in uniting its forces since the Polokwane conference, and is more than ready to take this unity to new heights in 2012, its centenary.

The PB welcomed the fact that the ANC NGC went a long way to achieve what we had expected from it and even went

beyond. It acted in unity in approaching the business of the council and focused its attention on evaluating and strengthening the implementation framework for the Polokwane resolutions.

The NGC further emphasised the absolute necessity of our alliance, and reaffirmed its character as articulated in the President's political report which was adopted by the NGC: "The Alliance was formed out of struggle, and out of the shared vision as articulated in the Freedom Charter. It is based on the understanding that each Alliance component enjoys political independence from the other, but also acknowledges the central role of the ANC as the leader of the Alliance and the political centre.

"There are no components of the Alliance that can be wished away or be replaced by others. All fulfil aspects that have been proven over the long history

of the Alliance.

"We must emphasise as well that the Alliance is not based on conformity and monolithic interpretation of events. It is a strategic alliance. We must avoid a temptation to change the historical character and purpose of the Alliance, regardless of challenges we face today as a sector, group or individuals.

"Each Alliance component partner has a political responsibility to guard against tendencies that threaten the unity of the Alliance. The Alliance is a unique political entity, and none of us must celebrate when it faces challenges. All the bold headlines about the imminent death of the Alliance are a waste of time and ink because the Alliance will live for a long time to come."

This is a very important re-affirmation, which also went further and distinguished between allies of the ANC as independent formations, as distinct from its leagues, which are integral components of the ANC mother body. This will go a long way in undermining those who opportunistically seek to reduce the allies into leagues of the ANC as part of an attempt to silence the allies. For the SACP this message clearly spells out that there is no place for anti-SACP elements in the ANC as this goes against its strategy and policies.

The very strength of the ANC itself lies in that it is a broad multi-class move-

The NGC confirmed the absolute necessity for our Alliance



Cde Blade Nzimande

ment that unites a wide range of forces. It is precisely because of this character that unity and renewal are the most critical components in the very character of the ANC, and that it must always pay ongoing attention to these.

But it is precisely this multi-class character of the ANC that enemies of our revolution, opportunists within our ranks and other detractors have for decades sought to sow suspicions and divisions between the constituent components of

the ANC. Today these attempts manifest in attempts by those who seek to capture our organisations for purposes of narrow capitalist accumulation to rehash old and tired methods of accusing communists of what they call 'double-dipping' and that communists want to take over the ANC. This agenda had no place and space at this important ANC NGC.

However, the example set by the ANC NGC also places particular responsibilities on its allies. Amongst other things it

Nationalisation is only one component in turning our economy to a new growth path

means that while we must always maintain our independence, we must not be reckless such that our actions cause divisions in the ANC and the Alliance. Instead it calls upon the SACP and Cosatu to continue to organise workers to join the ranks of the ANC. It is through this that we can also ensure that the ANC's own commitment, as an organisation with a working class bias, can become a living reality.

The NGC also took further steps towards the implementation of the National Health Insurance (NHI), with a determination to move even faster. We are indeed encouraged by this.

The SACP particularly welcomes the fact that the ANC decided to formalise the debate on the nationalisation of the mines inside its own structures and processes. This will go a long way ensuring the debate is conducted rationally, giving the allies an opportunity for principled engagement on this important question.

As the SACP we must also warn that in taking forward this debate, we must not lose sight of the broader strategy for a new growth path. Nationalisation of mines is important; but it is only one component of a broader strategy needed to put our economy on a new growth path, and away from its current semi-colonial trajectory.

The PB also expressed its disappointment that the economic commission at the NGC spent most of its time on a single issue - the nationalisation of mines - to the exclusion of other matters equally important for a new growth path: industrial policy, the financial sector and so on.

We are nevertheless heartened that there will now be a sober process to discuss the issue of nationalisation. Our optimism is further strengthened by the President's commitment to speed up the discussions on a new growth path. For the SACP this is the most critical chal-



Part of the Red October campaign crowd during a break in the Kwaggafontein rally proceedings

lenge facing the national democratic revolution today.

We therefore appeals to all in our movement to engage in robust, but constructive, debates on these critical economic questions!

Red October: Financing development with and for workers and the poor

There is a deep interconnection between a new growth path and the mobilisation of resources in the public and private financial sectors towards such a new economic trajectory.

The launch of the 2010 Red October campaign was a highly successful event in Kwaggasfontein in Mpumalanga. It was a lively occasion, attended by thousands of people, and truly became a red festival! This shows the extent to which a campaigning SACP, especially through our Red October Campaign, has captured the imagination of our people in the many issues it raises.

The transformation of the financial sector, as well as mobilising the trillions of Rands in its hands, is a critical factor in placing South Africa on a new growth path. Our campaign aims to foster a dia-

The ANC's strength lies in its broad, multi-class character

logue on how these resources can be mobilised to support the five priorities of our ANC-led Alliance and now government's programme as well: decent work, access to education and health, intensifying the fight against crime and corruption, and rural development.

The SACP calls for the convening of a broader financial sector summit, but unlike the 2003 summit, this must include both the public and private financial institutions. This summit must evaluate progress in the implementation of the commitments contained in the financial sector charter signed in 2003, and map a way forward. We have made progress on this front, but remain concerned that the private financial sector is not doing as much as it should. It is important that

we mobilise to support government in transforming the mandate of the public development finance institutions (DFIs), so they serve our broader developmental agenda rather than narrow BEE.

At such a summit we would therefore expect an honest, but critical, evaluation of the past role of the DFIs and get a report on how they intend to reposition themselves to fund development, including support for the government's five priorities.

The SACP also calls upon Cosatu in particular to support this campaign, but to particularly focus on mobilisation of the workers to have an effective say on how their retirement funds are invested.

The SACP further calls upon ANC structures to support this campaign, as its weight and muscle will go a long way towards the realisation of a transformed financial sector capable to support a progressive development path for our country. ●

Cde Nzimande is the SACP General Secretary

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Who am I?

By Tshepo wa Dikapeso



Their hands ached with blisters
While their backs forever bent
Burned into obtuse angles
Half naked shiny and drizzling wet
Drizzling to the formations
Of fountains of surplus

And then their slogan
We have come to work here
We have come to work here

Horizontally
Horizontally they travelled miles
Miles of unmeasured distances
Miles away from their families
And children left orphaned
And mothers kept widowed

And then their slogan
We have come to work here
We have come to work here

Vertically
Vertically more miles
Of unmeasured distances
To the stomach of the earth
And their journey was completed
Completed to complete graphs
Graphs of beautiful cities
Above their dead bodies

And then their slogan
We have come to work here
We have come to work here

And now the question arise
Who am I
Who am I

I am the song
In the gray lips of the hungry
I am the tears
In the burning eyes of the angry
I am the sweat
On the forehead of the weary
Who am I

I am the vanguard party
Of the working class
I am the SACP
I am the communist party

Who am I
Who am I

I am the caterpillar
Digging the freedom furrow
I am here building a tomorrow
I am red in bone and in marrow
I am the vanguard party
Of the working class
I am the SACP
I am the communist party

Who am I
Who am I

I am the child
Born under the nightmare
Of Vula

Poisa
Pass
Permit

I am the vanguard
Of the working class
I am the SACP
I am the communist party

Who am I
Who am I

I am the two sides
Of this great heart
On the tale part
I am Black Green and Gold
And the head part
I am the Star Hammer and circle
With Red blood bold
I am the vanguard
Of the working class
I am the SACP
I am the communist party

*Cde Dikapeso is the SACP Cadreship
Development Officer and a former MK
combatant*

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ANC NATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL 2010

NGC sends message: We're fed up with demagogues and their backers

It also saw real progress towards uniting the Alliance around a clear, single strategic vision

The SACP warmly welcomed the ANC's September National General Council (NGC) as an important success. The success of the NGC owes much to the clear line of march spelt out in ANC's President cde Jacob Zuma's opening and closing addresses.

But it was, above all, due to the firm endorsement of this line of march from thousands of ANC branch delegates. The message from the NGC is clear: we are sick of ill-discipline, demagoguery and tenderpreneurs. We need to rebuild the unity of the ANC and of the Alliance based on the ANC's Polokwane National Conference resolutions.

It was cde Zuma's call for revolutionary discipline and for a return to the ANC's traditional values of commitment to the people that particularly struck a powerful chord with delegates. Cde Zuma reaffirmed the centrality of the ANC-led alliance, and made a clear distinction between the independent role of the SACP and Cosatu, on the one hand, and the leagues of the ANC on the other. To strong applause, the president noted that the ANC is "not in alliance with its own leagues". There was not a single delegate who did not understand exactly what was being referred to.

Although the NGC was, necessarily,

focused on organisational discipline and renewal, important progress was also made on the policy front. In particular, greater detail was added to important Polokwane resolutions, including:

- Renewed commitment to the progressive implementation of a National Health Insurance (NHI) programme, based on principles of social solidarity – where people will receive health-care based on need and not on the money in their pockets.

- The establishment of a state-owned bank, possibly building on the Postbank's existing footprint – so that banking facilities can be provided at low cost and in areas neglected by the commercial banks.

- A commitment to transforming basic and higher education and skills training. This includes revitalising the further

education and training (FET) sector and establishing universities in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape.

Media transformation

The NGC also broadly endorsed the position proposed by the SACP in regard to the Media Appeals Tribunal. The ANC NGC reaffirmed that we are speaking of an appeals mechanism, not pre-publication censorship. It also affirmed that the appeals tribunal should be independent of state, party political and commercial influence. The NGC referred the debate on a tribunal to Parliament, rather than mandating a written-in-stone ANC position that could pre-empt further public discussion and hearings in Parliament. It is clear that the ANC is also open to the SACP's proposal that the selection of members to an eventual tribunal might be done by a panel that could include print media representatives.

The emphasis in all of this is, as the SACP has been arguing, not on punishing journalists, but on fostering improved and transparent media standards to enhance the quality of journalism in SA.

Transforming the mining sector

The discussion on economic policy at the

The emphasis in media transformation must be to enhance the quality of journalism



Snapshots from the NGC: Cdes Jacob Zuma, Kgalema Mothlante and Matthews Phosa greet delegates



Umshin'iwam': Zuma singing ...



... and in the NGC business centre



Cdes President Zuma and Deputy President Mothlante



Cosatu GS cde Zwelinzima Vavi

NGC was hampered by a sectarian and slogan-driven attempt by ANCYL leaders to harp monotonously on a single issue – “nationalising” the mines.

The SACP has consistently warned ANCYL leaders that the manner in which they were approaching the matter would actually set back the consolidation of a strong, developmental state capable of active intervention to place our economy

Narrow BEE interest lie behind the ANCYL's 'nationalisation' campaign

(including the critical mineral sector) on to a new, job-creating growth path.

Ever since ANCYL personalities began to advance their “nationalisation” call towards the end of 2009, the SACP has consistently warned of the narrow BEE interests that actually lie behind this campaign. At first, many comrades in the Alliance and many commentators in the media either disbelieved our claim or ig-

nored it.

