

# YReds Youth Day Special



June 2009

Voice of the South African Communist Party

# Unsebenzi



# WE SALUTE THE YOUNG AMAVOLUNTIYA!

Your tireless work assured the ANC  
an overwhelming victory

2009 ELECTION

# SACP welcomes ANC's overwhelming victory

*Our people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in the ANC and the Alliance*

**O**n 22 April, millions of our people came out in numbers to cast their votes in the fourth democratic elections of our country. The outcome reaffirms the overwhelming confidence that our people have in the ANC.

The ANC has amidst all manner of pessimisms, including sustained negative media publicity, emerged with a renewed mandate to work together with our people to transform the South African society for the better.

Just as it happened in the run-up to Polokwane and during the persecution of the ANC President, the media is licking its wounds with this resounding victory for the ANC. The DA's racist campaign was seen by our people for what it is and was rejected. The fugitives from the Polokwane democracy, the eternal opportunists calling themselves Cope, have faced their day. The people of South Africa have rejected the elitist campaign to demonise the ANC and its President.

Our people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in the ANC! Our people have heeded the call to defend the legacy of Chris Hani. Hani's legacy and indeed that of the many heroes, heroines and martyrs of our revolution remain an inspiration to the majority of our people who came out in their numbers yesterday and "did it For Chris Hani!". This victory indeed is a great way to honour the sacrifice and commitment of our leaders like Oliver Tambo, Joe Slovo, Dora Tamaana, Ncumisa Kondlo and Esther Barsel.

The SACP commits itself to deepening the political organisation of the working class to play its rightful place as the leading motive force to deepen and consolidate our democracy.

In our election campaign, as commu-

nists we interacted with millions of our people who raised with us genuine challenges and problems relating to service delivery. We do not have the luxury of time on our side, but to move with speed to attend to the water and roads problems in Itsoseng township in the North-West, the total absence of sanitation facilities in sections of Bethal in Mpumalanga, to the backlogs of land and agrarian reform and the conditions of the farmworkers in South Africa's countryside, and many other challenges identified during this campaign.

To do this, we ought to remain true to our commitment to working together! The SACP calls on our people not to demobilise but to utilise the momentum that has been generated by the elections campaign to form street committees to fight against crime and corruption, to form people's health committees to attend to the challenges of provision of quality health for all, to establish local

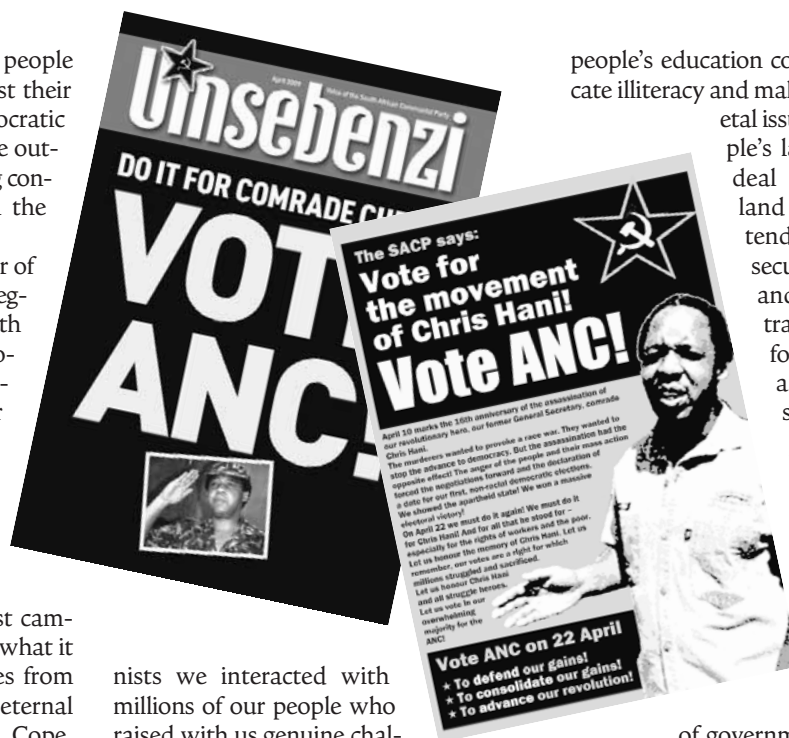
people's education committees to eradicate illiteracy and make education a societal issue, to establish people's land committees to deal with the issue of land reform and to attend to issues of food security to fight hunger and establish public transport committees for safe, accessible and reliable provision of public transport services.

We need to continue with the momentum to deepen community participation in various platforms set for them to influence decisions

of government especially at a local level. This victory should be a declaration that nothing should be done to communities without their participation!!

The working class and the poor have scored a major victory today and should benefit immensely from their effort. When we started the second decade of our democracy we declared that the first decade indeed benefited capital more and that the second decade of freedom should be a decade of the workers and the poor. Half way through that journey, we are at a pole position to accelerate our efforts to make this, the second decade of our democracy the decade of the workers and the poor!

The SACP congratulates the ANC and the rest of the Mass Democratic Movement on this resounding victory. We wish Cde Jacob Zuma and his leadership collective all the best in the next administration and guarantee them of our support. ●



2009 ELECTION

# Landslide victory – now to advance the NDR

*The political report to the May Central Committee assesses both the massive electoral victory and the major challenges facing the SACP and the Alliance*

**W**ith close to 66% of the national vote, the ANC-alliance performance in the 22 April elections was, in many respects, a major achievement. The extent of the achievement should be seen against several contextual factors:

After 15 years of democracy, one would expect that the post-liberation “honeymoon” would have been decidedly over. However, it is clear that an African majority continues to have a very strong sense of identification with the ANC – the ANC is still not just “merely” an electoral choice. This is an important factor going forward – including for the SACP in our ongoing assessment of our own positioning in regard to state power and elections;

It was a landslide national victory achieved in the face of an unremitting ideological attack on the ANC and its alliance partners by virtually all of the print and electronic media, and from large



**We can do more ... and we did - with nearly two-thirds support from South Africa's people**

parts of the “intelligentsia” and “chattering” middle classes. Post the elections there has been a partial ceasefire and some back-tracking from these quarters. There has also been a notable and very recent improvement (not just in the line, but in the quality) of SABC news coverage. However, the chasm between “public” opinion and “popular” opinion that

**It is clear that an African majority continues to have a very strong sense of identification with the ANC**

opened up in the election campaign (and even in the year before) calls for ongoing analysis – how does the SACP take forward the struggle on the ideological terrain? What positive lessons can we learn from amongst other things, our media war room interventions? Can we sustain these efforts? How do we win back a degree of hegemony within the intelligentsia?

A critically important factor in the election victory was the high level of youth registration, participation and mobilisation. A number of factors played a role in this regard, among them was the preparedness of the movement to be innovative culturally. Compared with other popular movements and progressive for-

mations in power for 15 years and more (Zanu-PF or former ruling communist parties – including formerly successful electoral parties in bourgeois democracies – like the CPI (M) which has just suffered major losses in the India elections, and the PCI), our ability to adapt to a younger generation and not become stuck in a rigid, stolid and merely folkloric glorious past requires thoughtful analysis and taking forward.

These are among some of the major positive achievements underpinning our election victory. However each of these also requires cautionary analysis:

It is true that it is remarkable to hold on to a near two-thirds majority after 15 years of incumbency. However, these elections had a paradoxical character for the ANC-led alliance, which we exploited effectively. We were simultaneously the incumbents and the non-incumbent. We could claim the positive achievements of government, while, at the same time, being able to present ourselves as a new wave that had been victimised precisely by the earlier ruling group. While this was perfectly legitimate, we need to remember that we cannot go on being “victims”, and we cannot in five years time expect a mass constituency to identify with us as the “fellow marginalised”.

Our victory was based on the defence and consolidation of our African township and rural base in the face of what was a potentially serious split (Cope). While Cope made 5-13% inroads into this African base in all provinces (except KZN), it is unlikely that they can repeat even this level of support in the future (provided of course we do not lose focus on our side). However, while there has been a general defence and consolidation of our African base, we have seen dramatic losses among minorities – there was a huge coloured swing in the Western Cape against us, and we lost Lenasia, for instance, for the first time ever. We need to analyse the multiple reasons for these developments – which include an antipathy in these quarters to our presidential candidate (how enduring this antipathy will be remains to be seen, but there are early signs of an improvement), and the racialised campaign waged by the DA.

Clearly, rebuilding our non-racial project requires a clear set of strategies going forward. One aspect of such a strategy must concern itself with the role of the working class and working class formations and the importance of forging non-



**Strongly in evidence: an SACP supporter at the Presidential inauguration**

racial class unity, not least at the point of production and at work generally. In SA voting behaviour tends to be determined by residential communities – and these remain overwhelmingly ethnic in character. This also points to the imperative of a much greater attention to spatial transformation in the coming five and ten years.

It is pleasing that we were able to confound “public” opinion, and that the election results punctured the predictions of much of the intelligentsia, and the media. However, we must be careful that this does not lead to an anti-theoretical, anti-media populism within our ranks and within our wider movement. The ideological struggle is critical as we have often argued – and the alienation of media houses and the intelligentsia underlines

**Our success . . . in connecting with first-time voters and a younger generation was critical to our victory**

the importance of systematic work in the media, in research institutions, NGOs, and in tertiary education.

Our success, in the course of the campaign, in connecting with first-time voters and a younger generation was critical to our victory, but it should not obscure the fact that there were also serious excesses of populist demagoguery (which has persisted in parts even after the election campaign). While it probably attracted some sectors, it also cost us seriously amongst minority communities, and amongst an older generation – and some of Cope’s relative success might be ascribed to this. More of concern is that going into the future, populist demagoguery can easily become the battering ram for a rightwing project within our movement. Ideological work within our youth formations is a key priority. We have a particular responsibility for the YCL, which needs to distinguish itself through its ability to provide a militant, vibey, but class analytical leadership to the youth of our country.

### **Reconfiguration of the national executive and the role of the SACP**

The SACP can claim considerable credit for spearheading the significant restruc-



**Youth power: high levels of youth registration and mobilisation were crucial to victory**

turing of the executive that has just taken place. Much of what we resolved upon at our 2008 September Policy Conference has indeed been implemented – a national planning commission, the reconfiguration of departments (eg. the separation of minerals and energy, the establishment of a new department of higher education), and much more besides.

The SACP needs now to ensure that these changes are not just bureaucratic shuffles, but that they serve the purpose of consolidating a national democratic developmental state.

In the first place, we need to ensure that the five strategic priorities of our election manifesto (jobs, health, education, rural development and crime and corruption) are effectively driven. But, as the SACP we need also to go further in providing a broader strategic analysis of our challenges.

As we have repeatedly asserted over the past 15 years – while there has been some important progress fundamentally it is the capitalist class that has been the principal beneficiary of the post-1994 reality. After 15 years of democracy, we remain one of the most unequal societies (in income terms) in the world, we have persisting crisis levels of unemployment (despite a global commodity boom over the previous five years), and the crises of underdevelopment remain starkly racialised, gendered, and class determined. Why?

The answer is that our society systematically and actively reproduces gross inequality.

Over the past several years, we have isolated one key factor in this reproduc-

tion of racialised inequality:

Our growth path – excessively primary commodity export dependent, excessively import dependent for capital goods, high levels of monopoly concentration, capital (and not labour) intensity, high levels of energy intensity, etc – all of this reflecting the continued dominance of the mineral/energy/finance/agro-processing monopoly sectors. It now becomes absolutely essential that the new economic cabinet cluster (in which DTI and Economic Development are lead departments) actively develops and implements a state-led industrial policy in which job creation is the key strategic objective (as opposed to some abstract growth target). Clearly, such an industrial policy needs to be engaged with by key sectors, especially the organised working class.

We have raised these matters insistently since at least 1996. We are in a much better position than ever before to practically realise progress on this front. The global economic crisis becomes an additional stimulus for doing this.

While we have elaborated on industrial policy, we have paid insufficient attention to at least two other key features of our

**Fundamentally it is the capitalist class that has been the principal beneficiary of the post-1994 reality**

society that are responsible for the active and continued reproduction of inequality and underdevelopment:

The education system which is nominally a single dispensation – but in practice there is a huge divide between suburban schools and township and rural schools, between elite tertiary institutions and others. An array of interventions guided by a class analysis is imperative if we are to seriously transform the broad education and training sphere – without its transformation we will remain on a treadmill of development and underdevelopment each reinforcing the other.

