

BUILDING ON SLOVO'S LEGACY
INTERVIEW: THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE USA

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Unsebenzi



MAY DAY EDITION

A SEA OF RED

BUILD THE SOCIALIST AXIS!

MAY DAY MESSAGE TO WORKERS

MAY DAY

A sea of red

Workers' role in our 100-year liberation struggle – and the need to see unity in action today!

BY MFANAFUTHI TSELA

The theme of this year's May Day's celebrations was "Celebrating workers' contribution to the struggle for liberation".

Fifteen rallies were organised in the country. The main May Day rally was in Botshabelo Stadium in Mangaung, addressed by ANC President Cde Jacob Zuma, Cosatu President Cde S'dumo Dlamini and SACP General Secretary Cde Blade Nzimande. The rally was well attended and workers' spirits were high, with a sea of red caps and T-shirts.

Another high profile rally, at Sisa Dukashe Stadium, East London, was addressed by Cosatu's General Secretary Cde Zwelinzima Vavi, the ANC's Secretary General Cde Gwede Mantashe and the SACP's Deputy Secretary General Cde Jeremy Cronin.

In his speech, Cde Blade Nzimande lauded the organised labour movement in South Africa, led by Cosatu "for demonstrating its massive power, its capacity to impact dramatically and decisively on key social issues that affect the workers and poor of our country."

He also praised Cosatu, the ANC, and government for seeking a united way out of the e-tolling crisis. These developments follow the massive demonstration of worker power in the general strike of 7 March.

"The SACP marched shoulder-to-shoulder with Cosatu and its affiliates to express our shared concerns about the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project, and our shared hatred of the role played by labour-brokers, these modern day slave-traders."

But Cde Nzimande warned that the postponement of e-tolling is not a solu-



Alliance unity in action at the national May Day rally: ANC Free State chair Cde Ace Magashule, SACP General Secretary Cde Blade Nzimande, South African and ANC President Cde Jacob Zuma and Cosatu President Cde S'dumo Dlamini

tion, even though it provides an opportunity for the Tripartite Alliance to find a united way forward. "It is absolutely essential that we now unite – otherwise we will abandon this issue to the DA, AfriForum, the Automobile Association and other essentially right-wing, middle class interest groups."

He said Cosatu and the Party's objections to the e-toll freeway project should not be confused with the objection of the DA, AfriForum, or the car-hire companies. "These

freeways are basically an infrastructure used and enjoyed by an overwhelming majority of middle and upper-middle income earners. The DA and its friends are not objecting to the fact that R20-billion of our scarce public resources have been spent on their Gauteng infrastructure. They don't want to pay themselves."

He called for an investigation into the e-tolling project and lambasted bureaucrats in the National Treasury for defending the project. "The idea of a multi-billion freeway system in Gauteng was first pushed by a group of former ANC Gauteng politicians, in league with narrow BEE entrepreneurs and big capital – both locally and internationally."

He said most of the former ANC Gauteng leaders involved in these projects were part and parcel of the 1996 class project; some of them went on to join Cope. The General Secretary noted that the Gautrain does not go anywhere near the major townships of Gauteng.



Mfanafuthi Tsela

'Workers have been key in defining the parameters and content of the SA struggle'



Marching in Johannesburg against labour broking and e-tolling

At Sisa Dukashe, Cde Cronin said the Alliance needs to consider the impact the tolls would have on the working class. “Infrastructure must be improved for ordinary people, and not only for improving the lives of the middle and upper classes.”

He also called for the alliance to fight for a “fair economic wage for the working class”. Cde Cronin said the SACP and Cosatu will always be united in opposing corruption in government.

Cosatu’s Cde Dlamini dismissed reports of deepening rifts within the alliance ahead of the ANC elective conference in Mangaung in December. He said that there was no animosity between the SACP and Cosatu, and that Cosatu and the SACP are not ganging up against the ANC.

Cde Vavi paid tribute to Cdes John Gomomo, Oscar Mpetha, Moses Mabhidla, Thozamile Gqweta and many other worker leaders who struggled against capitalism and apartheid colonialism. He said that Cosatu, together with the ANC and the SACP, will continue to push for a progressive agenda.