But the truth is now out for all to see. In the weekend before the NGC, the ANCYL president was flown around in an Exxaro helicopter. Contrary to claims subsequently made, the ANCYL leadership was taken on a helicopter tour of Exxaro mines and then to a YL meeting in Heilbron. Exxaro is the fourth largest coal mining operation in SA and it is a major BEE corporation.

Exxaro coal-mines were, by the way, formerly part of the state-owned steel-producer, Iscor. The apartheid regime actively implemented state-led industrial policy measures, and the linking of Iscor foundries to coal and iron-ore mines was part of its beneficiation programme. Iscor was privatised before 1994, and its former coal (now Exxaro) and iron-ore (now the Anglo-owned Kumba) mines were unbundled into private shareholders' hands.

In response to the SACP's revelation of the Exxaro helicopter sponsorship, the ANCYL has not denied the jaunt, but it has claimed that it "didn't even know who Exxaro was". It is an implausible denial which also makes a nonsense of their claim that they "conducted thorough research" into the mining sector in South Africa (and internationally) before making their "nationalisation" proposals.

However, even more revealing were statements made during the NGC by prominent BEE mining capitalists. In particular, Bridgette Radebe, president of the BEE mining association, Samda, said she fully supported the ANCYL proposal. She told the media that there was nothing unusual about "nationalisation" – after all, Barack Obama used public money to bail out the banks in the US in the midst of their financial crisis!

This is exactly what the SACP has been warning about since November 2009. The SACP has nothing in principle against nationalising the mines, or any other commanding heights of the economy – provided this is part and parcel of increasingly transforming our economy to meet the social needs of the majority. There are, however, BEE mining tycoons who want the state to spend billions of rands of public money in buying them out so that their presently encumbered (still to be paid off) share-holdings can be turned into capital that can be invested elsewhere.

We always need to ask in whose actual class interests a particular "nationalisation" is being undertaken.

The SACP welcomes the NGC decision



Caption

Cdes Lumko Mtinde and Pallo Jordan explain the NGC's Media Appeals Tribunal decision



NGC delegates celebrate

to do thorough research into the transformation of the mining sector in SA, including the possibility of nationalisation. The SACP intends to engage actively with this ANC-led process so that we ensure that the transformation of this key sector of our economy is aligned with our overall strategic objective of placing our economy onto a new economic growth path that is job-creating and more egalitarian. We say yes to state intervention

on behalf of the workers and the poor. We say no to spending billions more on narrow BEE tycoons.

Towards a new growth path

Following the NGC, our ANC-led government has taken forward important resolutions from the Council. In October the Cabinet finally made public the broad outlines of the New Economic Growth Path, whose key pillars are growth that is labour intensive, a major focus on infrastructural development, the affirmation of government's Industrial Policy Action Programme (Ipap), and the alignment of our macro-policies with these micro-economic objectives.

In his medium term budget strategy (MTBS) cde Pravin Gordhan also affirmed government's collective commitment to these objectives. The MTBS is focused on job-creation and continued public sector spending on infrastructure. Also important in the MTBS is the central place accorded to the progressive roll-out of the NHI programme, and the very firm message on combating corruption in the state's procurement chain.

Contrary to what the commercial media constantly seek to suggest, significant progress is being made in uniting our Alliance forces around a clear strategic vision.

Now we need to implement. And the sooner we do so, the sooner we can close down the space in which opportunism and demagoguery flourish – and that, surely, is what the great majority of ANC NGC delegates have called for. ●

Now it is time to implement – and the sooner the better

THE CONSTITUTION

Liberals: Are they really defending our Constitution?

Their true objective is to deny its transformatory character and to undermine the collective strength it gives the majority of South Africans

BY JEREMY CRONIN

Over the past months, a range of liberal personalities and formations have networked together and persuaded themselves and all who care to listen that the ANC and SACP are bent on undermining press freedom as part of a general offensive against our democratic Constitution.

The DA and their dependent-Independent Democrats, both Copes, the IFP's Ambrosini, the FW De Klerk Foundation, various academics, and an assortment of newspaper editors have all joined the fray. Some left-leaning NGOs and social movements have also been swept up into what is, fundamentally, a conservative anti-majoritarian liberal agenda. We have even had the ambassador of the US (the land of the embedded journalist) lecturing us on "media freedom".

Yes, there are rogue elements within our broader movement, and particularly within the ANCYL, who have shown scant regard for media freedom, or any other constitutional or legal nicety. They and others who lurk behind them may well want to censor the media and subvert our Constitution. But notice how it is precisely these demagogic forces (or at least the most prominent among them) whose sense of self-importance gets to be constantly stroked by headline treatment in the media. The print media in particular has a love-hate obsession with them. The more they insult journalists (and everyone else – including the President of the ANC, the SACP and Cosatu), the more coverage they enjoy.

In many respects, these forces are, at least to a considerable extent, a media creation. If you had read newspapers in the run-up to the ANC's September National General Council, for instance, you would have had the impression that



ANCYL personalities were going to pose a serious challenge to the incumbent ANC leadership. Very few newspapers in SA predicted that this clique would be utterly marginalised and roundly condemned by the overwhelming majority of ANC NGC branch delegates. And after the NGC, who set about re-floating these forces once more? The media, of course!

So what is the media up to? Partly it is the narrow commercial imperative of presenting the news and particularly politics as a shallow spectacle, a daily melodrama. Serious political analysis and debate are marginalised.

Sometimes, the flirtation in the media with right-wing demagoguery in our movement has features that are ominously reminiscent of liberal flirtations with the buffoonery of an incubating Nazism in the early 1930s. Back then it was a tragic flirtation driven by the delusion that a still small fascist right-wing was a useful counter-balance to what had been a powerful social-democratic and communist left in Germany.

At least some parts of the South African media have occasionally inclined in this direction. Consider a recent column by Business Day editor, Peter Bruce (The Thick End of the Wedge, 30 August 2010). Bruce refers approvingly to Julius Malema's interventions at the ANCYL's August NGC: "Even Julius Malema sounded strangely comforting... Denouncing the way political families (read Zuma's) are enriching themselves in black economic empowerment deals... when the guy leading the charge against the increasingly ridiculous SACP starts talking that kind of sense, you have to listen. It may be time for business to start taking Malema more seriously as a partner... with an eye on the future of our country."

Fortunately, the majority of newspaper editors and their journalists would, I think, disagree wholeheartedly with Bruce. Being the political dilettante that he is, Bruce himself has probably since changed his mind. But there is something more fundamental at play. It is not that many media practitioners actually approve of these demagogic personalities and their antics, but the liberal (and often sub-consciously racist) paradigm that prevails in many news-rooms needs demagogic populists to "prove" an ideological point: "You see what happens when they take over?", "We told you so, politics is a corrupt business", "The state (especially in Africa) is always-already on the brink of failure", "The ANC and its Stalinist allies are inherently anti-



Business Day's Peter Bruce: "... time for business to start taking Malema more seriously as a partner ..."

democratic", "If the media blinks for a moment, we will become like Idi Amin's Uganda".

And so we have an ongoing symbiotic relationship between liberal journalism on the one hand, and right-wing demagogic populism, on the other. The populists are high on media attention which goads and flatters them into increasingly outrageous behaviour. Media commentators then like to conflate this right-wing demagoguery with the ANC-led movement in general and by this sleight of hand the media presents itself as the last bastion of defence of our threatened Constitution against an anti-democratic, demagogic assault for which, in fact, it is acting as a megaphone.

The two faces of liberalism

This symbiosis is part of a much broader issue – the progressive and deeply reactionary sides of liberalism. The origins of liberal values can be traced back to the European enlightenment and the struggle against feudal autocracy. Individual rights were affirmed in the face of arbitrary despotism. Formal equality of citizens was upheld against entrenched and largely hereditary social hierarchies.

These liberal values played a crucial emancipatory role in human history. In 19th century Europe, the basic right to individual liberty ("self-determination") was conceptually transferred also to aspirant nations. Various peoples suffering under Tsarist or Austro-Hungarian

feudalistic imperial oppression took up the struggle for independent nationhood and stretched the liberal notion of self-determination to embrace the idea of a collective right to "national self-determination". This tradition was carried into the 20th century and taken forward by oppressed peoples in the colonial world. The dominant oppressors were now no longer so much feudal as monopoly capital imperialists. There was a major debate within Marxist circles in the second decade of the 20th century as to whether this appropriation of a liberal notion (self-determination) was progressive or not. Rosa Luxemburg believed not, Lenin differed. He argued that the national liberation struggles of oppressed colonial peoples were a crucial pillar in the general struggle to defeat global imperialism.

This Leninist approach to the national question has helped shape the dominant left tradition within South Africa. It lies at the heart of the eight-decade (and still going strong) SACP-ANC alliance. But ANC liberation culture has also been influenced by progressive values of liberal origin through other channels as well – notably those transmitted through 19th century liberal humanist traditions particularly by way of philanthropic missionary education. Basic notions of human equality ("we are all made in God's image") soon acquired a radical edge in a racialised colonial setting. However, in the course of struggle over many decades, and particularly with a shift towards a mass line within the ANC in the 1950s, the class limitations of classical liberalism were soon felt. The Freedom Charter of 1955, for instance, embodies many classical liberal demands, but it goes well beyond the boundaries of a liberal paradigm – one reason why the Liberal Party of the day refused to participate in the Congress of the People.

The political culture of the ANC represents a fusion of militant nationalist, liberal humanist, and radical left values. It is a unity forged in the anti-apartheid struggle around the political objective of achieving democratic majority rule. Let me repeat that: democratic majority rule. By contrast, throughout the 20th century, the mainstream of liberalism in SA (and, indeed, in most other places) never envisaged entrusting governance to a democratic majority. The forerunners of today's DA argued for a "qualified franchise". They even believed they were not racist because, after all, they were willing to bestow the franchise upon a handful of "civilised" (and "propertied") natives.

Of course, the majority of “natives” just happened not to have property (never mind that it was because they had been colonially dispossessed!)

In the 21st century, arguing for a qualified franchise in SA would, of course, no longer remotely fly. But the underlying anti-majoritarian liberal agenda remains the same: if we can't have a qualified franchise, then let's do everything to devalue the potential collective power of a one-person one-vote franchise. That means, among other things, continuously sowing mistrust in and scepticism about the democratic state and the majority party which, by a sleight of hand, are continuously presented as the key “threat” to democracy.

It is important at this point to be quite clear, especially for those of us in the SACP. There are sobering lessons from the 20th century that we need to internalise. In the course of the last century the left, everywhere, played an heroic and often leading role in opposition – whether against Tsarist autocracy or in the national liberation struggles of South East Asia or Southern Africa. In power, however, bureaucratic authoritarianism often swallowed up the revolutionary and democratic impulses (and even cadres) of an earlier period. That is why it is so important that the left, especially the communist left, should be in the forefront of defending a strong constitution that safeguards individual and collective rights, and that entrenches effective checks and balances on the state. There is nothing inherently “liberal” or “anti-left” about this.