If we have not really transformed education, then equally we have not transformed the spatial realities of our society (and region). Our towns and cities continue to be dominated by apartheid spatial realities (an important factor as noted above in voting behaviour). There are still two countrysides in our rural areas – largely white commercial farming areas, and impoverished former bantustans (where one-third of our population still lives). The long commutes that workers are forced to take are exhausting and are one factor behind the discrepancy between middle class activism in, for instance, SGBs compared to working class involvement. 30% of households (the poorest) are spending more than 11% of their income on public transport, and 18% are spending more than 20%. Apartheid spatial marginalisation continues to impoverish and discriminate against the working class and poor. Our logistic lines (and our public spending on them) overwhelmingly favour mineral exports and luxury and capital goods imports – while rural infrastructure is neglected, and likewise our regional market.

These three areas constitute critical sites for the reproduction of gendered, racialised and class oppression and exploitation. The recent reconfiguration of the national executive and of deployments into it, have positioned the Party and the broader left much more favourably.

The SACP now needs to ensure that it effectively mandates and guides its deployed cadres so that we are able to take the NDR qualitatively forward. We also need to reinforce and empower our effort from within the state with targeted SACP-led campaigns from without. We need to demonstrate practically what we mean by a people-driven ND developmental state. We are now better positioned than ever before to carry this forward. ●

2008 ELECTION

# Debating the meaning of a near two-thirds majority

*Passive moral majority or politicised and impatient electorate giving the ANC its last chance?*

PERSPECTIVE 1

## The ANC as moral majority

Matthews Phosa, 29 April 2009

The African National Congress (ANC) won its' fourth successive victory in the general elections in South Africa on 22 April 2009. For the ANC as a party the volume of the victory means that we have retained the trust of the large majority of South African voters across the whole of the country.

In simple terms, the rest of the political parties in the country won about a third of the vote, and, rather than eat into the ANC majority, there has been a reshuffling of the votes of the opposition. Some of the parties that had previously been small players nationally have now shrunk to become regional actors in the various provinces.

In political language this means that the ANC clearly and unambiguously represents the moral majority in our country, and will continue to strive towards a better life for those who most severely felt the impact of the oppressive policies of previous governments. In that regard it is safe to say that you can expect the government of President-elect Jacob Zuma to focus its attention, policies and delivery on providing a bouquet of health, education, housing and infrastructure services to accelerate socio-economic transformation in South Africa.

To ensure that this agenda is elevated to



national priority you can expect a number of structural, policy and management changes to be announced in the next month or two. Systems that have not been functional will be changed and creative methods will be sought to shorten the channel between policy and delivery. I want to make it very clear, however, that we will not, in an effort to address poverty and create jobs, or to improve governance change the Constitution as if it is our own private property.

The Constitution of South Africa belongs to all South Africans and the ANC respects the fact that all of us as South Africans toiled and slaved to make it a beacon of hope and principle that it is. We have no intention of making it a political plaything.

I am an Afro-optimist. The IMF's prediction projected a growth rate of 2% for Africa against contractions of 1,3% for the globe and 4% for the Euro-zone economy. As a businessman that, in my mind, spells

opportunity.

In the South African scenario that signifies that we are actively looking for partnerships with our international friends and partners to seize opportunities in the sectors that I have just spelt out as government priorities. If the incoming Zuma administration were to create opportunities for investors in the health, education, housing, infrastructure, commodities, energy and resources industries, it would beg for partnerships between our own companies and those in Europe and across the globe who are looking for profitable partnerships with South Africa.

The incoming President will verbalise his own economic policies in consultation with his economic, trade, industry and financial advisers and ministers, but we have repeatedly stated that our conservative fiscal and monetary policies will remain in place. I want to emphasise that point. Inasmuch as I emphasised the point that the South African government understands the current global challenges, it also understands that an isolated South African response to those challenges would be short-sighted.

I believe, therefore that it would better suit us to inform our policy responses with a regional and continental flavour and consultation process. The realities of regional economies have been aptly illustrated and converted into opportunity by the European Union and others.

In our context that means that we will start a process of carefully looking at the institutions that we have created in our region and on the continent, as well as its policies, powers and successes.

Our government will actively look for partnerships in the region and on the continent, as we believe that the opportunities here beg for multi-lateral solutions created by friendship, partnership and common interest. You can, therefore, expect us to act as leaders should, but, in all cases, looking for the common good of the region and the continent, and, indeed, those countries and companies that have profitable solutions to offer in partnership with us.

We fully understand that good governance, sound macro-economic policies, mature democracies and enhanced security makes for better partnerships with you. You can rest assured that it will receive our priority attention in our interaction with regional economic structures across Europe and the globe. Our ability, in South Africa, the region and the continent, to create and benefit from opportunities will, to a large extent, depend on our ability to access capital through international institutions and the private sector globally.

In my own view a knee-jerk reaction of ultra-pessimism is the wrong formula for South Africa and the region. The challenging state of the global economy presents us with a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve our position and status in the global economy. If we achieve success by positively stimulating the economy through improved access to credit here and internationally major opportunities can be created in the short and medium term while the economic pendulum starts its upswing.

We have, for instance, been blessed in South Africa, and the African continent, with an abundance of resources, whilst in the current slump in commodities exports, there is a substantial long term opportunity. In short: our macro economic policies will not shift, but our focus on delivery in specific sectors will be sharpened.

We will not seek to play an isolated leadership role in the region, but will look actively for political and economic partnerships based on common interests and opportunities.

Within that formula we stand ready to explore opportunities with the international community, and especially, the investment community. ●

*An edited copy of the speech given by African National Congress Treasurer General Mathews Phosa to the Global Emerging Markets Summit in London in April 2009*

PERSPECTIVE 2:

## Politicised, mobilised electorate giving the ANC its last chance

By Neil Coleman

**W**e have a serious disjuncture in our country: on the brink of an election, virtually all media, and most intellectuals and 'opinion makers', as well as the minorities, were vehemently opposed to the ANC. At the same time a decisive majority of the electorate is strongly behind that same party, which received about four times the votes of its nearest rival. In international terms, this is virtually unprecedented.

The depth of the ANC's support is more remarkable given that post-Polokwane it has had to:

- Deal with the legacy of a leadership in government which pursued policies which were deeply unpopular with its constituency;
- Answer for its mixed performance over three consecutive terms, in a country faced with massive social challenges; and
- Face a powerful anti-ANC front of social strata, parties and minority groups.

If 1994 were the Freedom Elections, 2009 has been the anti-ANC elections, with all opposition parties and 'respectable society' ganging up against the ANC. Despite this, and despite the ANC dealing with a relatively serious split in its ranks, it maintained its majority close to 1994 levels. How is this possible?

There are fundamentally two explanations:

Either the majority are so politically naïve that they are unable to see the problems with their party (a variant of this is that they are blinded by the liberation credentials of their movement, and prepared to vote against their own interests); or

The alternative explanation is that the minority, the media and 'ruling institutions', are either so out of touch with the

**The minority and 'ruling institutions' are either out of touch with the majority or ignoring it**

realities of the majority that they are unable to engage meaningfully with that reality, or are deliberately ignoring it in pursuit of their own interests.

Let me turn to the first possibility, that of a captive electorate, blind to the misdemeanours of the ruling party. This patronising perception ignores that South Africans are a highly politicised people, who have shown a healthy disrespect for figures of authority failing to advance their interests, as was seen both by the unceremonious ousting of Thabo Mbeki at Polokwane, and later as President, and by their long history of consistently mobilising in their own interests, if necessary against their own government.

Surveys of Cosatu members by Wits University, for example, shows that the ANC's support base includes a politically conscious constituency, who have argued for the need for change to take place within the ANC and government, including around unpopular policies, but have maintained the view that the best vehicle for securing this change, is contestation of the direction of the ANC, and determination, that if this fails, support will be withdrawn. This approach reflects not blind faith, but a sophisticated political strategy and consciousness, and an understanding of which party potentially advances their interests.

Cope attempted to adopt the liberation mantle, and appropriate the legacy of the Freedom Charter. If 'liberation credentials' blind the electorate, why has Cope, which many suggested would attract the support of 40% of the ANC leadership and rank and file – the so-called Polokwane losers – been such a damp squib? Even with explicit or tacit support of much of the old ANC leadership establishment (and the blessing of large sections of the media), Cope was unable to achieve 10% of the vote. Could it be that the electorate have rejected Cope and what it stands for, and that this has nothing to do with liberation credentials?

Equally, older more established movements claiming liberation credentials have hopelessly failed to win support of the electorate because they lack credibility. Clearly therefore, far from being voting cattle the majority consciously exercise their choice. This doesn't mean they are not exercising this choice with reservations, conditions, or the intention to address matters they are unhappy with.

The liberation credentials of the ANC, while important because they tell a story of how SA achieved its democracy, is only

one among a number of factors which motivate the electorate. Unlike many other African liberation stories, the South African struggle for liberation was driven by a highly mobilised, conscious and organised people. The South African people were not simply the beneficiaries of a war fought by a guerrilla army. So the 'liberation vote' is overstated in the South African context.

The division of South Africa into two stark camps in these elections reminds me of the situation in Venezuela, where the ruling party, with the support of a majority, has had to rule in the face of virulent, and ultimately violent opposition from the social elites. The party of Chavez has overwhelming support from the barrios (slums) and Venezuela's poor working class and peasants, and indigenous people, in attempting to address basic problems facing the population, including health care, illiteracy, and poverty.

Conversely, it has faced often hysterical opposition from the middle class and owners of capital, which has taken on a racial as well as a class hue, because of the European roots of these classes. The adoption of intricate constitutional arrangements and mechanisms of direct democracy, including provisions for Presidential referenda, which Chavez has repeatedly won, has not subdued the rightwing populist attacks on Chavez. Ironically those claiming to 'defend the constitution' launched a coup and suspended parliament. All of this has happened with the support of the private media, and the mobilisation of various institutions over which these elites have had control. Arguably, the conduct of the opposition was an important factor which subsequently led Chavez to attempt to introduce radical amendments to the constitution.

This transformation project has therefore been conducted in conditions which have deepened divisions in Venezuelan society, and without a common national vision which different strata buy into. The failure of the middle class and privileged elites to engage with the real issues and concerns of the majority has also tended to lead to the emergence of a cult of the personality among the poor, with all peoples hopes pinned around one man, and the danger that the movement will be pushed into undemocratic methods, in the face of this fanatical opposition. While some may argue that this scenario is inevitable in such societies, where minority privilege is threatened, I do not believe this is necessarily the case.

## For the DA and others we have moved from Swart Gevaar to Rooi Gevaar, to Zuma Gevaar – and now to Two-thirds Gevaar

There are significant parallels between South Africa and Venezuela, but also important differences. However, the spectre of increasingly arrogant social elites who have historically benefited from undemocratic privilege, trying to mobilise social support by drumming up fear and hysteria, has also starkly haunted our elections.

We have been confronted with what seems like a never-ending barrage of anti-ANC sentiment with little balance, much of it based on uninformed speculation about the danger an ANC victory purportedly represents. Our media should hang its collective head in shame. For example, the Friday 17 April edition of the Cape Times had three opinion pieces on the elections, all effectively calling for a vote against the ANC (numerous other papers are equally culpable). Most telling, the central argument of the main piece by Mike Morris was that South African voters shouldn't vote for any particular party, but should vote against the ANC 'in defence of democracy'! How bankrupt have our politics become?

In the face of this atmosphere, it is difficult to find an intellectual, or member of a minority community, with few notable exceptions, who has been prepared to openly stand up and argue the case for the ANC, despite its huge popularity and critical role in society.

The locus of negative campaigning, around which opposition parties have clustered, has been the DA. Its 'fight to win', and then 'stop Zuma' slogans, throw us back to the dark days of its 'fight back campaign', and inevitably in the South African context, has racist undertones. Indeed much of the elections campaign has been dominated by a subliminal racial element, with dark mutterings about going the way of other African countries, ending up like Zimbabwe etc.