However, and this is where the left begins to part ways with liberals, we also need to check, balance and transform other forms of concentrated power that can subvert democracy and development. Notice how in the debate around press freedom, liberal voices have had a great deal to say about the state and the ruling party, while being largely silent about the massive market (and therefore ideological) power of the three capitalist conglomerates that dominate the print media. The one is an apartheid-era corporate construct suckled on Afrikaner croney-capitalism, another is controlled by Irish media tycoons, and the third has as its major shareholder the embodiment of BEE mining money. We sometimes speak of the media as “the fourth estate”, but the dominant print media institutions in our society are very much part of a ruling “first estate”. In the present media debate, the recurrent message is:

Among the ‘liberals’ coming out of the woodwork is the former apartheid communications boss

“The ANC government wants to take away your right to know”. The message sets up a paradigm of a big, nasty government on the one hand, and 48-million individual citizens on the other. In this liberal fairy story, a supposedly benign print-media is guided by the purest intentions of bringing the truth to these millions of individuals.

But there are truths that they won't bring you. For instance, Independent Newspapers, for all their full-page boasting about speaking truth to power (“we're independent...are you?”), won't ever dare to tell us that their Irish-owners have been shipping out some R400-million a year in profits from our country while asset-stripping their increasingly impoverished South African newsrooms.

Liberals emerging out of the woodwork

Emboldened by the recent liberal offensive against government and the ANC, all manner of liberals have now crept out of the woodwork, among them Dave Steward, executive director of the FW De Klerk Foundation. I wonder how many fellow liberal “defenders” of the media and of our Constitution winced when Steward nailed his colours to their mast. After all, Steward headed the apartheid communication services between 1985 and 1992.

But it is precisely this indelible past inked into his CV that compels Steward to be a more honest and consistent liberal than some others strutting about today who are happy for us to forget the historic role of their anti-majoritarian liberalism.

In his most recent intervention (“‘Democracy’ declares war on freedom”, Cape Argus, 12 October 2010) Steward breaks that greatest of all contemporary SA lib-

eral taboos – he dares to imply (twice!), ever so subliminally, that there is a continuity between “the best” of post-1994 SA and “the best” of the last decade of apartheid rule.

He begins his “defence” of our Constitution with the following ringing assertion: “Not since the days of John Vorster have liberal values been under such attack by government as they are now.” Note how Steward neatly skips over PW Botha and FW De Klerk – after all, from Steward's point of view, the last two apartheid heads of state were liberal reformers. The scandal is not that Steward believes this, but rather that he has a point. Botha and De Klerk were anti-majoritarians who understood that liberal-leaning reforms (including market deregulation and privatisation) were the best chance of defending the ill-gotten gains of their white minority constituency in the face of looming change. This is the scandal that most of today's anti-majoritarian liberals would prefer us to forget.

Steward goes on to tell us that “the Gear based macro-economic policies that are now so widely denigrated helped to ensure 17 years of uninterrupted economic growth until the global downturn in 2008”. Again, if they bother to do the arithmetic, this will not please many contemporary liberals. But do the arithmetic for yourself: 2008 minus 17 years takes you back to 1991. Steward is breaking another (related) liberal taboo. He is reminding us of the continuity in macro-economic policy (and in the actual neo-colonial growth path it has underpinned) from the latter years of apartheid rule (with its Normative Economic Model) through more than a decade of Gear-dominated policies.

Anti-majoritarian liberalism and the attempt to hijack the Constitution

But it is in the manner of his “defence” of our Constitution that Steward is most revealing. “On the battlefield of ideas”, he tells us, “those who are fighting for liberal values can count on the support of the Constitution.” However, in seeking to claim our Constitution for his own anti-majoritarian liberalism, Steward has a small problem. True to the mainstream of liberalism, Steward makes the classical conflation of two very different things – “freedom” on the one hand, and the (so-called) “free market” on the other. In this paradigm, as Maggie Thatcher famously put it, “there is no such thing as society, just individuals.” Freedom

consists in “maximising” the choice (on the market) of individuals-consumers by privatising, de-regulating and generally liberalising.

To claim our Constitution for liberalism Steward proceeds to tell us that the Constitution “does not recognise ‘collective rights’: all rights devolve on individuals ... there is no idea that individual rights can ever be ‘over-emphasised’.”

Now this is very interesting: even a cursory reading of our Bill of Rights will reveal that it has many references to a variety of collective rights. For instance, Clause 9 on Equality reads:

“To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.” (Clause 9 Equality)

Likewise, Clause 23 on Labour Relations reads:

“(4) Every trade union and every employers’ organisation has the right - (a) to determine its own administration, programme and activities; (b) to organise; and (c) to form and join a federation.

(5) Every trade union, employers’ organisation and employer has the right to engage in collective bargaining...” (Clause 23 Labour relations)

Clause 25 on Property asserts that:

(6) A person or community whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled ... either to tenure which is legally secure or comparable redress. (7) A person or community dispossessed of property after 19 June 1913 as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled...either to restitution of that property or to equitable redress.”

The left must not be half-hearted in meeting this challenge

So why does Steward make the ludicrous claim that there are no collective rights in our Constitution? It is partly because of his liberal individualist bias, but, linked to that bias is an inability (or unwillingness) to confront the systemic realities hard-wired into the structure of South African society by more than three centuries of colonial oppression and white minority rule. And it is precisely because it does recognise these realities that our Constitution is not just about checking and balancing the state, it is not just about defending individuals against political power. It does embody these important constitutional principles, yes, but it is also a clarion call to use power (not least political power underpinned by a democratic majority) to transform our reality. And this is what our anti-majoritarian liberals fear. This is what they hope we will not notice. This is why they pose as the grand protectors of our Constitution – but they can only do so by cherry-picking an item here and there from the Constitution while grossly distorting its overall thrust.

A constitution to preserve what exists – or a constitution to advance transformation?

Many liberals will object that I have conveniently focused on an easy target in the shape of a former apartheid functionary, Dave Steward. I accept that there are many variants of liberalism and some of its proponents might be more adept at covering their anti-majority and therefore anti-democratic phobia than the CEO of the FW De Klerk Foundation. But this phobia is the consistent thread that runs through the ebb and flow of liberal chatter in our country.

It is a phobia that is detectable in, for instance, the Centre for Development Enterprise’s Dinokgeng scenarios – which conveniently render “unthinkable” (because they are allotted to two mutually excluding scenarios) the possibility of both a strong developmental state (= bad scenario) and an active citizenry (= good scenario).


It is a phobia detectable in an otherwise interesting recent contribution to the media debate by Mark Berger who tells us: “I will support the opposition until we have a balance of power.” In other words, for Berger, democracy is not about creating the conditions to change reality, but rather a mechanism for creating a stalemate. The fragmentation of a democratic majority capable of driving transformation is what informs the hypocritical praise of Cosatu leadership whenever there appears to be a glimmer of a split from the ANC-led Alliance. And it is the same pursuit of an anti-transformation stalemate that informed the media’s premature celebration of the arrival of Cope.

With Cope imploding, the anti-majoritarian liberal agenda on the party political front is once more back to square one. This is why, over the past months, in their unceasing offensive against the consolidation of democratic majority power, we have seen these liberal forces shifting their focus to an alternative terrain – building a civil society front “in defence of media freedom and the Constitution”.

In meeting this challenge, we on the left must not be clumsy. Above all, we should not be half-hearted in defending the Constitution – the actual Constitution, that is. It is a Constitution that carries a profound message of liberatory transformation that goes way beyond the narrow confines of 19th century liberalism. ●

Cde Cronin is the SACP Deputy General Secretary

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MEMORIAL LECTURE

What would cde Dadoo say about our movement today?

He would worry over loss of support in coloured and Indian communities and of negative tendencies in the movement

By Gwede Mantashe



When I was asked to deliver this memorial lecture I had the dilemma that visits those of us of a younger age. I tried to convince comrades that an elderly person must be found.

However, I soon realised that there is no Joe Slovo, Moses Kotane, Moses Mabhida or JB Marks in the Party office. I then reminded myself that Dr Yusuf Dadoo is my predecessor in the Party and, therefore, I have an obligation to deliver this lecture.

The memorial lecture is not just about the person of and the role played by cde Dadoo. It is essentially about interpreting his person and the role he played in the struggle for freedom, to remind ourselves – the younger generation, that our movement has a distinct culture and tradition, ways of doing things, which earned it the leadership role in society.

Great revolutionaries like cde Dadoo are an embodiment of these proud traditions. His fellow communists describe him as “the genial, mild-manner and somewhat taciturn ‘Doc’ who combined medicine with politics. His temperament was that of a militant activist, intent on putting ideas into practice. Though not given much to talk in the many committees and conferences he attended, often

presiding as chairman or president, he had a wide reputation for wise counsel and proper leadership.” He was known for his courage, commitment and consistency “in pursuit of his main objectives which were to weld Indians into a well-knit, radical national community and establish firm links with the African people in common struggle against white domination and oppression. He found in the Party the kind of ideological and organisational framework, which he needed to carry out his mission”.

The SACP was always a non-racial party and, therefore, found it difficult to appreciate fully how difficult it was to mobilise and coordinate the efforts of these comrades in racially based organisations into a single struggle against the brutal but organised successive regimes of the Nationalist Party. In reading the statement of Dr Dadoo on his return from India to South Africa in 1949, one begins to appreciate the value of the commitment of these great revolutionaries of our country in the fight against the Apartheid regime at any point of history. “I am happy to be back in my homeland. I will have the opportunity to again take full share in the struggle of all anti-Nationalists to overthrow the Malan Government and establish a truly democratic state which will ensure full citizenship rights to every citizen.” He said these words in the face of threats of deportation by the Nats, having been denied a passport to attend the United Na-

tions just a year previously.

His inspiration to be an activist came from two sources. His first inspiration was the nationalist movement in India, in particular the growing resistance to the British in the Gujarat State, the home of Gandhi. We must remember that the doctor was born in the village of Kholvad on the banks of the Tapi River in India, and only came to South Africa at the age of 15.

Second was the desire to fight the Malan Regime, because due to the laws of segregation the young Dadoo had to travel all the way from Krugersdorp to Fordsburg for schooling.

When he returned to India to complete his matric he was more active, participating in the meetings held by the stalwart of resistance, Mahatma Gandhi. Sending him to the Royal College in Edinburgh to study medicine was an attempt by his father to keep him away from politics. The opposite actually happened as his political horizon was broadened. He became involved in the Independent Labour Party and the local branch of the National Indian Congress. He also started reading Marxism.

It was a blessing in disguise that when he returned to South Africa he found all the working class movements in disarray and Hertzog rushed through many segregationist laws. The Indian Congresses were verbally denouncing the racist laws but adhered to the policy of compromise and isolation from the African and Col-

oured people.

After meeting Moses Kotane at a Party congress, Dadoo joined the SACP in 1939. He then lent all his efforts to the building of unity within the liberation movement in South Africa. He worked with great revolutionaries in the Indian Community like cdes Joshi, Naidoo, and Molvi Cachalia, families that remain active in our movement up to this day. In 1940 cde Yusuf Dadoo was elected to the Johannesburg district committee of the SACP and to the central committee in 1941. The four months he spent in the Boksburg Blue Sky prison for making anti-war statements gave him more time to read and strengthen his revolutionary theory thanks to cde Harry Bloom for consistently supplying him with books. In 1951 he was one of the 20 leaders charged under the Suppression of Communism Act for which he received a suspended sentence.

In the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1955 he, alongside Chief Albert Luthuli and Father Trevor Huddleston, was awarded Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe. Despite the bannings and house arrests he was very active, hence his arrest in Howick in 1959. In 1960, having picked up a warning of raids and arrests, he left the country for Botswana where he linked up with cde Oliver Tambo. His international activism grew, leading to him becoming part of the world peace movement.

Following the watershed Morogoro Conference at which the membership of the ANC was opened to all races, Dr Dadoo became a member and the vice-chairperson of the Revolutionary Council of the ANC. He was elected to the Central Committee of the banned SACP in 1953 and became the National Chairman of the SACP in 1972. The inscription on his tombstone summarises what he stood for; "Yusuf Dadoo, Fighter for National Liberation, Socialism and World Peace."

When the Party was banned in 1950 the NEC of the ANC called for an emergency conference. As cde Dadoo called for unity against fascism, cde Tambo warned that no democratic organisation would be spared if the attack on the Party was allowed to pass without resistance. "Today it is the Communist Party. Tomorrow it will be the trade unions, our Indian Congress, our APO, our African National Congress."

In 1951 cdes Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia represented the South African Indian Congress on a joint council formed to plan the defiance campaign. Working



'The Doc' with cde Nelson Mandela during the Defiance Campaign

together was already a culture between the Indian Congress and the ANC. The Xuma-Naicker-Dadoo Pact, also known as the Doctors' Pact, of 1947 formalised this relation. In 1987 cde Tambo had the following to say: "This significant revolutionary pact, signed on behalf of the ANC, the Natal Indian Congress and the Transvaal Indian Congress, was a step towards the achievement and consolidation of the broad political and organisational unity between our movements and people. It also laid a firm foundation for the Congress Alliance of the 1950s and the United Democratic Front (UDF), the broad democratic movement in our country."

The question that must be confronted is whether Dr Yusuf Dadoo would be proud of our movement today. We must imagine what his reaction would be to the current political environment. I am sure he would be worried by the fact that the ANC has been losing support in both Indian and coloured communities since 2006. Activism in these communities has been declining.

Cde Dadoo would ask us to design specific programmes to organise these communities. He would remind us that the primary objective of the National Democratic Revolution is the liberation of blacks generally and Africans in particular: "blacks generally" being Africans, Indians and coloureds – those sections of the population previously excluded from the political system. Africans are the indigenous people in our country, including Khoi and San. This is a reminder

that we belong together and we must continue to rid our society of the racial, class and gender contradictions. The ANC must rekindle its understanding of these communities and organise them again. It is a contradiction in terms that the DA can boast of making inroads in communities whose track record in the struggle for freedom is voluminous.

The Doc would be concerned about the growing negative tendencies in our movement, wherein,

- Leadership of the ANC is seen as a stepping-stone to positions of power and material reward in government and in business.

- The development of a social distance between the leadership and the motive forces.

- The disturbing trend of careerism, corruption and opportunism at all levels of the movement.

- Divisive leadership battles over access to resources and patronage becoming a norm and allegations about corruption and business interests of leaders and deployed cadres becoming more prevalent.

- The general collapse of discipline and undermining of the traditions, culture and values of our glorious movement.

He would be worried about the open fights in the Alliance. Any open fight among alliance partners is a reflection of our failure to engage. In some instances it reflects selfishness on the leadership of the alliance components who believe that the African National Congress owes its existence to them. We cannot have a situation where alliance partners have rights and no responsibilities, as if they are supporters and not part of the revolutionary forces.

This memorial lecture must therefore mark the beginning of a new programme of organising in Indian, Coloured and White communities. We must re-dedicate ourselves to the project of building a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society. We must remind our people that they must themselves be revolutionaries. This great revolutionary, himself, remained one to the end. He performed his Haj (pilgrimage) a few months before he died. On his deathbed he asked Slovo to get someone to sing him Parna Janda (an Indian national liberation song) and be buried as a Muslim. His wish was fulfilled. ●

Cde Mantashe is SACP National Chairman and ANC Secretary General

LOOKING BACK

PAST GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE SACP

W H ANDREWS, GENERAL SECRETARY CPSA 1921 – 1925

Comrade Bill: Product of worker and socialist movements

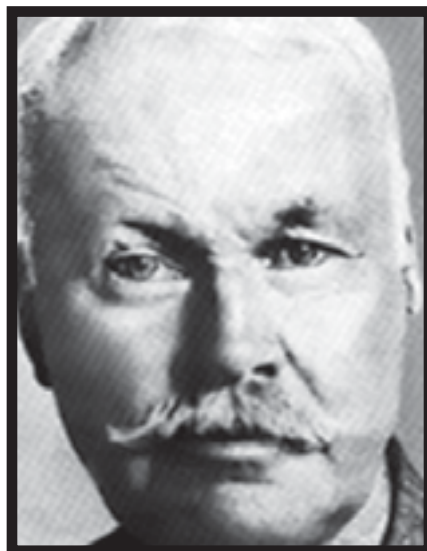
BY HOWARD SMITH

William Henry Andrews (Comrade Bill) was Secretary of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), and editor of the Party's paper, *The International*, from its founding conference in July 1921 until 1925.

The CPSA founded in 1921 was the product of political developments in the labour movement in the young Union of South Africa (established in 1910) that paralleled those on the international stage.

The dominant influence in the labour and trade union movement in the first two decades of the 20th Century came from skilled workers, mainly of British origin. They had been schooled in the British labour movement and still followed its developments. They organised in craft unions, linked by trade's councils, and worked for labour's political representation, but displayed weaknesses or vacillation when class and national loyalties were tested.

A second influence was the socialist movement in Europe, with strong internationalist traditions and Marxist theory and practice, felt through the socialist groups formed by the settlers, British but also German, Jewish and other Europeans, with active ties with socialist movements in Europe and America.



'Comrade Bill' Andrews

Born on 20 April, 1870, cde Bill Andrews was from the former tradition. He served a seven-year apprenticeship, joined his craft union, the Association of Engineering Societies (ASE), and had been a skilled worker in England before coming to the booming Gold Reef in 1893. He worked on gold mines and was a founder member of the Johannesburg branch of the ASE in March 1894. His activities were interrupted by the South African War in 1899. With his wife Mary O'Brien he moved to England but was back in South Africa in 1900, when he enlisted in the British Army for six months and then worked at the Braamfontein workshops of Imperial Railways.

After the South African War, trade unions revived. Resisting Chamber of Mines' attempts to impose accelerated

work rates, a number of unions joined together tactically in a United Trades Council. It was here that Andrews proposed a Trade Union Council and the Johannesburg, later Witwatersrand, Trades and Labour Council was established.

With moves towards self-government for (white) South Africa, the WTLC was central in organising to give labour a political voice. Andrews, now the full-time organiser for the ASE, was elected President of the Labour Representation Committee in 1906. Its candidates took three seats in the provincial elections the following year. In 1909 the South African Labour Party (SALP) was founded with cde Andrews as its President. In 1912 he was elected to the Union Parliament.

Labour resistance to intensifying exploitation by the Chamber of Mines culminated in a general strike of (white) labour in 1913. The strike heightened labour movement hostility to both the Chamber of Mines and the Smuts-Botha government that served its interests. This hostility papered over the fault lines between the SALP's reformist right-wing and revolutionary socialist left-wing. The SALP was leading an alliance of forces – English- and Afrikaans-speaking workers in craft and industrial unions, left- and right-wing socialists and sections of the middle classes – that seemed likely to challenge the existing alignment of South African politics.

Opposing World War 1

This hope was lost after the Smuts' government took South Africa into the First World War on the side of Britain. Loyalty to the Union, and the "mother country", conflicted with principled socialist opposition to the war seen as serving the interests of armaments manufacturers against the working class in all countries.

A popular War on War movement agitated against working class participation and promoted the international socialist movement's peace initiatives in Europe. The anti-war position was supported by the majority of the SALP Executive, even while members were free to support and participate in the war.

A pro-war move at the January 1915 SALP Conference was contained by the leadership, but the showdown came when 'loyalists' led by the right-wing Cresswell forced a special conference in August. The rowdy conference eventually voted 82:30 in favour of a pro-war motion and went on to rule out dissent, enforcing a loyalty pledge.

This decision and a general move to the right by the SALP (Andrews was to characterise it as "a middle class party" from this point), left the anti-war leaders with no option: Andrews resigned as Chairman, JA Clark as Vice-Chairman, David Ivor Jones as Secretary, and Gabriel Weinstock as Treasurer. The anti-war faction formed the International League within the SALP (IL-SLP). But the new pro-war leadership of the SALP would not tolerate dissent: it demanded that candidates for parliament pledge loyalty to the government for the duration of the war. Andrews and Crisp refused and resigned from the SALP to contest the election on an anti-war platform.

Socialist alignment

On 15 September 1915 the IL-SALP voted overwhelming to sever all connections with the SALP and reformed as the International Socialist League (ISL) with cde Andrews as Chairman.

In its attitude to the international socialist movement, to socialism in South Africa and to industrial organisation, the ISL followed the pre-war militant socialists. Significantly The International of 10 September 1915 included the following statement: "Internationalism that does

¹ Sadly for this writer, his great-grandfather GB Steer as the new SALP Chairman played an enthusiastic role in this purge. He and Andrews had shared membership of the ASE in Johannesburg from its earliest days

Ahead of the CPSA after its 1921 launch lay many storms ...

not concede the fullest rights which the native working class is capable of claiming will be a sham. One of the justifications for our withdrawal from the Labour Party is that it gives us untrammelled freedom to deal, regardless of (electoral) political fortunes, with the great and fascinating problem of the native. If the League deals resolutely in consonance with Socialist principles with the native question, it will succeed in shaking South African capitalism to its foundations. Then, and not till then, shall we be able to talk about a South African Proletariat in our International relations. Not till we free the natives can we hope to free the whites.

The editor was WH Andrews, but the sentiment suggests the writer was S P Bunting.

Unlike in the SALP, Marxists played a significant role in defining the character of the ISL. Pamphlets by Marx, Lenin and de Leon (a Marxist in the USA) were promoted. The ISL agitated for peace and established links with Lenin's Third International; the ISL was enthusiastic in its support for the Russian Revolution.

The ISL came out in support of industry-based unions, as opposed to the craft unions it saw as reformist. In 1916 membership of the ISL was about 400, but this included leaders of the (white) Mine Workers Union, the ASE, the Boilermakers and building workers unions, and its potential influence was far greater than its numerical strength. The ISL developed branches in Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria as well as sustaining its presence all along the Reef.