As in the bad old apartheid days, our elections have been characterised by 'gevaar politics'. We have moved from Swart Gevaar to Rooi Gevaar to Zuma Gevaar, back to Rooi Gevaar, and now Two Thirds Gevaar!

Even Cope, despite its origins, has sunk

to this level of gutter politics, putting all its eggs in the 'stop the ANC' basket. Instead of telling the electorate what it plans to do to address their basic concerns, to deal with poverty, unemployment, inequality etc, it focused on red herrings such as purported threats to the constitution. Unsurprisingly this message has sunk like a stone with the majority.

On the whole the ANC fought a constructive campaign and focused on the issues, not personalities. Equally the ANC advanced an impressive manifesto, but its propositions have not been debated, nor the need for developing a national consensus, in this time of international economic crisis. The Manifesto proposes important new policies and strategies to address these challenges, and focuses on the five priorities of decent work, rural development, health, education, and fighting crime. Yet there has been little serious debate on these proposals of the movement.

Where, on the whole, the ANC has embraced the politics of hope, the opposition parties allowed themselves to be submerged in the politics of fear and hysteria. This largely mirrors the attitudes of their constituents, with surveys showing that the ANC's constituency (despite being the poorest and most marginalised) is the most optimistic about the future; with the minority constituencies being the most pessimistic. While it may pay short-term dividend to exploit these fears, it threatens to create long-term damage and divisions which may become impossible to reverse. This elections campaign has arguably taken us back more than 15 years to the apartheid mentality of two South Africas, two realities.

Finally, the beating of war drums on purported threats to our constitution, courts, media, and other institutions of democracy, is likely to have a perverse effect. These blatant scare tactics, in the face of repeated ANC assurances and denials, and in the face of all contrary evidence, are likely to reinforce perceptions in the minds of the majority that many of these institutions are being used by elites to reinforce their power and privilege and will mobilise support for interventions to curb their power. So far from protecting these democratic institutions, the harbingers of doom are serving to further discredit them!

We need to be grateful for the political maturity and tolerance of the majority of South Africans. Just as Obama refused to be dragged into the gutter by the Republicans, the ANC has risen to the challenge,

and held steadfast to its agreed vision and policies. This creates the space to begin to address the very real problems we have inherited in the state and in society.

A decisive elections victory for the ANC will not be a blank cheque. Along with the vote, are attached real conditions. Surveys of Cosatu members show that many workers view this as the 'last chance' for the ANC to implement the RDP mandate on which it was elected in 1994 – a mandate which is revived in the 2009 Manifesto, subsequent to the Polokwane revolt – and that workers intend to hold the ANC leadership accountable to these commitments. Perhaps one of the most important features of this election campaign has been the revitalisation and strengthening of the ANC as a mass movement. Contrary to the common idea in the media that it is bad for the country to have a strong ANC; many of the problems we have experienced are partly due to the ANC having been weakened.

One of the most damaging aspects of Mbeki's legacy, was the weakening, fragmentation, and marginalisation of the ANC and civil society (as well as the undermining and abuse of democratic structures and institutions), as part of the agenda of imposing an elite transition. The new ANC leadership has had to work hard to overcome this legacy, and needs to be given a chance to take this forward. This is ultimately what the Polokwane democratic revolt and, by extension, the 2009 elections are about.

The type of transformation our country desperately needs can only happen with a strong ANC, a strong Alliance, and indeed a strong civil society. While this will in no way reduce democratic contestation, such conditions will help the ANC to implement its mandate, and begin to unify the country.

The major political and policy contestation will tend to take place within the ANC and Alliance, and opposition parties, if they retain their current posture, will relegate themselves to the sidelines. Vigorous engagement is what will hold the leadership accountable and responsive.

None of this is to suggest that the ANC is lily white, or that it and the state don't face major challenges. As with other parties and organisations, it has many good people, but as Kgalema Motlanthe has stated, also its fair share of opportunists, adventurers and rogues. To the extent that good people abandon the space created post-Polokwane, we are handing it over to such backward elements.

## The victory is not a blank cheque: workers intend to hold the ANC leadership accountable

Polokwane and these elections have opened up massive space for engagement by civil society, to begin to articulate a vision of how we can address the priorities of creating decent work, rural development and food security, affordable health and education for all, and creating secure and liveable communities. We need to put the negativism and pessimism of the elections campaign behind us, and begin to deal with these real, burning issues which our people expect us to address.

*Coleman is strategies co-ordinator for the Congress of South African Trade Unions secretariat. A shortened version of this article was published in the Sunday Times on 26 April 2009* ●

PERSPECTIVE 3:

## Two flawed perspectives

By Patrick Bond

**W**e have a serious disjuncture in our textbox. Is the 66% majority 'highly-politicised, mobilising in their own interests' – or instead 'moral', 'conservative'?

Is Neil Coleman talking left to the progressive petit bourgeois ANC-naysayers; while Matthews Phosa talks and prepares to walk right to the London bankers who regularly loot SA and Africa, on bended knee? The first is eloquent, but my concerns here are that cde Neil ignores the standard indy-left line on the Alliance, which is that there needs still to be a split left given that the structured power of capital over government will trump the union and communist bloc, a problem we hope not – but yet are prepared – to witness on May 9 when the Cabinet is announced... and hence a third explanation - where Neil says there are just two, here: for the ANC's vote arises: there's no viable left alternative yet, not until an Alliance split.

All the parties running on 22 April be-

yond the 2% popularity mark said they'd retain Trevor Manuel and his 'conservative' economic policies, the same 'conservative' policies that in reality have made SA the single riskiest country among emerging markets, according to The Economist. A shame that this fairly common argument was not addressed head-on by Neil. After all, everything in the Mathews Phosa perspective should signal to Cosatu and the SACP that they are not going to get the macroeconomic change they want, especially if Phosa has the momentum he appears to. I chatted with Phosa in OR Tambo airport's haute-bourgeois lounge a few days ago, and was nearly courageous enough to mention that when he so very strongly supported water privatisation in Nelspruit by a nasty London firm, Biwater, as Mpumalanga premier a decade ago, he'd forever lost my respect. As for Neil, the other elision is the dubious way Venezuela is brought in for comparison purposes.

First we had Manuel and Suresh Roberts doing comparisons of social spending and inaccurately claiming SA outpaced Chavez's government; then we had Mbeki comparing Nepad to Alba last September; and now we get Neil's amnesia regarding how much SA capital loves ANC economic policies compared to Venezuelan capital which hates several of Chavez's concrete policy changes since around 2003: tight exchange controls, creeping nationalisation, strong support for worker takeovers of factories, genuine commitment to socialist conscientisation, a lefty international geopolitical stance, municipal cooperatives, new community banking strategies, much, much more dramatic funding flows to the poor through impressive health and education missions, etc, none of which are really thinkable objectives in Pretoria in 2009.

On the other hand, there is a phrase from Neil is an extremely promising line of argument, but people will naturally ask once 9 May cabinet minister appointments disappoint Cosatu and the SACP, what accountability, what punishment, what strategy? "...many workers view this as the 'last chance' for the ANC to implement the RDP mandate on which it was elected in 1994 – a mandate which is revived in the 2009 Manifesto, subsequent to the Polokwane revolt – and that workers intend to hold the ANC leadership accountable to these commitments". ●

*Patrick Bond is a lecturer and researcher at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE / MAY 2009

# It was an outstanding electoral victory – now let's get to work

*Communists in the new administration must set an example of activist and participatory governance*

The CC noted the outstanding electoral victory achieved by the ANC and its alliance. The sustained, nearly two-thirds majority is a remarkable achievement for a movement that has now been an incumbent ruling party for 15 years. The electoral victory was all the more notable because it came in the midst of what was potentially a serious breakaway from within the leadership core of the ANC. The victory was also notable because it was achieved against an unremitting and extremely hostile year-long ideological offensive mounted against the ANC and its alliance from a large part of the media and the middle class intelligentsia in our country.

The CC agreed that the electoral victory was the victory of the working class and poor of our country, who mobilised in overwhelming numbers to defend their movement, and to defend and advance the gains achieved over the past 15 years. The election victory was also notable for the high levels of participation by the youth sector, and the ability of the ANC-led movement to connect dynamically with a new generation of citizens.

There are, however, important challenges following April 22. The anti-ANC “public” opinion constructed by the media and chattering classes was roundly rebuffed by the actuality of popular opinion in our African mass base in townships and rural villages throughout our country. However, the media offensive did have an impact upon minority communities, including working class minority



**New Minister in the Presidency Collins Chabane - addressed the May CC**

communities. This was seized upon by the opposition parties, notably the DA, which ran a thinly disguised, subliminal racist campaign in defence of perceived minority interests. Advances in building a non-racial society over the past decade and a half have suffered. The SACP calls on its membership and the working class movement to defeat racism, and to build a principled non-racial solidarity, particularly based on working class solidarity in the struggle to overcome the crises of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

We also need to engage with media professionals, academic institutions and think-tanks in our country. Much of the anti-ANC ideological offensive over the past year has been framed as a conflict between “populism” and the defence of various “liberal” constitutional rights (media freedom, freedom of speech, independ-

ence of the judiciary, academic freedom, etc.). The SACP fully supports these constitutional rights, but we strongly reject the notion that these rights can be defended and consolidated without connecting them to other critical rights – the right of all to access to education, the right to employment, the right to shelter, etc. Nothing is more distasteful than the former upholders of apartheid, who had to be forced into our new constitutional dispensation, now posing as the defenders of constitutional rights.

Our electoral victory, of course, now places a huge responsibility on the ANC and its alliance partners. We cannot pretend that our comfortable electoral majority is secure for all time. In the face of the global capitalist melt-down and in the face of persisting systemic crises within our own society – deep-seated inequality, crisis-levels of unemployment, and wide-ranging poverty – the next five years must be marked by a sustained effort at transforming the underlying factors that are reproducing these crises of under-development. In particular, we need to place our economic growth path onto a new job-creating and more egalitarian trajectory.

The CC congratulated all SACP members who have been elected as ANC public representatives in Parliament and in provincial legislatures – overall, some 14% of ANC elected representatives are SACP members. The CC also congratulated the many SACP members who have now been deployed into senior positions in legislatures and executives. While there



**Singing for victory: The majority in the townships and rural areas ignored the 'public opinion' manufactured by the media and chattering classes**

has been a minor campaign in some quarters of the media to suggest that these deployments are controversial within the SACP, certainly in the CC there was unanimous support for the idea that the SACP, working closely with its alliance partners, must never position itself simply an extra-parliamentary oppositionist bloc. We must assume full and collective responsibility for governance.

This will require, however, that we ensure that Communist employees in executives and other senior positions must set an example of activist and participatory governance – in which popular organisation and mobilisation is not seen as inherently conflictual with the important governance tasks confronting our country. At the same time, maintaining a strong and independent SACP is the prerequisite for a Party and for a cadreship of communists that are able to build a principled mass-based Alliance. To this end, the CC is also seized with strengthening the organisational machinery of the SACP. In doing this, we will be building on our activist cadre that has played such an outstanding role in the election campaign.

The new Minister in the Presidency, cde Collins Chabane, was invited to the CC to brief our meeting on the newly reconfigured national executive. The CC noted that the issues raised in this regard over the past year by the SACP had been taken into consideration, and welcomed the efforts to ensure that we build a strategically focused, better coordinated and more effective developmental state. In particular, we welcome the establish-

ment of a planning commission, and a cabinet cluster that will focus on economic policy and specifically industrial policy. The CC agreed that the reconfiguration needs to proceed in a phased but rapid fashion, and that we must ensure that reconfiguration does not consume all our energies to the detriment of actual implementation of our key programmes.

The CC also received a briefing from the City of Johannesburg on its public transport plans as an innovation that needs to be engaged with in the light of the coming Confederations Cup, 2010, and the need for affordable, accessible, safe and efficient public transport systems throughout our country.

At present, public transport often remains untransformed, relatively unregulated and operator-controlled. We need to transform this reality into public transport that is a publicly controlled and regulated reality in which the needs of communities are prioritised. The CC resolved to re-launch our former Red October public transport campaign, beginning here in Johannesburg. In the coming weeks, working together with a wide cross-section of commuter, trade union, driver, small operator, and community formations we will be campaigning for transformed public transport. It is critical that the future of public transport in our cities is not left simply to a (sometimes hostile) dialogue between government and taxi operators.