The significant policy development at the 1916 Conference was to engage with the causes of the non-enfranchised majority. The ISL organised classes on political topics which included black participants. It was in contact with leaders of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC, later the ANC), and Grendon, editor of the SANNC's *Abantu-Batho*, addressed the ISL on "Links between Black and White". The ISL agitated against the Native Affairs Administration Act.

Linking socialism and the union movement

In 1917 cde Bunting and others were engaged in attempts to establish an African Industrial Union. The ISL played a part in the formation of the Indian Workers' Industrial Union in Durban.

The turn of the decade saw growing trade union organisation and short-lived strikes by African and other black workers. The ISL issued calls for white workers not to scab on striking black workers, but was unable to influence white unions to act in solidarity with black workers. Divisions over the implementation of its 'native policy' weakened the ISL when successes on that front led to opposition from its white supporters.

In 1917-18 cde Andrews spent time in Britain meeting leaders of trade unions and of the British Socialist Party and other left-wing socialist groups that were to later coalesce into the Communist Party of Great Britain.

A meeting with Maxim Litvinov, representative in Britain of the new Soviet Republic, confirmed his faith in the Russian Revolution. He returned in July 1918 enthused by the developments of a shop steward movement in Britain and with a better understanding of the international socialist movement.

Developments in the international socialist movement influenced the ISL, particularly the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in mid-1920 and calls for socialist unity and an anti-imperialist front in defence of the young Soviet Republic.

Formation of the Communist Party of South Africa

The January 1921 ISL Conference was opened to discuss "the non-whites of the country; the Afrikaner nationalist movement; socialist unity; and the role of a communist or socialist party in South Africa". Attended by a number of other socialist groups, the Conference supported cde SP Bunting's proposals with regard to blacks, but his proposals for a sympathetic approach to Afrikaner nationalism were defeated.

On socialist unity and a communist party, the conference reached broad agreement on the thesis of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (CI). A Unity Committee of five was established, with ISL members (Andrews, Bunting and Goldman) in the majority. This convened an inaugural meeting in Cape Town in July. The three-day meeting of 14 delegates, all English-speaking whites, adopted the

constitution and rules for a centralised party under the name Communist Party of South Africa (Section of the Communist International) and agreed to apply for affiliation to the CI. Tyler was elected Chairman, Andrews Secretary and Bunting Treasurer.

Ahead of the new party lay many storms, which were already discernable in the contradictions of its founding positions. First among these was the 'native question' on which the CPSA had written policy but very limited practical experience and no direct African participation. Second was the Afrikaner nationalist issue, which the Unity Conference had chosen to dismiss. And third was the issue of external influence and even control inherent in the Party's position as a Section of the Communist International.

The 1922 strike of white mineworkers exposed the first two of these. The Chamber of Mines had precipitated the strike on an issue that would divide the workers along racial lines and rouse antagonism on both sides. The Party extended assistance to the strike committee "without necessarily identifying with every slogan heard on the strike" (a reference to 'workers unite for a white South Africa'), but failed to raise any demand that African workers could organise around. The strike included Afrikaner workers, 50% of the white workforce, but the CPSA had little to appeal to them with. When the strike was defeated, many trade union militants turned away from socialism and followed the SALP into the pact with the National Party. The "purely 'white' labour movement thereafter was transformed step by step into an adjunct of the boss class, exchanging their independence for concessions and privileges".

Prioritising the national question

During cde Andrews' secretaryship the CPSA developed its work among the growing urbanised black proletariat. The spectacular national growth of the Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU), a

Cde Bill 'unequivocally supported the necessity of organising all workers irrespective of colour'

general workers' union formed by Clements Kadalie in Cape Town in 1920, provided new opportunities for the CPSA to engage with Africans and their organisations. These developments found reflection in policy emphasis and leadership changes at the third national conference at the end of 1924. A resolution to seek affiliation to the SALP, an attempt to (mis) align the Party with white labour politics, was roundly rejected. The policy on work among Africans was given greater emphasis, with a resolution stressing "the prime importance of mass organisation of labour ... forwarding the industrial organisation of all sections of the workers, especially those hitherto unorganised ... the problems of the working class can only be solved by a United Front of all workers irrespective of colour."

Cde S. P. Bunting was elected Chairman and Eddie Roux Vice-Chairman; both were leading advocates of work among Africans. Cde Andrews was re-elected Secretary and editor of *The International* but resigned both positions in 1925 to concentrate on trade union work. In an interview with *The Star* Andrews denied any split over principles; he "unequivocally supported the necessity of organising all workers irrespective of colour" but "disagreed with the emphasis and speed with which the new leadership of the Party proposed to tackle the job."

True to his stated intention, cde Andrews was again active in the AEU (formerly ASE), serving on its South African Council. In 1930 he was elected Secretary of the South African Trades and Labour

Council. He was the only labour member appointed to the Industrial and Wages Commission set up by the Pact Government, inserting into its final report a devastating critique of the state's role on behalf of capitalist interests. Cde Andrews remained a committed member of the Party until expelled, along with others, during the purges of 1931 that were the hallmark of an intolerant, sectarian period in the CPSA and the CI. In 1935 the 7th World Congress of the CI crushingly defeated the dogmatic, ultra-left tendencies in the international communist movement and this signalled the end to the sectarianism in the CPSA too. Cde WH Andrews was readmitted to the Party, which he served as Chairman for a number of years and as a member of the Central Committee until the last year of his life, 1950. ●

Cde Smith is active in the SACP Jack Simons branch and Brian Bunting (Cape Metro) District

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SERVICE DELIVERY

Moving away from treating civil servants like machines

From the 'machine model' of organisation to the 'brain model' to support delivery in a developmental state

BY SYDNEY LUCKETT

We spend our days boxed in our houses, swarming in and out of office blocks like tribes of ants, crammed into trains, canned in aeroplanes, locked in traffic jams ... all this is demanded by the way we have arranged our economy and the institutions we have built to operate that economy – Stafford Beer, 1974

Stafford Beer was a published poet, a painter and a yoga teacher. However, most of his time was spent thinking about organisational systems. In this role he held professorships at various prestigious universities across the globe, published more than 200 books and papers, and most significantly, was a special adviser to Salvador Allende on how to structure the Chilean industry in line with Allende's socialist vision.

Before proceeding with Beer's ideas let me wind the clock backwards a few decades. At the turn of the 20th century, Frederick Taylor pioneered the field of 'scientific management'. It was on the principles of scientific management that Henry Ford built his first factory. The principles are simple: all responsibility for a job lies with the manager; the use of scientific methods to determine the most efficient way of doing the work by breaking it down into distinct measurable tasks; employ the most technically proficient people to perform those tasks; and, lastly, monitor the performance.

Because of the widespread confidence in the possibility of applying scientific methods to all spheres of human endeavour, scientific management soon crossed geographical, cultural and ideological boundaries. Factories built on these principles sprang up in USA, Europe and the Soviet Union.

In his *Prison Notebooks* Italian Communist Party General Secretary Antonio Gramsci, wrote that Taylor's aim was to: "Develop the worker to the highest degree of automatic and mechanical attitudes, breaking up the old psychophysical nexus of qualified professional work, which demands a certain active participation of intelligence, fantasy and initiative on the part of the worker ...it is in [the industrialists'] interest to have a stable, skilled labour force, a permanently well-adjusted complex, because the human complex of an enterprise is also a machine".

With these words, Gramsci summarised what has become known as the machine model of organisation, or, more popularly, the 'McDonaldisation of organisations'. In its more sophisticated current form this machine model in-

cludes some powerful tools such as Management by Objectives, Organisational Charts (Organograms), five year plans, etc – tools all-too familiar to anybody who has spent time working in a South African government department.

This model has severe limitations in application often not appreciated by those who using the tools. It works well under conditions where machines work well: when projects consist of simple, unambiguous tasks; when the 'environment' of the organisation is stable and unchanging for the planning time periods; when the same product or service is delivered repeatedly; when precision is a premium; and, when the human 'components' are compliant and unquestioning. All the conditions that make McDonalds such a success!

The model's limitations are significant:

- It is unable to adapt to changing circumstances;
- It tends to produce a mindless unquestioning bureaucracy;
- Tasks are performed for the sake of compliance and their purpose is not appreciated;

This results in risk-aversion and, most seriously, has dehumanising effects on lower-level civil servants.

In a completely different context and a few centuries before Marx wrote on the alienation of labour, Chinese sage Chuang-Tzu warned that "he who does his work like a machine, grows a heart

The 'machine model' has severe limitations

like a machine”.

So it shouldn't surprise us that not only factory workers but also civil servants who work within this machine model have become alienated with machine-like hearts.

How many civil servants understand the importance of their work and the contributions that their 'pen-pushing' makes?

How many understand the purpose of all the forms that have to be completed? Who can blame level 5 civil servants for knocking off without completing a task at the end of the day when the only expectation is that they come to work at 7,30 am, sit with their bums on seats for eight hours and comply with their APPs. And we wonder why our civil servants don't deliver!

The machine model has become so much part of government that it is almost impossible for most civil servants to conceptualise a different model of organisation. Ask any employee to give a diagram or picture of the department s/he works in. It's unlikely that you'll get anything other than an organogram with blocks and lines. Each of these blocks will have a job title, a boss of some sort, with lesser bosses reporting to him (seldom her) and so on until you get to the administrative assistants. As Beer says in his book, *Designing Freedom*: “This picture ... is useful for just one purpose: if something goes wrong, you can use the picture to trace whose fault it is.”

Indian economist Amartya Sen defines development as “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” – a radical break from the usual obsession with increase in GNP, GDP per capita, industrialisation etc, which unsurprisingly all fit neatly into a machine model of society. Just as the machine model of organisation is an unquestioned Holy Cow in government likewise is the GNP/GDP measure of development. The question of why we should be aiming for an x% pa

increase in GNP is never questioned.

Lead by France's Nicolas Sarkozy, government institutions such as the OECD have recently pointed out that: “GDP counts as positive economic contributions many aspects which most people would see as negative from a wider perspective of societal progress. For example, obesity, cancer and Aids increase healthcare costs and so make a positive contribution to GDP. High levels of crime lead to more prisons and policing costs which are also counted positively.”

Back in 1968 Senator Robert Kennedy said of the GNP measure: It does not measure the health of our children, the

quality of their education, or the joy of their play... it measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile.

Sen's alternative is incorporated into the Sarkozy Commission report. However, his 'freedom-centred' approach to development does not give prescriptions for how to organise the state and government departments. For this we need to return to Beer.

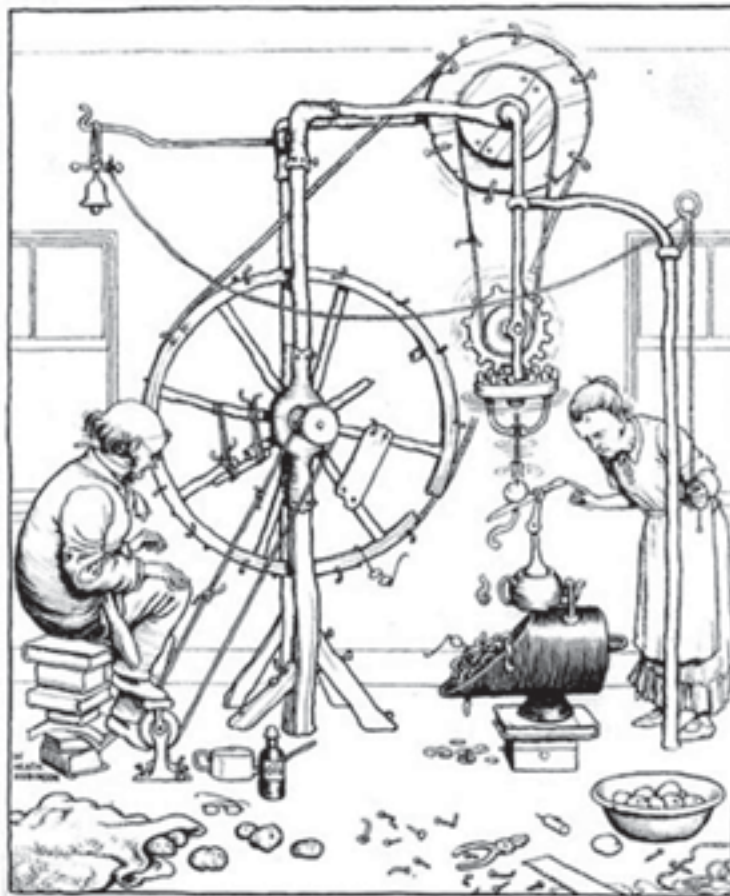
Beer's approach referred to as a cybernetic approach in organisational theory, has been further developed by a number of leading systems thinkers and is now widely known as a 'brain model' of organisation, with some variants known as

the 'learning organisation'; it parallels the modern understanding of the dispersal of intelligence of organisms (especially mammals) throughout the organism. Thus the emphasis is on decision-making at different levels throughout an organisational system. This is in essence a 'freedom-centred' approach.

Some readers might be cynical about the viability of a 'freedom-centred' approach to organisational management. The question of its viability often degenerates into a false debate between centralisation and decentralisation. One of the features of the brain model is a blend of central and peripheral decision-making, made possible by building an organisation on five key principles. (The first and key principle on which all aspects of the design are constructed is a technical term known as 'requisite variety' – an organisation needs to be able to match the variety

of the social environment with which it engages by an equivalent variety of responses. This is the opposite of 'the one size fits all' approach – or that every size, shape and culture of a family must fit into a standard RDP house.

The implication, and second principle, is that 'redundancy' must be built into an organisation where it is directly needed, usually at the point of delivery. There should be parallel and overlapping self-organising work groups each of which includes a range of functions sufficient to deal with the problems it faces.



GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile

This excess capacity is not only necessary to provide the variety necessary to deal with the various types of problems that may arise, it has provides space for innovation and development. In government, as in many old-fashioned companies, we do just the opposite. We cut redundant posts and reduce the work force to a conveyor belt type function – the machine model! Without redundancy systems become fixed and static.

The third is known as the 'holographic principle' – the whole organisation is built into its parts. This is primarily achieved by focussing on the 'corporate DNA', its culture and information systems. It should be the vision, values and sense of purpose that binds an organisation. All civil servants should understand and be committed to these. In government we give lip-service to Batho Pele. In practice, most managers monitor arrival times and lunch breaks. Until recently I was a director of a major project in a provincial department. When I started on this project I had to fight for my staff to be allowed to work at home (if they needed to do work that demanded a high level of accuracy) and I didn't concern myself with how long they took over lunch. Very soon at one senior management meeting a colleague in human capital management produced a ream of print outs from the swiping of cards at security to support his accusation that

Does the government want the work done or bums on seats during office hours?

my staff had been lax about their work hours. My response was simple (but resulted in a series of protracted disputes: do you want the work done or do you want bums on seats during office hours? A survey on staff performance conducted subsequently among the project's clients showed that the clients were overwhelmingly appreciative of the care and attention that they received from the staff.

The fourth principal, 'minimal policy specs', addresses the tendency to detailed specification of policies and strategies. Policies are often developed under the misconception that every possible eventuality has to be anticipated. Detailed rules, protocols and targets are drawn up which negate all redundancy, variety and innovative potential that may exist in the organisation. The alternative is to define the boundaries of acceptable practice and keep these boundaries as wide as possible to allow for as much autonomy as possible, so that units and individuals may innovate and self-organise as they please.

A wonderful, if very radical, example of a company that follows these principles is Semco, a specialist heavy machine manufacturing company in Brazil. The story is told by Ricardo Semler in his book *Maverick*. I'll quote his explanation of how office space is organised: There are no dedicated offices, not even for the CEO. "It works like this: instead of one headquarter building, we distribute identical offices across town. To use a desk, a couch seat or a place at a cappuccino outdoor café (modem wired) you tap into the website and reserve a place. Because no one knows whether you're at office A, B, D or at home, you discover that, hey presto! you can stay an extra day at the beach. And no one will know."

The story of Semco demonstrates what is possible. It may not be desirable to try to emulate such a company, but we can organise our work on the basis of the four key principles set out above. And if we can't do it throughout and across all departments, we have the legal platforms, namely Special Purpose Vehicles, with which we can experiment.

Let's not back away from the task because it seems insurmountable. As Amarty Sen says: Development is a momentous engagement with freedom's possibilities. ●

Cde Lockett is a skills development activist



The African Communist

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SPECIAL ISSUE – AFRICA LEFT NETWORK FORUM CONFERENCE / PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA CONFERENCE

Reports on the status of Left formations in: Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, DRC, Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Chad and Namibia



CUBA

Socialism and the current economic reforms

Umsebenzi editor, cde Yunus Carrim, interviewed Oscar Martinez, the Deputy Head of the International Relations Department of the Cuban Communist Party during the recent SACP visit to Cuba

YC: What is the nature of the economic problems Cuba is currently experiencing?

OM: In the context of our other problems, the US economic and financial blockade is hurting our economy more now. The blockade has been the main obstacle to our social and economic development more than 48 years. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc, we lost our main trading partners. It was a severe blow from which we have not yet recovered. The 2008 global economic crisis also hit us hard. The price of nickel, a major export earner, has gone down. And we have had huge losses with the hurricanes. But also our productivity is too low. We need greater efficiency and more saving to ensure economic growth. We are a small country with limited resources. We need better organise our production, improve discipline, and update our economic model. We are importing far too much, especially food, and need to be more self-sufficient. We need to focus far more on agriculture. Food production has now become an issue of national security.

Isn't the US blockade easing?

In practical terms, no. The main aspects remain and overall the blockade has even got worse. Since 2009 there have been more prohibitions on companies doing business with Cuba. Yet 187 countries voted against the blockade in

the UN General Assembly. Direct economic damages to Cuba since the blockade began in 1962 until December 2009, according to conservative estimates, surpass US\$15,4-billion. If this was calculated according to the present value of the US dollar, it would be about US\$23,9-billion.

But if you have economic problems how does it follow that you have to retrench half a million state workers? Especially since you're a socialist state?

We are not retrenching. That's a capitalist term. We are not putting people out in the street. We are not going to leave them without social assistance. We are re-organising the workforce, not firing workers. We are directing them to other areas of work vital for the economy, mainly food production. We are making these changes as part of updating our economic model in order to ensure that our socialist system is sustainable on the basis of the rational and effective use of the workforce. The first phase will be concluded by the first quarter of 2011. As part of the process, we are giving people land, and helping them to make productive use of it. A significant section of this land is near the urban areas, where 80% of the working population lives. If this land is used to produce food, it will also reduce the fuel and transport costs because it's near the urban areas. We

have too many bureaucrats and professionals, not enough artisans. We want to move people from just producing paper to areas of the economy in which they can be productive and contribute to the economy. We are trying to find new areas of work for them. As President Raul Castro says, 'we have to remove once and for all the notion that Cuba is the only country in the world where you can live without working'. If they do not accept work that the government directs them to, they can be self-employed. We have opened up 178 areas in which they can work. Over 2 years, the state will have to give up about a million workers.

Are you going to re-skill the workers? And what areas are you opening up?

Yes, we are going to fully support the workers to get new skills and other means to get started. Our higher educational institutions are also going to assist. Banks will help with loans. Our main priority, of course, is food production, with the emphasis on substitution of imports, but we also want to increase imports in certain areas. The new areas being opened are in tourism, trade and services, mainly. We are to allow more people to be self-employed as transport providers, bricklayers, stonemasons, plumbers, electricians, panel-beaters, shoe-repairers, hairdressers, shoe-makers, accountants and so on. We are also to allow people to have restaurants with

up to 20 seats. Labour must be got from the owners' families, but they can also employ a limited number of people.

Will there be a minimum wage for those employed and any restriction on the profits of the restaurant owners and others?

Yes, there will be a minimum wage. These will be limited enterprises and they won't be able to make huge profits. We are introducing new redistributive taxes. In fact, new regulations related to this, including the modification of the tax system, have already been published in a special edition of the government gazette.

But ultimately you will be introducing a further measure of private enterprise?

But we're not opening the door to capitalism. No way! Our economic reforms are based on socialist principles. In any case, we have always had self-employed workers. We are just increasing their numbers. Self-employed workers may be able to accumulate more in certain cases, but that'll be based on their hard work, not through exploiting others.

But in the context of the joint ventures with the private sector and other economic reforms since the early 1990s aren't you gradually drifting away from socialism?

No, no! We are consolidating socialism in new difficult global conditions. We are not expanding the private sector significantly, and the fundamental means of production remain in state hands. Even where people work on the land, the product will be theirs, but the state will retain ownership of the land. We are not privatising the land. And if people do not make productive use of the land, we will take it back from them as part of our leasing agreement and allocate it to others. It's impossible to seriously build socialism with our low productivity. We must have a strong economy, especially to ensure our free health and education systems. You must understand we are shaping our own Cuban model of socialism. Ours is an authentic Cuban revolution. It's not been imported from anywhere. It's based on our history, our culture, the nature of the Cuban personality, the psyche of the Cuban people, our natural resources, our climate, our position as a small island, our location in the Caribbean, and our specific problems now. We are not perfect but we are working very hard to make socialism work. We



Cde Oscar Martinez with the SACP delegation (from left): cdes Parkies Phel, Yunus Carrim, Oscar Martinez, Rodolfo Puente Ferro (head of the Africa Department, Cuba), Mhlekwana Nxumalo and Solly Mapaila

have to make these changes to preserve socialism in the context of the economic and financial crisis and the anachronistic US blockade. The changes we are making are under the control of the Cuban Communist Party, with the support of the people. The changes we are making are under the control of the Cuban Communist Party, with the support of the people. After 51 years of our revolution, we cannot afford now to make major strategic mistakes.