The CC also resolved to reinvigorate our long-running financial sector campaign. In the light of the current global

capitalist economic melt-down and its impact on South African consumers, households and small businesses there is an increase in repossession of houses, cars and other items, and the closure of small businesses and the likely increase of black-listings.

The CC briefly discussed the question of ethics for executive members in government. The CC commended the Minister of Transport, cde Sbu Ndebele, for handing back the luxury car that he had received from a group of small contractors. This episode raises wider questions. The SACP strongly believes that no-one in government should receive a gift from the public for doing what is, in any case, their job. What is more, government delivery should not be seen as personal patronage from an individual government leader – it is a collective effort and a collective responsibility.

The SACP in the past week has supported Cosatu in its efforts to reverse the sale of Vodacom to majority foreign ownership. In the light of the court decision to decline a ruling in this direction, we will be working closely with our alliance partners to chart a way forward. One thing is clear; the problematic way in which this sale has been handled (which the court itself acknowledged) is just one small part of a much wider problem. Our IT and telecommunications sector has been badly mismanaged, largely by a former leading cadre in government (formerly, but no longer, associated with the ANC). Moreover, this is not just a question of mismanagement. All the evidence points to a systematic ripping-off of public and national resources in the interests of an avaricious personal accumulation agenda. In particular, the future of Telkom has now been seriously compromised. The SACP calls for a comprehensive ICT plan that places at its centre universal access and affordable quality service.

With new legislation and a new Parliament in place, the SACP now calls for the rapid dissolving of the current SABC Board. The imperative of urgent moves in this direction has been reinforced by the new evidence of massive financial losses in the SABC, the consequence of gross mismanagement. The current Board has presided over this implosion of this public resource, and it must now go. The SABC must be rescued and it must be rebuilt as a public broadcaster that serves all the citizens of our country, and not narrow factional or party political objectives. ●

CENTRAL COMMITTEE / MAY 2009

# Brief guidelines on deployment of national and provincial public representatives who are SACP members

*The SACP adopted guidelines on deployment at the May CC meeting. Below is an edited version*

## Part of Re-configuring the Alliance

These guidelines have to be understood in terms of the SACP 12th Congress resolution on state power:

The SACP taking part in the elections as part of our Medium Term Vision for hegemony, over time, in the state, among 6 major sites of power; and

Our commitment to negotiating with our partners for a reconfigured Alliance. Exactly what a reconfigured Alliance will mean is still being worked on. This re-configuration has many aspects. Some we are clear about. Others we are clarifying. Yet others will only emerge through practice.

Among other issues, the the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress resolution on state power notes: "SACP cadres who are deployed as ANC elected representatives or as public servants must continue to owe allegiance to the Party and cannot conduct themselves in ways that are contrary to the fundamental policies, principles and values of the SACP." The reconfiguration of the Alliance includes the Alliance being the "strategic political centre" and "respect" for the "independent role and strategic tasks of each of the Alliance partners." It was resolved:

- The SACP deepens its capacity to provide strategic leadership in regard to key policy sites of power, including industrial policy, social policies, and the safety, security and defence sectors.

- The SACP contests state power in elections in the context of a reconfigured Alliance.

- To mandate the incoming CC to actively pursue the different potential modalities of future SACP campaigning. These modalities could include either:

- An electoral pact with our Alliance partners, which could include agreement on deployments, possible quotas, the accountability of elected representatives including accountability of SACP cadres to the Party, the election manifesto, and the importance of an independent face and role for the SACP and its cadres within legislatures.

OR

- Independent electoral lists on the voter's roll with the possible objective of constituting a coalition Alliance agreement post-elections.

The SACP must actively engage its Alliance partners on these proposals.

The guidelines in this document also

**The guidelines in this document deal only with public representatives, and do not address deployees in other institutions and structures**

have to be set against the background of the "Sharpening our Deployment and Accountability Capacities" framework document – the D&A Framework, for short – adopted at our February 2009 CC meeting. Of course, the Framework document deals with broad principles and policies related to deployment of SACP cadres in other structures generally. The guidelines in this document deal only with public representatives (especially in the national and provincial legislatures), and do not address deployees in other institutions and structures. While these guidelines apply to national and public representatives, they will also need to be adapted to apply to councilors as well. And while these guidelines focus on public representatives, aspects of the approach set out in it might also be relevant to SACP members deployed in other state structures and other institutions and organisations.

These guidelines must also be located within the framework of the need to strengthen each of the Alliance partners and the Alliance as a whole, and the responsibility of each of the partners in the Alliance to help to strengthen the others. A version of these guidelines might perhaps also be of some use to the ANC and other Alliance partners in deploying public representatives to political work within their structures.

These guidelines need to be discussed further within SACP structures

and improved on, as well as developed over time, through practice and experience. Many of these guidelines will also have to be negotiated with the ANC and our other Alliance partners. The particular guidelines may also have to change as the Alliance is re-configured over time.

### Public Representatives Need to Answer to Both the ANC and SACP

Obviously, public representatives who are SACP members are elected on an ANC Election list and must be accountable to the ANC. SACP members are expected to fully participate in the ANC Caucuses in the legislatures and serve as disciplined ANC public representatives in other ways.

But without undermining their commitments to the ANC as public representatives, SACP members can and must also be accountable to the SACP as part of a reconfigured Alliance. For far too long and in far too many cases, many SACP members have abandoned their responsibilities to the Party on the grounds that they have commitments as public representatives that they have prioritised; it even applies in many cases where their commitments to the SACP have been arranged well ahead of time (for example, the dates of CC and PEC meetings that are set out in the annual SACP Year Planner) and well ahead of their commitments as public representatives.

We need to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between effectively serving as both ANC public representatives and as SACP cadres. We need, in fact, to seek to ensure that these two roles are *mutually reinforcing*. It is essentially towards this end that this document is directed.

To facilitate the deployment and accountability of SACP comrades, Deployment and Accountability (D&A) Committees need to be established at national and provincial levels, as agreed at the February CC meeting.

Obviously, as the D&A Framework notes, the ANC has to also develop a clearer deployment policy for its public representatives generally. This would help the SACP in shaping our deployment policy.

### General Accountability of Public Representatives to the SACP

Essentially, as far as possible, without being factionalist, and with due recog-

nition that they are ANC MPs and MPLs, SACP members who are public representatives have to link their legislative, constituency and other work with their Party work. This must be done in ways that ensure that both their work as public representatives and SACP cadres is strengthened.

In the first instance, all public representatives who are SACP members must be active in the PDFs (Party Discussion Forums) in the legislatures. The existence of PDFs has been sanctioned by the ANC. The PDFs include all SACP members in a legislature – both public representatives and staff members. The basic aims of the PDFs include:

To discuss SACP ideology, policies, programmes and other issues.

- To receive reports from and contribute to PB and CC meetings.

- To seek to be active in SACP structures in Cape Town and other towns where the provincial legislatures are located.

- To discuss issues of Marxism generally.

- To encourage the sale and distribution of SACP literature.

- To empower and encourage MPs to be active in our SACP branch and other structures in our home bases.

The PDFs do not act as an SACP caucus or lobby within the ANC parliamentary caucus or study groups or legislature committees. They cannot be factionalist and do not campaign to ensure particular SACP members get elected to certain positions. The PDFs must be strengthened and be far more active. They need to effectively co-operate with D&A Committees. “Without dynamic PDF-type structures, our D&A Committees run the risk of dangling in the air”, notes the D&A Framework guidelines. The precise role and powers of the PDFs need to be further clarified in the context of a reconfigured Alliance and the new de-

**We need to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between effectively serving as both ANC public representatives and as SACP cadres**

ployment and accountability policy of the SACP.

Just as public representatives report on their constituency work to the ANC legislature caucuses, especially after the “constituency periods”, they should also report to the SACP D&A Committees. We will need to prepare an SACP format for these reports that would also provide for information on what contribution the public representative has made to SACP work. This would also include how the representative’s constituency and legislative work was related, not just to ANC work, but also to Party programmes, activities and goals.

Among the issues relevant to ensuring that public representatives could also make an effective contribution to SACP work are the following:

**The location of Constituency Offices.** This would have to be part of an overall strategic allocation of Constituency Offices by the ANC to ANC MPs generally and a more effective linking of Constituency Offices to the organisational and other needs of ANC structures. The needs of SACP structures could also be taken into account. For example, should the Constituency Offices of the general secretary and provincial secretaries be located in the SACP Head Office and provincial offices?

**The legislature committees in which SACP cadres serve.** Where possible, SACP cadres should serve in committees which are relevant to their responsibilities within the SACP. For example, an SACP comrade serving in a Party structure on labour issues, should, ideally, serve in the Labour Committee in the legislature.

**Contribution to developing SACP policy.** The D&A Framework notes: “...a key aspect of SACP deployed cadres’ accountability to Party structures is to actively contribute to SACP policy development (at all levels, from branch up).”

**Facilitating the SACP’s international work:** MPs travel to other countries and receive foreign delegations. SACP members who are public representatives must inform the SACP international desk of these international exchanges and seek, without undermining the relevant norms of the legislatures, to foster the SACP’s programme and policies on international issues.

There is a need to insert a suitable

and durable provision in the Constitution on the accountability of public representatives to the SACP and/or the role of Deployment and Accountability Committees. The D&A Framework adopted by the February CC notes: “While the Constitution provides more specific guidance to work in fraternal mass organisations (6.4), it is perhaps not yet specific enough on the accountability of party cadres in governance deployments.”

**Specific Contribution of SACP Members serving in Executives and Senior Positions in the Legislatures**

There are also specific contributions that SACP cadres deployed in national and provincial executives and in senior positions in parliament could make to the work of the Party.

This would include Ministers, MECs, Deputy Ministers, Speakers and Deputy Speakers. Committee chairpersons are more limited in terms of access to resources and in other ways, but where possible, they should also contribute to Party work in ways proposed in this section. Many of these proposals could also be relevant to the ANC as well.

Among the issues relevant to the role of these comrades are:

**Availability on specific days for SACP work.** On at least one day a week, a certain number of these comrades, on a rotation basis, must be available to do SACP work. By SACP work, is not meant just attending formal meetings of SACP structures from BEC level upwards to the PB, but actively participating in Red October and other SACP campaigns; helping to launch and strengthen branch and other SACP structures; raising funds; and fulfilling the other constitutional

requirements of an SACP member and leader.

**Development of SACP policies on key issues.** This applies even more in the case of these comrades, given their key location.

**Facilitate the international work of the SACP:** This is referred to in section 3.4, and applies even more to SACP members deployed in senior positions in governance since they are in a better position to advance this than other MPs who are SACP members. Of course, they need to do this in ways that are consistent with the relevant norms that apply to all people who occupy these positions

**Fundraising for the SACP.** Obviously, given their higher profiles they will be able to more effectively assist in fundraising (clearly, in ways that do not undermine the norms that apply to their governance functions.)

**Assist in Head Office if Necessary.** They could also be deployed more easily in the SACP Head Office, if required. This would be necessary, given that the GS will also be in parliament and none of the office-bearers is in the Head Office full-time.

**Role of Deployment and Accountability Committees**

Key aspects of the role and approach

**On at least one day a week, a certain number of these comrades, on a rotation basis, must be available to do SACP work**

of the D&A Committees are set out in the D&A Framework , particularly in section 3, “Different kinds of deployment.”

Relevant aspects include:

Four different kinds of deployment – internal Party; electoral lists; civil service and parastatals; mass formations

Not be ‘militaristic’ – also important advisory and consulting role.

Not a crude “trade-off” for having been lobbied for by the SACP - but deployment to SACP work necessary because it is the right thing to do.

Avoid undermining the “organisational integrity and internal democratic processes of fraternal organisations”

The D&A Committees will have to guide public representatives and engage with them, and the public representatives should also seek to engage with the D&A Committees.

There will have to be effective co-operation between the National and provincial D&As.

**Proposals Need to be Phased In**

Obviously, it will not be easy to effect the proposals set out above. We will also have to negotiate with the ANC and our other Alliance partners on the proposals. We will also have to develop the capacity to effect these proposals through well-organised D&A Committees.

These guidelines may be too ambitious. But they are necessary. We may not be able to implement all of them. We may also need to phase in those that are implementable over time. We may also find the need for other guidelines. We will get clearer on what we want and what is do-able over time. Experience will help. But we must get started as soon as possible! ●

**CAPITALISM EXPLAINED**

Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the nastiest of men, for the nastiest of reasons, will somehow work for the benefit of us all.

– John Maynard Keynes



DEAR MAX

# Not perfect, not disastrous, just average

*We can admit to our weaknesses and our strengths – no need for hyperbolic mood swings*

By Jeremy Cronin

*This article was published in response to a newspaper column by journalist Max du Preez in early April*

I generally enjoy Max du Preez's feisty columns. They are not always accurate, but they are never boring. However, there is also a predictable rhythm about them. Over the years, du Preez has tracked between bubbly euphoria and abject despair. Not infrequently, these zig-zags occur, back and forth, between one week and the next (which is why, I guess, his column is called "Maximum Headroom" – he needs it).

If this manic behaviour were confined to a handful of media commentators, we could put it down to the competitive demands of weekly journalism, the need to say something truly big every week. But du Preez's columns are symptomatic in other ways. They reflect something about our national psyche.

The popular (and global) portrayal of post-apartheid SA, as welcome as it might have been, was always overcooked – the "South African miracle", "the rainbow nation", "the winning nation". This provoked all manner of hubris on our part. Yes, of course, the negotiated transition to democracy was an immense and collective South African achievement, but much remained (and still remains) to be done.

In the mid-1990s, a half-dozen Western leaders (Francois Mitterand, among them), in trouble with their domestic electorates, flew out for a photo-oppor-



**Max du Preez - Maximum Headroom**

tunity with our global icon, Nelson Mandela. Nothing wrong with that, but again we were encouraged to believe that behind the photo-opportunity lay an eager avalanche of Marshall Aid.

After Mandela, Thabo Mbeki continued to nurture elevated expectations of being able "to punch above our weight". He envisaged SA leading an imminent African Renaissance.

The danger in delusions of grandeur is that, when reality bumps into your script, you are liable to move into denialism (about AIDS or Zimbabwe), or blame some improbable conspiracy ("it's the West", or the "ultra-left"), or you plunge into an overwrought and generalising

post-colonial despair ("we are just like the rest of Africa").

Which brings me specifically to Max du Preez's recent column. It is a litany of woes ostensibly showing that the ANC and its support base are thoroughly venal, "we have now become like Angola and Nigeria". (Why are these the negative references and not, say, Enron, WorldCom, Arthur Andersen, or, in the light of recent scandals, Wall Street itself?)

Du Preez's list of examples of supposed ANC moral laxity is a mixture of part truth and plain error. On a minor note, Tony Yengeni is not leading the ANC's Western Cape election campaign. "One of the top men in the SACP" (a reference to Blade Nzimande) stole a paper bag with R500 000 in cash" we are told. In reality, it was an accusation (two black plastic bags, by the way) made by a fraudster currently behind bars.

Nzimande voluntarily opened personal and family accounts to the police. Absolutely no evidence was found for this libellous accusation. But who cares? After all, Nzimande looks like he could be Angolan.

Space permitting, there's more in detail that might be said about du Preez's other allegations. But, yes, there are challenges we confront in regard to corruption. These challenges are within the ruling party and indeed in other sectors too – as recent excellent work done by our Competitions Commission into big corporates has unveiled.

The ANC, like SA at large, is not an out-of-this-world model of perfection. But nor are we on the brink of a ground zero dystopia. The real story of our times is to be found, not in some fictional paper bag, but in the relative durability of our economy and democratic institutions.

In the recent period, we have seen the recall of a serving president without the remotest hint of "civil war" (a ludicrous prediction made at the time by Archbishop Tutu), a noisy but typical break-away from a ruling party in power now for 15 years, and a robust but peaceful electoral campaign. Our economy is doing better than most in the midst of the current bleak global situation. We are a pretty average country, with our strengths and weaknesses. Let's honestly admit to both...and then let's try to avoid hyperbolic mood-swings. ●

*Jeremy Cronin is Deputy General Secretary of the SACP*

STATE OF THE NATION

# Partnerships to meet South Africa's challenge

*This is a summary of the State of the Nation address delivered by President Jacob Zuma on 3 June*

By Reneva Fourie

Transparency and accountability are key principles in our country's Constitution. Therefore the President annually addresses the nation on progress in respect of delivery and on future priorities. On 3 June 2009, President Jacob Zuma delivered his State of the Nation Address (SONA) at the opening of the fourth democratic Parliament in Cape Town.

In the context of a global economic crisis and resulting job losses in South Africa, the central focus of government for the next five years is to eradicate poverty. The programme to fight poverty and build a better life for all is captured in the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) for 2009-2014 and based on ten priorities, which are outlined below.

## Decent work and sustainable livelihoods

The framework for South Africa's response to the international economic crisis concluded by government, labour and business in February 2009, through Nedlac, is the starting point of working together to speed up economic growth and to transform the economy to create decent work and sustainable livelihoods. In the short term, re-skilling workers instead of retrenchment is being encouraged; the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) is assisting employers and workers to find alternatives to retrenchment; the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) has

developed a programme to fund companies in distress; and government will prioritise procuring goods and services locally.

An Industrial Policy Action Plan is being developed for medium to long term creation of decent jobs in targeted lead sectors. Interventions to support small, medium and micro enterprises and to make the economy more inclusive will be introduced. This includes a single integrated business registration system. The Expanded Public Works Programme will continue. The initial target of one million jobs opportunities was achieved in the



**Facing the nation: President Jacob Zuma spoke to the nation on 3 June**

first phase. The second phase of the programme aims to create four million job opportunities by 2014, with 500 000 to be created within this year.

While the primary focus will be to create jobs, social grants will remain a tool for poverty alleviation. Self-reliance by able-bodied persons will however be encouraged. It is also expected that neighbours assist each other during this diffi-

cult period.

## Economic and social infrastructure

An amount of R787 billion has been set aside to develop economic and social infrastructure. This funding includes allocations for the building of schools, public transport, decent human settlements, and water and sanitation. A key investment project is the 2010 FIFA World Cup, a proud legacy that will benefit communities for many years to come.

## Rural development

A comprehensive, participatory, rural development strategy, linked to land and agrarian reform and food security will be introduced with the aim of transforming the face of rural areas in South Africa. This will include the implementation of the Neighbourhood Development Grant Programme in targeted rural towns to boost their local economies.

## Skills and human resources

Education at all levels (early development; primary, secondary and tertiary institutions; and adult education) will be a key priority for the next five years. Discipline by both educators and learners will be expected and punitive action will be taken against those who abuse their power. Access for children from poor families to higher education will be improved and sustainable funding structures for tertiary institutions will be developed.

## Health

The quality of health care will be improved by reducing the inequalities in health care provision, boosting human resource capacity, revitalizing hospitals and clinics, and stepping up the fight against HIV and AIDS, TB and other diseases.

## Crime and corruption

A transformed, integrated, modernized, properly resourced and well-managed criminal justice system is being established. Serious attention will be given to combating organized crime, as well as crimes against women and children. Other key initiatives also include a Border Management Agency, and management of cyber crime and identity theft. The war on crime has to be driven by all and we must actively participate in Community Policy Forums, stop buying stolen good and report crime to the police.

## Cohesive, caring and sustainable communities

We must continue to promote unity in diversity, developing a shared value system, and building community solidarity and a caring society by becoming active citizens in the renewal of our country. This must be underpinned by a common national identity and patriotism, with affection for our country, our Constitution and our national symbols.

## Continental and international co-operation

The main goal of government for the medium term is to ensure that our foreign relations contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to sustainable economic growth and development. In so doing, programmes and structures on the African continent will continue, including efforts to entrench democracy and respect of human rights. South-south relations will be strengthened and we will continue to forge strategic alliances to influence international platforms.

## Sustainable resource management and use

Water management will be improved through the Water for Growth and Development Strategy and efforts to promote energy efficiency and the usage of renewable energy sources will continue.

## Public institutions

A developmental state must be driven by well-oiled public service machinery, programmatically aligned state-owned en-

## STATE OF THE NATION

# Campaign themes and perspective emerge in government policy

## *SACP statement issued in response to President Zuma's State of the Nation address*

**T**he SACP warmly welcomes both the tenor and content of President Zuma's State of Nation address to Parliament. President Zuma clearly located the new government's cornerstone priority as the fight against poverty. He located this priority within the context of persisting challenges within our society and a global capitalist crisis and domestic recession. We welcome his assurance that the crisis and recession will not be a reason to abandon our ANC-led election manifesto policies and commitments. While the pace of change might be affected, President Zuma was categorical that we will not alter our strategic direction.

The SACP further welcomes the indication that the Framework Agreement for SA's Response to the International Crisis (concluded in February this year between government and its social partners) will guide the new government in the key short-term strategic responses to be made to the recession.

However, it is quite clear that President Zuma has committed his government to pursuing not just short-term defensive measures, but also to sustaining our state-led R787bn infrastructure construction programme and to enhancing our industrial policy programme with an emphasis on the creation of decent work. Together with other strategic programmes announced in the State of Nation Address, our infrastructure and industrial policy programmes must help to put SA on to a new, more inclusive and equitable growth path.

Over the past years the SACP has run a series of popular mobilisational campaigns around health-care, rural transformation, public transport and transforming the financial sector, including our Developmental Finance Institutions. We are pleased to note that many of the themes and policy perspectives that emerged from these campaigns now find their place within official government policy.

Finally, we welcome the emphasis placed by President Zuma on our collective responsibilities. The emphasis he placed on active citizenship and on participation by communities in popular participatory organs like Community Policing Forums is absolutely correct. Together we can and must do more! ●

terprises and development finance institutions, and effective oversight bodies. The two Ministries in the Presidency responsible for strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation will hold the public service and entities accountable. A Single Public Service will be established to improve service delivery across the three spheres of government, ensuring that service delivery puts people first.

President Zuma called on South Africans to emulate the values and example of former President Nelson Mandela of service to humanity. Accordingly 18 July

will henceforth be known as Mandela Day and South Africans and people across the world will be called upon to spend at least 67 minutes of their time doing something useful within their communities on that day.

In conclusion President Zuma called for a partnership, emphasizing that working together, we can do more to realize our common vision of a better and more prosperous nation. ●

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*Reneva Fourie is an SACP activist in the Western Cape*

THE NPA AND ZUMA

# Ngcuka, Khumalo and McCarthy would put the mafia to shame

*A covert strategy to wrest political power and gain unimaginable riches*

By Sedisa Gala and Lebogang Hoveka

There is no doubt in the minds of most South Africans that the Ngcuka, Khumalo, McCarthy trio and their associates have, for more a decade, waged one of the most relentless offensives against any South African who has dared to threaten their economic and political turf. The political and economic arenas are littered with broken morals, dented reputations and severely wounded victims. Like all mafia wars the purpose was for a long time disguised under legitimate wrappings of defending democracy and protecting the constitution. The strategy of this mafia-like ring focused on a complicated juxtaposition that involved the conflation of the party and the state, business with the party, and vice versa.

The political component focused on wresting political power from the ANC and its alliance partners by sowing divisions in the alliance and wreaking fissures within the ANC. Once the mafia-like ring had done this, they were left to contend with a wounded, limping ANC, a shadow of its former self, with members who have lost hope in the cause of the National Democratic Revolution. The targeting of the ANC leadership was intended to render the party leaderless. Thanks to the strength of character and bravery of Cde Jacob Zuma who stayed the cause despite unrelenting persecution, this carefully designed onslaught would have been carried out under the deafening rhetoric of African renaissance, a concept which ironically denotes putting the interest of Africa's awakening above personal interests.

While South Africans relaxed in their defensive modes, the real intentions manifested themselves in form of contradictions in policies and what was actually taking place on the ground. To secure political power, strong and brave leaders were targeted and persecuted one after the other by carefully planned covert operations from all fronts. Cde Zuma was la-

beled corrupt, a fraudster, a money launderer and Cde Blade Nzimande a thief, insinuating he was a former Inkatha Freedom Party warlord; the list is long, winding and the actions were without pause.