Have there not been increasing inequalities within Cuban society since the economic reforms of the early 1990s? And with the reforms, a change of values? And what about corruption?

Yes, there are inequalities, and we are addressing this to prevent the gap growing. But the major distortions come from the money sent to Cubans by their relatives from the US and elsewhere. For example, one US dollar is equivalent to the entire ration card we give to our people. So those who get money from outside are better off. Over time, we want to do away with the two currency system we introduced after collapse of the Soviet Union. (Cubans use the Cuban peso which is weak compared to the US dollar, but US dollars are exchanged into the convertible peso which is closer in value to the US dollar). But to do this, we have to increase the productivity of our workforce, to have a strong economy. We can then raise the salaries of workers. And, yes, we are also aware that the values of people can change. We are addressing this in various ways, including through new and more intensive ideological programmes in our schools, the Young Com-

munist League, the mass organisations, workplaces and elsewhere. We have open debates about this issue. That's the best way to deal with it. We are also getting stronger against corruption through prevention measures and prosecutions of offenders. Any process of change will have challenges. Our economic reforms will be managed gradually and progressively to try to prevent distortions. Of course, this is not the first time we've introduced reforms, but we are aware of the far-reaching consequences, and we are working towards avoiding possible negative effects.

So what is the response of workers to your new economic reforms?

We have spent long hours with the trade unions and workers. We discuss our problems. We make them public. That's how we can solve them. If we are open with people they will support us, as they did during the 'Special Period' after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc. We have also been given lots of ideas by the public and are including these in our plans. But the workers are worried. You see, until now the state has been doing everything for them. They have become too dependent on the state, on the excesses of government paternalism. Now they have to adjust. It won't be easy, but we will do it. In a situation like this, the government has to be part of the solution. We are not going to leave the workers alone. We are going to assist them in their new work. We have to make these changes. If we don't make them we will burden future generations. We are doing this for us but mainly for our children. ●

ICWP

World Communists to meet in Africa for the first time – hosted by SACP!

Theme: The deepening systemic crisis of capitalism – the tasks of Communists in the struggle for peace, progress and socialism

BY CHRIS MATLHAKO

The 12th meeting of International Communist and Workers Parties (ICWP) will for the first time be held in Africa – from 3-5 December 2010 at Swan Lake Lodge, Centurion, Tshwane – hosted by the South African Communist Party (SACP). The meeting will be attended by almost 60 communist and workers parties, representing 50 countries across the world, under the theme: “The deepening systemic crisis of capitalism – the tasks of Communists in defense of sovereignty, deepening social alliances, strengthening the anti-imperialist front in the struggle for peace, progress and socialism”.

This meeting marks an important achievement in the international communist and workers parties’ movement, as it will complete the full-circle of having convened the international meetings across the world in all continents. It follows on the successful hosting of the 1st Africa Left Network Forum (Alnef) and 2nd African Participatory Democracy Conference (APDC), held in Johannesburg in August 2010.

The International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties has a long way since the demise of the ComIntern

in the last century and has played a key role in the coherence of a communist-pole in the world after the setbacks suffered with the end of the Cold War era.

The last decades of the 20th century saw tumultuous developments and cataclysmic changes. The dismantling of socialism in the Soviet Union, the disintegration of the USSR, the collapse of the communist-led regimes in East Europe and the process of restoration of capitalism in these countries – all constituted a big reversal for the world forces of socialism. In this situation, many communist parties carried out serious introspection

on the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism. Wilting under the pressure of an intense ideological offensive, many communist parties abandoned the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism and embraced social democracy.

During this period when the international communist movement has been thrown into disarray, there were some communist and workers parties that believed these historical developments were not due to inadequacies or lack of scientific

rigour of the philosophy but rather due to the inadequacies and lack of scientific rigour on the part of those who have embraced it. Various efforts were undertaken to regroup the international communist movement and bring together all communist and workers parties that believed in the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

The seminal pamphlet by cde Joe Slovo, *Has socialism failed?*, contributed significantly to the renewal efforts and spurred on the revival and aggregation of communist and workers’ movements across the world. From 1998, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) took up this task of organising international meetings of the communist and workers parties to exchange opinions on some of the important contemporary developments in the world and to share experiences. Since then seven consecutive meetings were hosted by the KKE in Greece.

The number of parties taking part in these meetings saw a steady increase reflecting the growing relevance and validity of Marxism. To facilitate the smooth organisation of these meetings a ‘working group’ of international communist and workers parties, including the SACP was formed. This group decides on the theme of each meeting, the venue and dates and the participants

As the experience of organising such meetings proved useful, there was a request to organise this meeting in different parts of the world.

Accordingly the 8th meeting was organised in Lisbon, Portugal, the 9th in Minsk and Moscow to observe the 90th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, the 10th in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The working group had decided in its meeting in February that the 11th meeting would be organised in India jointly with the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Communist Party of India.

The 12th meeting in South Africa marks a very important milestone for the SACP, which celebrated 89-years of unbroken struggle for socialism this year. Having recently convened and hosted a successful Alnef meeting, the Party will in December complete a very successful implementation of the 6th pillar of the Medium-Term Vision (MTV) of the SACP: hegemonising the international! ●

Cde Matlhako is SACP Politburo Secretary for international Relations



YOUNG REDS

YCL welcomes leadership demonstrated by ANC NGC

Young communists also applaud line-of-march direction provided on ill-discipline, and future rules of engagement

BY GUGU NDIMA

The Young Communist League applauds the ANC for a successful, decisive National General Council (NGC) which gave thousands of ANC members and Alliance partners an opportunity to assess and interrogate the state of our revolutionary movement, government and policies.

The manner in which processes unfolded was a far cry from the hostility and chaos eagerly anticipated by most media practitioners. This affirms that members of the ANC will never be deterred by narrow speculation and pessimistic views from so-called analysts and media commentators.

As the YCL we welcome the tough stance by the President, cde Jacob Zuma, on the issue of discipline and rules of engagement. President Jacob Zuma re-assured that disciplinary measures would apply to all members of the ANC and Alliance partners without fear or favour. We hope that this will restore the culture of vigorous debate and interaction without narrowing down or degenerating core issues to individuals. This foreign tendency has distorted many key issues which could have been addressed.

We welcome the proposal in the education commission that compulsory community service should not only be applicable to doctors, but to graduates in various fields, as this would assist in skills development and the attainment of the relevant practical knowledge most graduates require when entering the workplace.

Cde Zuma re-affirmed the ANC's commitment to service delivery. All Ministers have signed the performance agreements and this will cascade to provincial

and local government. In the past two years we have seen an increase in service delivery protests which stem from the looming frustrations people have with the pace of service delivery. The agreements should be duly enforced and any civil servant failing to deliver should be held accountable.

We welcome the proposed implementation of the NHI as a matter of urgency. The health system is still characterised by severe inequalities to the detriment of the poor and the working class. Medial aid schemes are profit-driven corporations which configure medical services according to class. Many workers pay medical aid only to find that the benefits are not worth the money they pay every month.

This elitism should be eliminated in basic services such as health and education. The days of depriving any human the right to health care because they don't have money should be a thing of the past.

The YCL also welcomes the consensus that BEE has been turned into a narrow accumulation tool rather than a policy

to benefit the black majority. The unintended consequences have been the benefit of an elite, mainly well connected politically. This has discredited BEE as a means of addressing past socio-economic disparities. The economic transformation commission was robust in interrogating neo-liberal policies which have benefited corporations. We respect the stance taken by the NGC that further engagement on policies will unfold in 2012.

YCL views the media appeals tribunal is a necessary intervention in the current media. The NGC was decisive in ensuring the tribunal becomes a reality. We should acknowledge the role that media has played both as a community watchdog and in causing unrest and distortions about facts. Irresponsible journalism can never be ignored; journalists should be held accountable. The Press Ombudsman has not played that role. As cde Pallo Jordan stated: the ANC has a track record of advocating and promoting freedom of expression. Progressive media legislation came after 1994 and relations with the media have from then been favourable and interactive. The proposed tribunal is not intended to undermine these gains and laws, but it is to ensure media practitioners equally respect laws which apply to every South African. There are numerous incidents where a number of South Africans, politicians in most instances, who have been victims of distorted reporting resulting in the compromise of their social standing and reputations. It is important that while we embrace freedom of expression, this should not be to the detriment or violation of the rights of others. ●

The YCL welcomes the recognition that BEE has been turned into a narrow accumulation tool – not a means of benefitting the masses

Cde Ndima is YCL National Spokesperson

YOUNG REDS

NYDA should represent the diverse character of our youth

BY GUGU NDIMA

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) has made media headlines following the finalisation of its Provincial Board Appointments (PBAs).

The process of appointing provincial boards was delayed for a range of reasons. These boards are an integral part in the proper functioning of the NYDA, because they play a key role in ensuring that programmes are implemented at regional level in provinces. Provincial boards have a sense as to the needs of the youth each province and allocate resources in accordance with the needs and demands of the various provinces.

Recent weeks have seen an outcry from youth formations in political and civil society questioning the composition of the provincial boards. The fundamental concern was that only political youth formations were represented and are central in the provincial board appointments. This is detrimental for other youth formations that legitimately represent constituencies in society.

The NYDA is a public institution which reports to government through the Presidency. People that should benefit are the youth from various sectors and youth with disabilities. The NYDA should not be viewed as being exclusively for young people from political organisations – whether they come from YCL, ANCYL, Sasco or Cosas.

There are a number of youth organisations in civil society which play an instrumental role in advancing youth development. Young people do not only have ambitions in business, but also in the arts, education, entertainment, community projects and so forth. It is imperative that such young people find representative expression in the NYDA and other relevant institutions. The failure of the National Youth Commission

should always be utilised as a case study to make reference to the mistakes which have had severe financial consequences for our government and for young people in our country. Young people need tangible results and programmes as well as the success stories of ordinary young people who are not only seen to benefit due to their political affiliations.

This will instil confidence in ordinary young South Africans who are faced with abject poverty, unemployment and growing frustration, demonstrated through they demonstrate in service delivery protests. The youth of South Africa needs hope and re-assurance that they are taken seriously by government. The current level of socio-economic disparity is a ticking time bomb.

Social ills have lured young South Africans to crime and other unbecoming activities. Young people are growing despondent due to the lack of access to financial resources to improve their lives.

The NYDA needs to show young South Africans that it is an inclusive organisation for all, whatever their affiliation. It did not assist that after so many outcries about the NYDA not having sufficient funds, the disclosure of salaries of executives were made public.

It is imperative that the NYDA play its role and that all young South Africans should be in a position to take full responsibility for the agency and its activities. We have an obligation all to ensure that does not fail, but the point of departure is to ensure that processes of employment and appointments within the NYDA are made public.

This is in no way an antagonistic approach to the current NYDA Board; it is a pre-caution that we all need to raise as youth stakeholders who have the interests of youth development in South Africa. ●

This article appeared first in City Press

BECC: an urgent intervention to help matrics

BY RICHARD MAMABOLO

The YCL, Sasco, Cosas, Sadtu, Sagda and Cosatu met the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Unisa SRC urgently in September to discuss the current crises in education relating to school examinations.