The second leg of the strategy involved the economic. The ring leaders and their members were close to the debates on economic policies in the ANC and they positioned themselves at a vantage point ready to pounce when the right moment presented itself. They identified their competitors and detractors who were to be taken out one by one, sometimes using the courts and other state organs to achieve their strategic economic goals. Shaik's matter is a case in point.

In the early 1990s Shaik worked with the late ANC treasurer General, Cde Thomas Nkobi exposing himself to the inner working of the ANC and accompanied the latter to Malaysia where Cde Nkobi was to study the Malaysian equivalent of the current BEE policy in South Africa.

Armed with these insights and information, Shaik came back and applied the model to his business and commercial strategies, often outsmarting one of the mafia-ring's big shots, Mzi Khumalo. This was exposed in the Shaik court ruling by Judge Squires, where Shaik and Khumalo were competitors in the Durban Point redevelopment plan. Both pulled political strings to secure the contract, using inside information given by those close to the process. The genesis of political conspiracies started with the unhappiness relating to such projects and the realization that there are many players in competition for lucrative BEE deals, which in the beginning relied heavily on government initiated or linked projects.

More importantly, what started as a competitive tussle between two companies was later to fine-tune the entire policy of BEE into an essence that was not what it was meant to be. BEE became a policy of patronage, for which benefits were dished out in exchange for loyalty and sycophancy at a price not yet known to the South African public. Left seriously outsmarted, Khumalo was sucked into the plotting and conniving that has come to characterize BEE, particularly in the mafia ring. Today many – if not most – BEE deals are linked in one way or another to a member of the ring, whether it is the JCI, Harmony, Standard Bank, Nedbank, Grindrod and many other deals regardless of industry or sector of the economy.

This ring of members has spread economic benefits rightly owed to the formerly disfranchised and indigent blacks between themselves, and their cohorts and cronies. Shaik, left to rot in jail, was a message: beware those who wstand in our way – there will be consequences.

The third component of their strategy involved the state and was to wrest control of key state institutions such as the NPA, to be used strategically to silence and eliminate their foes. And so, they targeted the likes of Shaik, Zuma, Selebi and others who had become powerful, and threatened their hegemony over the state. They conducted intelligence work without the legal mandates to do so, they plotted and undertook counter-intelligence activities, and today they ask how Zuma's lawyers got hold of the tapes. The state has been treated as turf and the wars are fought at all levels in "Primus Salus Pro Familia" – friends and family first!

The often untold story of apartheid is that deprivation breeds a culture of entitlement, and now cadres are using intelligence strategies, taught for liberation, cadre against cadre. When taken to its natural conclusion these individuals have acted in their own interest for self-enrichment, and they assert that they did not take part in the struggle to be poor. Ngcuka, Mc Carthy and associates have behaved ruthlessly and challenged national security. ●

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*Sedisa Gala is an attorney and Lebogang Hoveka is a YCL activist*

## PROFILE

# Blade Nzimande: beloved and hated communist

By Mafika Damane Mndebele

“We were called ultra-lefts because we had refused to sell the Party...we shall never submit... never,” these utterances came from Cde Blade Nzimande, General Secretary of the SACP, in the tense inauguration Congress of the Young Communist League of South Africa. After his input the congress was in a jovial spirit, and we all chanted the popular song “Namhlanje sizo launch i-YCL...jabulaninonke Makomanisi”.

Comrade GS had been able to unify us. He had come from a meeting with Christians at which he spoke about the need for communists and the Christians to work together for the needy.

The GS also met King Zwelithini (Isilo) and many civil society movements to discuss the reconstruction of this country. Under his leadership the Party saw its membership increasing and saw itself mobilising the people directly under the Red flag. The Red October programme became one of the key instruments in this regard. By so doing he was invited onto numerous platforms, by both the Left and the Right..

As a prickly voice to the ears of the right, he made himself the number one enemy of those who anticipated a feeble communist party, after the collapse of USSR. The media labelled him a populist. He was attacked from all sides, within and outside the movement. Karl Marx in the Communist Manifesto observed that the history of hitherto existing society is that of class struggle. This class struggle is over the means of production and the consequences arising from the mode of production. This class struggle is between those who have nothing but their labour to sell for survival (the proletariat) and the captains of the industry or owners of means of production (the bourgeoisie). This struggle could either result in the common wreck



Blade Nzimande

of the contending classes or the reconstitution of the whole society.

This base is then justified, promoted and defended by the superstructures, which among other things include the laws, the judiciary system, the media, art, religion, and the education system. Accordingly, the ideas of the ruling class (white monopoly capitalism) are reflected in these institutions. Put differently, the bourgeoisie establishes institutions and practices which mirror their representation and interests (i.e. profit maximisation at all cost). This entails – but is not limited to – knowledge produced by institutions of higher learning, scientific research and innovations of the human mind programmed (“false consciousness”) to justify, promote and defend the interest of the propertied class. The media is a powerful weapons of the propertied class to spread its propaganda. We are told, through it, that communists are not charming, they are evil, , populist, corrupt, antidemocratic and the enemies of progress. The media is also a site of ideological contestation since it is a an integral part of society.

During the period of Uhuru the media was used as an anti-communist vehicle. Newspapers, magazines, electronic media: all were telling Africa that communists are

filthy. Perhaps that is the cause of our woes today as Africa, countries were ill-advised and accepted capitalism without analysing its nature. The slogan of the PAIGC of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, then led by the late Amilcar Cabral that was borrowed by most Africa liberation movements which was “Tell no lies! Claim no easy victories!” was not understood as most African countries allowed themselves to be victims of lies designed by the western-funded and inspired “African media”.

They sang praises to easy victories of capitalism. It perhaps come as no surprise that City Press is one of the most reactionary newspapers in the country, and it came with a dream story about the GS and the “group of five”. Many other newspapers took a line from it have psychologically prepared society to see the deployment of the GS to Cabinet as payback for his loyalty to Zuma. Comrade GS is portrayed as an opportunist who had used the Party for his personal interests. This is despite the fact that it was the Central Committee and the Politburo that propelled the GS to avail himself for Parliament. For this we are told the Party wants to control the ANC. The media should know by now that their cheap tactics of saying that communists are controlling the ANC had long passed it sell-by date. It is an exhausted tactic borrowed from the apartheid regime.

Those in the ANC who still dream of the ANC as a capitalist institution must dream on. The ANC is neither a communist nor capitalist instrument. It is (and must remain) a national movement assigned with the task of eliminating the national grievances which are as a result of “colonialism of a special type”. It has throughout its existence been a beacon of hope for our people, the majority of whom are poor and workers. Thus the GS cannot be blackmailed for accepting the nomination by the ANC, of which he is a proud member. .

It is a pity that instead of educating society about socio-economic struggles, and the contribution it can make in this regard, the South African media belittles itself to become gossipers. We know that the attacks on the GS are not directed at him as an individual but to our noble cause. That is a reason why we say today, Dr Nzimande is the beloved and hated communist in our land: loved by the working class; hated by the class enemy, which uses media for their mischievous cause. ●

Mafika Damane Mndebele is YCL KZN Deputy Secretary and Sasco Deputy Chairperson

## CAPITALISM'S CRISIS

# The global economic crisis needs a transformational agenda in South Africa

*Predictions of GDP growth for South Africa this year are a feature of the delusional neo-liberal mindset*

By Jeremy Cronin

Last month's announcement by Stats SA that our economy had contracted by 6,4% in the first three months of this year appears to have shocked many mainstream commentators. But for workers on the shop-floor, hammered by a torrent of retrenchments and shortened working-weeks, the dismal figure hardly came as a surprise.

Indeed, for some 8 months the SACP has been warning against the complacent chorus that has been telling us that "South Africa's economy is well insulated", and that "our fundamentals are all fine." As recently as the 11 February budget, in the midst of what was already patently a recession, government was still predicting GDP growth for this budget year.

Why these illusions?

The illusions are partly the product of an assumption that economic policy is, first and foremost, about "sending positive signals to the markets", about "convincing potential investors that SA is a good place to come." While nobody is denying that we should in principle actively encourage fixed investment, it is a problem if economic policy is simply reduced to marketing. It was this habit that was partly responsible in the recent past for denialism about HIV-Aids, unemploy-

ment levels, and crime in our society. And it is this "selling SA" paradigm that has played its part in the recent attempts at convincing ourselves (and then the rest of the world) that our economy was more or less insulated from the global meltdown.

But the illusions are also part of a related feature of the neo-liberal mind-set. According to this mind-set, the economic role of the state is confined to macro-economic tweaking, while the "real" (i.e. productive) economy should be left largely to the private sector. This means that industrial policy, for instance, is not something that the state should meddle in. We have been repeatedly told that "the state can't pick winners, leave that to the markets", as if an intelligent industrial policy were reducible to a gamble on the race-track. Remember how in the late 1990s we were told that it's the private sector and not the state that creates jobs? One former ANC leader told us that "the state is not an employment agency".

These attitudes produced an aloofness from the side of many about what was actually happening in the productive or micro-economy. As long as the macro-economic indicators were "sound", then everything was supposedly okay – or at least it was on track to being delivered.

It is against this background of active scepticism about what the state can do,

that it is now encouraging (but ironic) to find most of the mainstream business media in our country calling on government not to abandon the R787-billion infrastructure construction programme. This state-led infrastructure programme is, indeed, the one sector still consistently contributing to growth and employment. Even the London-based *The Times* has carried a recent article lauding our state-led infrastructure programme, which, it says, puts SA ahead of developed countries in coming up with a sustainable long-term response to the global crisis.

However, notwithstanding the dawning of some greater appreciation of the role of the state in the productive economy, profound scepticism still prevails in many quarters in SA. We are still being told that the "developmental state is a dangerous illusion", and that state-led economic planning is either hopelessly "over-ambitious", or alternatively inherently "authoritarian". Often it is the same commentators who praise our state-led infrastructure programme in one breath, and then condemn the idea of a developmental state in the next!

So where does this leave us? And what must we do in response to the crisis that is now impacting so dramatically on our economy and our people?

As we have already implied, the very first requirement is that we should be



**Cape Town's Greenpoint stadium under construction: The state-led infrastructure programme is the one sector that has consistently contributed to growth and employment**

honest about the nature and depth of the crisis. This involves a systematic unpacking of the relative strengths AND weaknesses of our economy. Yes, this is largely an externally driven crisis, but what are the structural features of our own economy that have made us vulnerable to it? If we do not pose this question honestly, we will simply get stuck in a waiting game – holding tight until the next global commodity boom comes around again.

But we have just been through one of the biggest global commodity booms, and while some key sectors of capital did very well, we did not create nearly enough jobs and the systemic problems of the South African economy (huge inequalities, spatial marginalisation of at least half the population, and crisis-levels of unemployment) persisted and were even actively reproduced in the midst of 5% growth.

So, strategically, our response to the present recession needs to ensure, as best as possible, that we sustain our state-led infrastructure construction programme. While the resourcing will now come under strain, there is a substantial national consensus that we need to sustain this programme. Some of what we have planned might now require longer time lines, and other infrastructural programmes need re-assessment – but, fundamentally, the multi-billion infrastruc-

ture spend (rather than the bailing out of failing enterprises) needs to be our major response to the crisis.

However, we cannot just be satisfied with a multi-billion rand infrastructure programme. We need to ask critical questions of it. We need to assess whether the huge capital spending is transforming the systemic weaknesses of our economy. To what extent, for instance, is our infrastructure programme simply reinforcing the spatial inequities of our society? Is it really re-shaping the persisting apartheid geography of our cities, towns and rural hinterland?

And this is where the ANC-alliance April 22 electoral mandate to commit focused attention to rural development, for instance, comes in. Infrastructure construction cannot simply be targeted to lowering the logistics costs to our mineral exporters, moving from coal and oil fields to ports. While this is an important component, simply confining our infrastructure spend to this kind of goal will lock us into the same systemic features of the apartheid economy, while our former Bantustan rural areas continue to be marginalised through poor infrastructure.

Then, secondly, we need also to ensure that our industrial policy programme aligns much more energetically with our infrastructure construction. Too many of the construction materials, components

and technologies are being imported when they could be produced locally. This means we spend billions of Rands, but fail to maximise the local job-creation possibilities. It also means that we reproduce our historic trade deficit vulnerabilities – we remain an exporter of primary commodities and an importer of more expensive capital goods.

These, then, are the two core strategic responses we need to make to the present recession:

- Sustaining our state-led mass infrastructure programme; and
- Aligning an industrial policy with this programme.

Together, these two major strategic interventions need to place us onto a new growth path that creates decent work and that overcomes the other systemic weaknesses in our economy.

There are, of course, also many more specific and short-term interventions that we need to make in order to weather the recession. These include all of the matters agreed upon in the Nedlac framework document, among them: the massification of the expanded public works programme; much tougher interventions to block illegal imports; the strategic application of tariff protections; a review of executive salaries; and the defence and consolidation of a comprehensive social security net. ●

## IDEAS FOR THE STRUGGLE

# Not to impose, but to convince

*The second in a series of articles on "Ideas for the Struggle" by Marta Harnecker*

Popular movements and, more generally, various social actors who are engaged in the struggle against neoliberal globalisation today at the international level as well as in their own countries, reject with good reason actions that aim to impose hegemony on movements.

They don't accept the steamroller policy often used by some political and social organisations that, taking advantage of their position of strength and monopolising positions of leadership, attempt to manipulate movements. They don't accept the authoritarian imposition of leadership from above; they don't accept attempts made to lead movements by simply giving orders, no matter how correct they are.

Such a hegemonist attitude, instead of bringing forces together, has the opposite effect. On the one hand, it creates discontent in the other organisations; they feel manipulated, obligated to accept decisions in which they've had no participation; and on the other hand, it reduces the number of allies, given that an organisation that assumes such a position is incapable of representing the real interests of all sectors of the population and often provokes mistrust and scepticism among them.

## Winning over others

But to fight against an attempt to impose hegemony does not mean renouncing the fight to win hegemony, which is nothing but an attempt to win over and persuade others of the correctness of our criteria and the validity of our proposals.

To win hegemony, it's not necessary to have many adherents from the beginning – a few are enough. The hegemony

achieved by the Movimiento 26 de Julio (July 26 Movement), led by Fidel Castro in Cuba, seems to us to be a sufficiently convincing example of this.

More important than creating a powerful party with a large number of militants is establishing a political project that reflects the people's most deeply felt aspirations and thus wins their hearts and minds. What is important is that its politics succeeds in procuring the support of the masses and creating consensus among the majority of society.

Some parties boast about the large numbers of militants that they have, but, in fact, they lead only their members. The key is not whether the party is large or small; what matters is that a majority of the people feel identified with its proposals.

Instead of imposing and manipulating, we need to convince and unite all who feel attracted to the project to be implemented. And we can only unite people if we respect others, if we are capable of sharing responsibilities with other forces.

Today, important sectors of the left have come to understand that their hegemony will be greater if more people get behind their proposals, even if they may not do so under their banner. We have to abandon the old-fashioned and mistaken practice of each organisation demanding that other organisations that dare to hoist their own banners recognise its authorship of ideas.

If a significant number of grassroots leaders are won over to an organisation's ideas, then it is assured that these ideas will more effectively reach independent popular movements. It is also important to win over distinguished public figures of the nation to the project, because they

are public opinion makers and will be effective instruments for promoting the proposals and winning over new supporters.

We believe that a good way to measure the hegemony obtained by an organisation is to examine the number of grassroots leaders and public figures who have taken up its ideas and, in general, the number of people who identify with them.

The level of hegemony obtained by a political organisation cannot be measured by the number of offices that it has won. What is fundamental is that those who occupy leading positions in diverse movements and organisations take up as their own and implement the proposals elaborated by the organisation, despite not being members of it.

## Project's credibility

A test for any political organisation that declares itself as not wanting to impose hegemony is whether it is capable of proposing the best people for offices, whether they are members of the organisation itself, independent, or members of other parties. The credibility of a project among the people will depend a great deal on the figures that the left put forward.

Of course this is easier said than done. Frequently, when an organisation is strong, it tends to underestimate the contribution that other organisations can make and tends to impose its ideas. It is easier to do this than to take the risk of rising to the challenge of winning people over. The more public offices we win, the more vigilant we must be against the temptation to impose hegemony.

Moreover, the concept of hegemony is a dynamic one, since hegemony is not established once and for all. Maintaining it is a process in which it has to be constantly recreated. Life follows its course, new problems arise, and with them new challenges. ●



*Marta Harnecker is originally from Chile, where she participated in the revolutionary process of 1970-1973. She has written extensively on the Cuba Revolution*

*and on the nature of socialist democracy. She now lives in Caracas and is a participant in the Venezuelan revolution. This article was translated by Federico Fuentes for Links International Journal of Socialist Renewal.*

# Virginity testing is sexist and patriarchal!

By Phindile Kunene

As an aspiring Marxist, I agree with the contention that virginity testing resurfaced and featured more prominently in the South African cultural landscape due to the high prevalence rate of HIV-Aids. This has led some quarters to herald virginity testing as a truly African solution to what is largely, at least in scale, an African problem.

Western critiques disagree however and call this practice, along with genital circumcision of women as nothing short of barbaric and a violation of human but mostly women's rights. Such critiques are often mounted in the comforts of library armchairs and living rooms. However, while acknowledging the material conditions that might have given rise to the practice in the past and its resurgence, I fundamentally disagree with virginity testing.

The first reason is that it is biased against the female child in the sense that men are not subjected to the same practice. Does this mean that women are the carriers of Aids and if we want to deal with it they should be the primary targets?

Yes statistics do show that the prevalence rate might be higher among women. (I say might because it is also shown that it is women who are more likely to get tested than men). The high prevalence rate is largely because women do not enjoy sexual autonomy over their bodies and hence are more vulnerable to being forced to have sex without a condom or being raped. In this sense, virginity testing and high HIV-Aids prevalence are all cut from the cloth.

Secondly, the practice of virginity testing sometimes goes hand in hand with the Reed Dance where the king/patriarch will choose one maiden as a wife. What happens to the rest? These are left off to other men after not being chosen at the ceremony. This is a classic intersection of the paternal (king as father to all) and fraternal (brother solidarity) sex rights of



The Reed Dance in KZN - a classic intersection of paternal and fraternal sex rights



men over women.

Lastly, the practice vilifies those that are non-virgins and judges them as impure according to largely patriarchal standards.

In the final analysis, it is correct to attack Western critics of virginity testing as this is often done in a way that pits West-

ern dominant cultures against those of other civilisations. However my contention is that capitalist culture has commodified the human body, that of a woman in particular, into simple sex objects that have acquired an exchange value in the capitalist market.

The depiction of women in porn sites and the rise of breast implant and other "beauty enhancing" surgeries must be seen against this backdrop. Thus while we struggle against virginity testing as a gender biased practice, we should equally condemn the commodification of not only talent but also female body as seen through the likes of Chomee and Kelly Khumalo. ●

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Cde Phindile Kunene is YCLSA Gauteng Deputy Provincial Secretary

## EDITORIAL

# Inspired by the radicalism and militancy of '76 generation!

**W**e are commemorating the 33rd anniversary of the Soweto Students uprisings on June 16. As the YCLSA we should refuse to let the memory of June 16 die in the midst of our concerted efforts to build a just and socialist South Africa under the leadership of the South African Communist Party (SACP), the vanguard of the working class and the poor.

We are inspired by the radicalism and militancy unleashed by the generation of 1976 and beyond. Their radicalism and militancy brought apartheid to its knees and to the dustbin of history. We aspire to have the oratorical skills of Tsietshi Mashinini, the mobilisation skills of Onkgopotse Tiro and the ideological understanding of Mzala Nxumalo.

For us June 16 was a watershed and a strategic turning point in the liberation struggle of the oppressed majority and played an important role in dislodging the apartheid regime. On this 33rd anniversary, we re-commit ourselves in memory of the martyrs who perished on that day to intensify our struggles for decent work, free education, affordable health-care and HIV-Aids in sync with the ANC-led Alliance Election Manifesto which is now incorporated into the programme of the new administration led by President Jacob Zuma. This is part of making sure that the ANC-led Alliance government delivers on the elections manifesto, and concretising the elections slogan 'Working together, we can do more'.

We celebrate June 16 in a period characterised by contradictory realities as a result of the global financial crisis as posed by the failures of the barbaric capitalist system. This

crisis is now being felt by the majority of our people in our country especially by the working class and the poor youth, and calls upon us to devise means and mechanisms to deal with this crisis without the bourgeoisie dictating terms.

We also support Numsa and the broad working class formations in their actions targeting the South African Reserve Bank to demand the introduction of progressive inflation targets and a review on of policy on the interest rates. It is our belief that the role of the Reserve Bank should be reviewed and redefined to focus on job creation and mitigating the global financial crisis in the midst of this jobs-loss bloodbath, repossessions of cars and houses by capitalist institutions. Through the lenses of the working class and the poor youth the Reserve Bank should be playing a key strategic role in job creation and meeting the demands of the working class and the poor within the overall political economy geared towards reversing the colonial and apartheid legacy.

Since the 1994 democratic breakthrough, we have been told by our leaders and class enemies as young people to seize the opportunities presented by the bourgeois democracy, and also we should not bore ourselves with the theories of Karl Marx. This was part of the strategy of the bourgeoisie and their puppets to alienate the youth from active involvement in the body politic of our country and building a better future for ourselves as encapsulated in the Freedom Charter. They wanted the youth to be spectators in the revolution while they mess up the country with neo-liberal policies and capture

the ANC for their own class interests. Fortunately we have not been spectators, we liberated the ANC in Polokwane and recently have delivered the ANC into power for the next five years under President Jacob Zuma.

In memory of the martyrs of June 16 and other young heroes and heroines who perished in the line of duty demands of us that we are in the forefront and actively involved in the implementation of the ANC lead Alliance Election Manifesto to the letter; and also that we ensure that those we have deployed into public offices are accountable to the people. If we fail to appreciate the power we possess to ensure government delivers and public representatives are accountable, we will be cheating the revolution and the betraying our forebears in 1976.

The President of the ANC and Republic Jacob Zuma has called for the Nelson Mandela Day, as part of renewing the spirit of voluntarism amongst our people. This call is in line with our own Chris Hani Brigades, that of taking a lead in assisting our communities – Cde Chris being a symbol of sacrifices and voluntarism.

The YCLSA will therefore throw its full weight behind this call, and a foundation has been laid by our elections volunteers to ensure that this become a success. The central pillar of our work during this month of June is the revival of our campaigns in a mass scale and strengthening of our lower structures. The electoral victory of the ANC Alliance and the enthusiasm displayed by young people during the election calls on us to continuously connect with the masses.

uFasimba rocks... Amandlanes! ●

## The best national executive ever!

**W**e, young South African communists, take this opportunity to congratulate the President of the Republic on his election, and the entire Cabinet team, already at work. We believe in this leadership. It was brought into place through the sweat of our brow. We will support this leadership through and through.

We also congratulate the Central Committee members of the SACP who were appointed as Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

It will be important that as they execute their responsibilities as ANC Ministers, they remember that they are communists.

History is littered with people whose

membership of the SACP granted them positions in government under President Thabo Mbeki, and many of those became the worst anti-communists ever. We have faith that those who were appointed now, will never disappoint and that they will carry with them the hopes of the working class youth throughout the country and the world. ●

# The politics of soapies!

By Castro Ngobese, YCLSA Spokesperson

Yesterday on Facebook, I asked my two friends whom I will not name, to write something about the 'politics of soapies'. I hope and believe they will respond and if not, they would have failed me given the strategic position and the readership their esteemed papers possess.

To begin with, soapies sucks! In reality the majority of South Africans in particular the youth they are in love and obsessed with soapies such as Rhythm City, Scandals and Generations. The question that we need to ask ourselves is that what role are these soapies playing in our ongoing critical tasks of building a society envisaged in the Freedom Charter? What are we, as the youth of the advanced class, doing in contesting the capitalist social life that is being implanted or transmitted to our people on a daily basis by the SABC and e.tv through soapies?