All participants recognised that the current crisis was not only a crisis for Grade 12s; it affects the entire schooling system and has dire consequences even for higher education entrance next year.

We resolved to form a Basic Education Crises Committee (BECC) and, as BECC, to approach President Jacob Zuma to set up a high-level Ministerial team to look into the crisis and consider BECC's proposals. We believe that all of these can only be resolved through political leadership at the highest level.

The participants noted that there has been no learning and teaching in some schools in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo and Gauteng, and that learners who wrote their pre-examinations tests in schools affected by the public sector strike have potential not to perform well,

The participants took a range of progressive resolutions: they resolved that:

- The culture of learning and teaching had been direly compromised and should be restored; and that
- No learner should be forced to write trial examinations pending a discussion between Sadtu, Cosas and DBE.

Participants also supported the call by Cosas for the introduction of two additional hours of teaching time; Saturday as a normal school day; the complete scrapping of the September holidays; and the postponement of the final examinations by one week.

BECC will participate in the DBE intervention programme – mobilising volunteer tutors from universities, and from unemployed graduates and teachers ●

Cde Mamabolo is YCL Cadre Development Officer

YOUNG REDS

A tragic tale of racism and protection of class interests

YCL opposes the brutality and racism of the DA Western Cape government in denying the people of Hangberg land and shelter

BY GUGU NDIMA

The Young Communist League (YCL) strongly opposes the brutality and racism demonstrated by the Western Cape government against the community of Hangberg in Hout Bay.

This act epitomises the character of the DA administration and its intransigent attitude towards the poor. The majority of Africans and coloureds continue to live in horrific conditions of squalor and abject poverty. The allocation of resources is skewed and biased towards the development of white and rich communities such as Camps Bay.

The DA administration is not committed to improving the conditions of the poor; they failed to engage with the community of Hangberg on the legitimate concerns it raised. The DA is not accustomed to democratic processes and has shown that it is incapable of listening and responding to the concerns of the people.

The only wisdom that the DA administration has is in misusing and abusing state apparatuses, with apartheid tactics, strategies and ideology that entrench racist residential patterns and embrace white supremacy and privileges. Land continues to be used for the selfish economic benefit of white farmers and the ruthless exploitation of Africans and coloureds. Black residents continue to be forcefully removed from land that they rightfully want to use for shelter.

Helen Zille's administration has failed to provide solutions to the social problems of unemployment, housing, sanitation, etc. She has paraded herself as a messiah and a know-it-all. It about time the people see the DA for what it



Informal dwellings in Hangberg

truly represents. These are the direct consequences of not voting for an organisation – the ANC – that listens to the problems of the people and is committed to breaking the chains locking Africans and coloureds into the bondages of poverty. As we go towards local government elections, our people must refuse to be misled by a campaign that seeks to preserve white privileges and continues to employ apartheid tactics. The DA has done nothing new – in fact it continues with the programmes developed by the previous ANC provincial government towards service delivery. Today the DA is telling us that there are no houses or budget to build more houses – but when it wanted to come to power it created the impression that it would perform miracles.

And DA leader Helen Zille has the audacity to opportunistically attack the Human Rights Commission, after it initiated an investigation in the brutal attacks of civilians in Hangberg. The

DA sees institutions investigating the ANC as “progressive” and “defenders of our Constitution” – and of democracy itself. But when the tables turn and such similar legal process are applied to the DA, they become “political hit-squads”. This is extremely hypocritical considering how vocal the DA is on issues of morality and integrity.

The problems confronted by the community of Hangberg are evidence that the recruitment of black people into the DA is a mere facade and an AA strategy. The DA will never speak for the poor and continue to show that its class interests are solely with the white elite which continue to dominate the Western Cape. Victory in two ward by-elections by the ANC in the Western Cape indicates that the people in the province are beginning to see these inconsistencies and are using their voting power to bring about the necessary change. ●

Cde Ndima is YCL National Spokesperson

YOUNG REDS

Our Red Flag flies over UniZulu!

YCL claims SRC election victory at the University of Zululand – for the first time under its own banner

BY MAFIKA MNDEBELE

The Young Communist League UniZulu branch has won SRC elections there – an overwhelming victory directly under the Red banner of the YCL.

This is the first time in KwaZulu-Natal history that the YCL has contested and won SRC elections under its own banner. The YCL has in the past contested SRC elections through either Sasco or ANCYL.

The YCL in KZN commends and congratulates the UniZulu for its dedication and the concerted campaign that has led to this overwhelming victory.

The YCL's past resolve not to contest SRC elections directly had never been based on mechanical encapsulation of material conditions as they relate to dynamics at play in each and every institution of higher education and at any given moment.

So, with other youth formations in UniZulu reported to be ineffective and dysfunctional, and the ANCYL have decided not to stand for SRC election as the only component of the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA) in good standing, the YCL was forced to stand.

Our strength had been demonstrated in all our meetings including the Branch General Meeting in early August



UniZulu students campaigning during SRC elections that saw the YCL triumph



2010, attended by 300 members in good standing – and the 1 000-plus students participating in and witnessing the nomination process of SRC candidates was an early promise of victory.

While celebrating this historical milestone, it is important for the YCL – and the entire PYA – to ensure that this victory serves as the beginning of intensified struggle for free education in all aspects including curriculum content and financial affordability.

Our victory must as the example for aspirant and young communists in education institutions absorb and internalise the discipline of our organisation – ensuring their conduct truly reflects of our principles and our commitment to transforming higher education.

We must also use this opportunity to wipe the PYA slate clean and build and entrench unity in the PYA. This victory should not be treated as 'just another' SRC election victory.

We call upon an immediate meeting between PYA components most importantly Sasco to discuss and iron

out whatever disagreements that had taken place towards SRC election. We would also like to thank the ANCYL for the leadership role they have played for not fuelling divisions in the PYA but remained principled. Never again must we see Sasco competing against YCL or any PYA component. Our strength is rooted in unity. Division and contestation will only serve as instruments to weaken the revolutionary cause jointly championed by YCLSA, ANCYL and Sasco.

As YCL in the KZN, we had long prioritised the University of Zululand, with its governance and management challenges, as an institution that needs collective and dedicated attention. We will not limit our engagements to political intervention but will also engage in a fight against corruption, patronage and any other factional tendencies that seek to defeat our aim of institutional transformation and free education.

Once again we congratulate YCL Branch in UniZulu for its overwhelming victory and our Presidential candidate Bongani (Jobe) Sithole for his hard work in the SRC election. But we warn that the real work starts now: serving students' needs and fighting for institutional transformation. ●

Cde Mndebele is YCL KZN Provincial Spokesperson



**SOCIALISM
IN OUR
LIFETIME!**

Y-REDS

VOICE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA ★ NOVEMBER 2010

All systems go for the YCL's 3rd National Congress!

And this time, we will really rock you!

BY PALESA MOTSHOENE

The 3rd National Congress of the YCLSA will be from 8-12 December 2010 under the theme "In Praise of Communism".

The National Committee has cleared what could be more than 2 000 delegates to attend from all corners of the country, representing more than 998 branches (pending an audit process) from villages, towns, universities, schools, workplaces.

The Congress will also be attended by our allies from the Progressive Youth Alliance and the Alliance structures. We have also invited more than 50 youth formations from all over the country as part of the partnerships we have established through our different campaigns and programmes.

Already, the Communist Youth Leagues of Cuba and China, together with youth wings of liberation movements from Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zambia, Namibia, Sudan and Western Sahara have confirmed their participation. The General Secretaries of the SACP, cde Blade Nzimande, and Cosatu, cde Zwelinzima Vavi, have confirmed their availability to speak at the Congress. The Deputy President of the ANC, cde Kgalema Mothlante, has been invited, as has YCL veteran, cde Ahmed Kathrada. The President of the ANC has been invited to speak at the closing rally on 12 December 2010.

From 5 November 2010, all branches in good standing (that is, have 30 members or more and went to AGMs or BGMs before 15 October 2010) will be starting with election of their delegates. All BGMs should be supervised by a member of the

DEC, and a form signed by the Branch Secretary, the Chairperson and the DEC deployee.

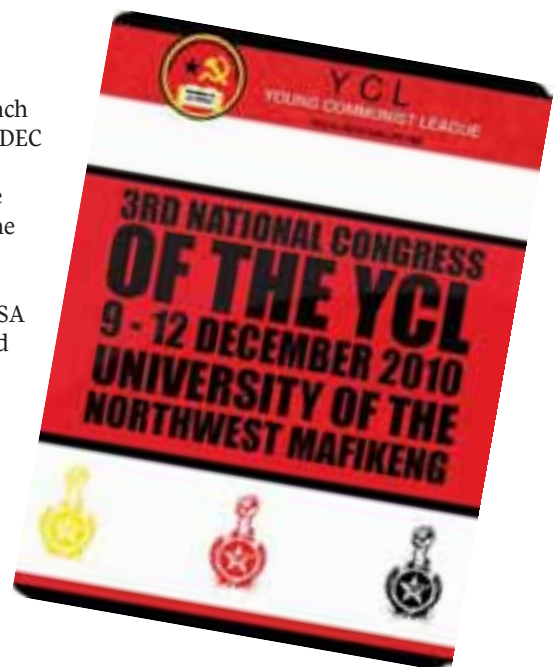
Although this will be an elective congress, coming four years after the Durban YCL Congress, topping its agenda will be how we build effective, vibrant, active and strong YCLSA branches centred on campaigns and cadre development.

We will vigorously engage on what the role of the YCLSA branch should be, and how the branch, as a basic unit of the organisation, will mobilise young people for socialism and youth development in their communities. The emphasis for the current leadership's term was on cadre development.

We will interrogate issues of education, health, unemployment and how these affect young people. We have to ensure that we put youth interests and aspirations at the heart of the YCLSA programme.

Branch delegates to the Congress should ensure that at the centre of their mandate are issues such as 'what are the challenges affecting young people in my community and how should we take the lead in dealing with these challenges'.

At the last Congress, central to our discussion was the establishment of youth co-operatives, and the establishment of community youth clubs, as a way of ensuring that we provide this leadership. Branches are asked to nominate candidates for Best Branch and Best District, Lifetime Membership Awards, Youth Leadership Award for young people who were outstanding in work



that seeks to advance youth development. The awards will be announced at the Congress.

Branches and delegates will also be required to participate in the cultural evening on 10 December 2010 for an Open Mic Session. In this session, delegates will present their skills in poetry, hip-hop, song, dance, DJ, drama, speech – displays of their artistry in whatever form. There will also be prizes given to the best performance by an individual or branch. There will also be a Gala Dinner and a Closing Rally, which all delegates are required to attend. This will be an exciting Congress, and with the lessons learned from the previous Congress and Councils, this time, we will rock you! ●

Cde Palesa Motshoene is YCL Publications Manager