Such questions we need to vigorously respond to, within the broader political frame of building a Freedom Charter society and ultimately a Socialist society. Even the Freedom Charter does not devote a single sentence on the transformation of the media. The reasons for this silence are alarming.

The National Party government and its ideologues made use of the media particularly the SABC to inject or transmit to society their racial and social life to the minds of the many. It is undeniable that we are living in a new epoch and terrain. We need to use the media particularly the SABC to bolster and reinforce the kind of society we are building.

Marxism teaches us, that soapies are



Isidingo stars arriving in Lusaka - where their influence is nearly as strong as at home

programmes created for the elites for their own enjoyment and amusement. Their main core function is that of reinforcing in the entertainment sphere a capitalist logic and morals which are necessary for the reproduction of a dog-eat-dog society. This then helps to maintain the status quo which bolsters the dominance of the ruling class.

This means that soapies that are being flighted on our television screens on a daily basis are meant to defocus the working class and the poor from the primary struggle – the class struggle. The ruling class are using the SABC and e.tv as a communication tool to suppress and defocus the working class from their fundamental struggle and immediate demands.

## Marx analogy

Marx himself saw an analogy between ideas purported or transmitted via the media and the processes which typify its social order. Thus in the German Ideology he illustrates how the ruling class uses organs of class rule to buttress the hegemony of their ideas: The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas.... as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.

One wonders if we did not have soapies, if we will have people like Khanyisile Mbau. The reason being Mbau is the most relevant and classic depiction of the false world they promote through

these soapies. The reality is that most of our people cannot relate with this soapie circus, only a select filthy rich can be co-opted to this opulent lifestyle as depicted in soapies.

As young Marxists we have a special reason to critique and debate the politics of soapies and their role in advancing our revolutionary programme. As the youth of the advanced class in society which is schooled in scientific Marxism have three major tasks of contesting this capitalist hegemony in the carnival of ideas.

These tasks can be summed up as follows; agitate, educate, fight and crush capitalism.

It is well established fact that youth, possess the vigour and the necessary energy in any revolutionary transition. We have that duty as the youth to continuously take a lead on issues, but not in a manner of being a vanguard of the working class since the working class as the vanguard can lead itself. Ours is to prepare the necessary fire and seize the opportunity for the continuation of the revolution and the struggle.

If our struggle is to fulfil the whole, and not merely a part, of its promise, then it is clear that this Americanisation and soapie-isation of our society particularly the youth must be ended. Our revolution will not triumph if public institutions like the SABC advance programmes that are inconsistent with our revolutionary programme and align with the dictates of the ruling class.

Without being populist or aspiring to be a populist: Soapies must go! As one Chinese revolutionary once quipped; "Let a thousand flowers bloom, a hundred schools of thoughts contend".

Mas'jule ngengxoxo! ●

# SABC Board must go!



Down: Ex-chair Khanyi Mkhonza



Out: Ex-head of news Snuki Zikalala



(Still) in: Gloria Serobe and Ashwin Trikamjee

The SABC Board is under extreme pressure to resign given its negative image. A coalition called SABC Crisis Coalition, composed of actors, producers, writers, trade unions and Young Communist League, has called on the current Board to resign amidst failures by the SABC to pay local producers.

The Coalition has put pressure on the new Minister of Communications Sipiwe Nyanda and the parliamentary portfolio committee to fire the Board in line with the Amended Broadcasting Act, which allows parliament to fire the Board. There no indications whether Minister Nyanda or the portfolio committee will budge, which enjoyed wide support from the previous parliament for the Board's removal.

The SABC has been facing a leadership crisis since the appointment of the new Board in December 2007, after the then President of the Republic Thabo Mbeki was defeated by the current head of State Jacob Zuma as the President of the ruling ANC. It is alleged that the appoint-



Waiting: Communications Minister Sipiwe Nyanda

ment of the new Board was retaliation by Mbeki on his defeats by his rival Zuma, who enjoyed popular support from the structures of the ANC and its allies from the Left of the political spectrum.

The SABC Board is currently engaging government for a bailout of R2 Billion to meet its financial obligations. However, the Coalition is opposed to the bailout given its lack of confidence in the current regime at the helm of the SABC. A memorandum of demands was handed over to the Corporation's acting Group Chief Executive Gap Mampone.

Three Board members have thus far resigned citing lack of leadership at board level.

The National Committee has resolved to write to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications for it to move on the recall of the entire SABC Board. We believe that the Board has proven, beyond the issues of process and representivity, that they are just incompetent and have resulted in the SABC now seeking a bailout.

This also includes some of the Board members having violated their fiduciary duties by leaking highly confidential memos on the fracas involving the suspension of then Group CEO, the reported spying by the Chair of the Board on staff and Board members and many other problems that the SABC is confronted with.

We believe that some of the senior managers are equally responsible for the SABC being a shame of the public, and a citadel of crises, and that they should not pass the buck on some of the things that they should be responsible for. ●

## Electing judges

The National Committee resolved to establish a Judicial, Intelligence and Military Task Team whose immediate responsibility will be to develop a YCL perspective on the transformation of the judiciary. We believe that the laying to rest of the ANC President matter gives us an opportunity to objectively look into the service that needs to be provided to the youth of the country by the judicial, intelligence and military sections of our State. Part of the responsibilities of this

Task Team will be to make proposals on taking further the National Council resolution on youth and the military, and advise on the best ways to implement these. We are aware that since our call for the enrollment of young people in the military, the National Defense Force intends to enroll more than 10 000 young people in their fold within the next few years. This is progress.

The National Committee also decided to engage with the Presidency and the

Minister of Justice, together with the PYA and the Alliance on the possible review of the process of the appointment of the Constitutional Court Judges and the various judge president. We are of the view that if judges can make law as a result of their judgments, and as part of our democratic processes, we need to subject judges to a popular electoral system where the electorate directly participate in their election. The Task Team to be established will also look into this. ●

# We thank the youth and amavoluntiya!

## FROM BACK PAGE

not to dissolve the YCL election machinery, but to retain it to prepare for the forthcoming local government elections in 2011. The election teams will also play a role in ensuring that we continue to go back to our people and not only thank them, but remind them of what the ANC Election Manifesto says and what their role should be in ensuring that this manifesto is implemented.

Our bold election campaign touched most of the areas where there were YCL structures. It was also probably a first and fully fledged campaign of the YCL because in the last national election (2004) we were only six months old and had to fend and find our space in an already established electoral platform, a hostile ANC and ANC Youth League and a disgruntled and divided Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA). Fortunately, most of these factors were in the positive and thus, our successful campaign. However, we want to look into various factors that dominated before or during election period, and then also assess what this election victory represents.

The outcome of the election demonstrated a decline in percentage and in the actual number of votes for the ANC in almost all the provinces. The only province that saw a drastic increase and that led to the ANC winning the province for the first time as an outright majority was KwaZulu Natal. The reality is that elections are dominated by the following factors:

The level of service delivery are a factor which determines firstly, whether a person will vote or not and secondly which political party they will vote for. This was the case in KwaZulu Natal where the ANC through a coalition with a variety of political parties ensure that there is massive service delivery (accompanied by political propaganda) in areas which the IFP had either failed or chose to marginalize. This however is not the case with all the voters (electorates), as others clearly uses various prejudices, class interests, racial mob (the Democratic Alliance's STOP ZUMA) and access to media as a way to determine which political parties to vote for. It is also clear that South African voters were sometimes not easily excited by "angry political slandering" but opted more for "strategic political rhetoric".

The extent of the vibrancy of the campaign equally determines how political parties will fare in the election. This means that resources play an important role in an electoral victory. KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Gauteng ran some of the most creative, active and innovative campaigns and whilst the Western Cape was fairly docile (until the intervention by the NEC). This factor is also important for our discussion on preparations for local government election, and how the SACP would manage in running an election campaign in the future in this transient, consumerist, market-based, illusory electoral war.

Both the ANC and the DA had access to massive resources both from the IEC and their private funders as a result of their dominance. Is this democracy in practice where only the highly resourced are the ones who gets elected because they are capable of spreading their message far and wide? In effect, elections are more becoming a commercial gimmick where parties are going to be elected on their "electoral market reach" brought by advertising rather than on real and genuine issues that can equitable be spread through to the electorate, and they decide.

The structural strength of the organisation contesting for election is important as this means that that organisation can reach the electorate far and wide and can reach out to as many voters as possible. This was, again, evident in the Western Cape where ANC structures were dormant because of their dissatisfaction with the outcomes of the Provincial Congress. The defection of many of the leaders of the ANC did not do nay goes, as can be seen in both the Northern Cape and the Western Cape. Similar lessons can be drawn, although to a lesser extent, in some of the other provinces. We need only to look at the Amathole Region in the Eastern Cape to conclude on this theoretical factor. It is also important to note

**Our bold election campaign touched most of the areas where there were YCL structures**

that the intervention by the ANC NEC in the North West and the Eastern Cape saved the ANC huge embarrassment as these provinces could have lost even more votes.

These elections may represent, as post-colonial political realities in many African and Latin American countries have shown, the beginning of an end-game for the ANC and the liberation period of our struggle. The ANC nature and character of the campaign, symbolised a combination of old rhetoric and new emerging commercial trends in order to reach out to the so-called "born-frees". This is mainly because many who were leading the ANC campaign felt that the mantra of "we liberated you" alone is not going to work.

Equally, the experience of post-colonial political discourse, as a result of various factors (mainly relating to the economy, challenges of governance more as a responsibility than as a terrain of struggle, corruption, external meddling and influence by former colonial masters etc) in many African countries have resulted in liberation movements not being re-elected into government and losing popularity (although not representing the fall of popular governments) in their own societies – remained a long thread in this election.

If the SACP is to contest elections the three factors mentioned above (resources, structure and service delivery) should play a role. We should discuss, as we will later on, how we suggest the YCL should approach the SACP on its "relationship to state power".

However, this victory should represent to the SACP an opportunity to advance a radical programme, through government, to advance the National Democratic Revolution. The zeal that persists, albeit not in all quarters, for the implementation of the Freedom Charter and improved and quality service delivery for the people (although more as an electoral plan than as a revolutionary programme) needs to be taken advantage of. We also need to insist that SACP cadres deployed in government should display the highest level of commitment and dedication in the positions they are deployed in. ●

- Extract from the political report presented to the YCL National Committee



**SOCIALISM  
IN OUR  
LIFETIME!**

# Y-REDS

VOICE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA ★ JUNE 2009

# We thank the youth and amavoluntiya!

*Your contribution was the key  
to an overwhelming  
ANC-led Alliance  
election victory*

**W**e are emerging from an overwhelming election majority for the ANC with a vibrant and active election campaign by our organisation. This was the most exciting campaign which saw our structures convene independent, autonomous and successful campaign activities throughout the country.

From the edges of Polokwane to the peak of Umtata; from the centre of the IFP territory to the DA's Paarl; from our dominant fields of Welkom to lands we visited only for the first time in Colesburg; from the borders of Swaziland in Mpumalanga to the borders of Botswana in the North West (and the borders of Lesotho in Free State); from coast to coast we had cocktails and conversations which began in the economic hub of the country – Gauteng.

This election was a test of our strength as we sought to draw meagre human and financial resources to ensure that our resolution of ensuring that Jacob Zuma becomes president of South Africa and that an ANC-led Alliance emerges victorious.

The National Committee applauded the many YCL members who volunteered to be part of the YCL election machinery, and had also heeded our call to volunteer as part of the ANC election team. We are proud of the creativity that the youth of the country had invested into these elections. This has added pre-



*We are proud  
of the creativity  
of the youth  
that the youth  
had invested  
into these  
elections*

**Victory!**  
President  
Jacob Zuma,  
ex-President  
Nelson  
Mandela and  
ANC deputy  
SG Thandi  
Modise at the  
ANC's final  
pre-election  
rally

viously unseen dynamism, while all the issues as encompassed in the ANC Election Manifesto were never lost. We are also proud that the youth conducted themselves in such a way that the IEC

was able to conduct a free and fair election, and that they managed to distinguish between “constructive political rhetoric” and “infantile rhetorical mudslinging” which some of the political parties got involved in.

The National Committee has decided  
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