He also reiterated Cosatu’s position on the outright banning of labour brokers.

He stressed that the “labour market in South Africa is sufficiently flexible if not too flexible. If you judge that by the

fact that, we lost over one million jobs between 2008 and 2009, and employers did that without any sweat.”

Paying tribute to the contribution of South African workers in the struggle for liberation, ANC President Cde Jacob Zuma said “workers have distinguished themselves within the 100 years of the existence of the ANC as a significant partner in the struggle for the liberation and development. Their progressive and revolutionary outlook has been key in defining the parameters and content of our struggle.”

He said stalwart worker leaders such as Cdes Clements Kadalie, Vuyisile Mini, Elijah Barayi and Chris Dlamini were among the most advanced of our revolutionaries owing to their understanding of the interdependence of the struggle of the workers and those of our communities.

Cde Mantashe urged workers to

Deepen the Cosatu-SACP axis – as part of deepening the unity of our Alliance

play a role in the ANC’s centenary celebrations. “Workers should claim their space in these celebrations because they are not for the ANC only, but for the entire workforce.”

Speaking in the May Day Rally in Alexandra, Johannesburg, ANC Deputy Secretary General Cde Thandi Modise, said many of the ANC’s outstanding leaders came from Cosatu. These include Cosatu’s founding President Cde Elijah Barayi, who was an ANC underground operative. This rally received a message of support from Cde Jerry Thibedi on behalf of the SACP, with the keynote address by Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali, Deputy General Secretary of Cosatu.

Other May Day rallies were held in Witbank and Bushbuckridge (Mpumalanga), Thohoyandou and Lebowakgomo (Limpopo), Kuruman (Northern Cape), Ulundi and Ladysmith (KwaZulu-Natal), Cape Town, Plettenburg Bay and Saldanha Bay (Western Cape), and Moses Kotane Municipality (North West).

Throughout the country, the messages of unity within the Alliance and the need to consolidate and take forward workers’ struggles came through clearly. ●

Cde Tsela is an SACP activist

MAY DAY

Build the socialist axis of the SACP and Cosatu

Tasks of the trade union movement in the current period – the May Day 2012 SACP message to workers

Over the past weeks, the organised labour movement, led by Cosatu, has once more demonstrated its massive power, its capacity to impact dramatically and decisively on key social issues that affect the workers and poor of our country.

The SACP salutes Cosatu, the ANC, and government for seeking a united way out of the crisis that has been provoked by the e-Toll project in Gauteng. The announcement followed the massive demonstration of worker power in the general strike of 7 March. On that day the SACP marched shoulder-to-shoulder with Cosatu. Of course, we must remember that a postponement of e-tolling is exactly that – just a postponement.

Following the court judgment, that postponement will now have been considerably more than one month. The delay gives us some more space as the Tripartite Alliance to find a united way forward. It is absolutely essential that we do now unite ourselves. So how do we move forward together to provide progressive leadership on the e-Toll crisis?

Let's first remind ourselves about the background to the e-Toll crisis. The idea of a multi-billion rand widening and expanding of the freeway system in Gauteng was first pushed in the early 2000s by a group of former ANC Gauteng politicians. They were in league with narrow BEE entrepreneurs, and big capital – both local and foreign. It was basically the same group who also pushed for the multi-billion-rand Gautrain project. Most of the former ANC Gauteng leaders involved in these projects were part and parcel of the 1996 class project; some of them went on to join Cope.

Neither the Gautrain nor the Freeway



Marching shoulder-to-shoulder: the Johannesburg march against e-tolling and labour broking

Project was concerned with addressing the transport problems confronting the working class and poor in Gauteng. They were projects essentially directed at making profits at public expense, meeting the needs of upper and middle-income

earners in Gauteng.

The Gautrain, which cost R27-billion, and which is still costing the Gauteng province some R300-million a year in ridership guarantees, doesn't go anywhere near any of the major townships of Gauteng. With the R27-billion plus we have spent on the Gautrain we could, instead, have made a huge impact on improving bus services, Metrorail services, and township and rural access roads throughout South Africa. And we could have created local jobs, instead of jobs in the UK.

It was essentially the **same** group of tenderpreneurs who championed the Gautrain project who also championed the Gauteng e-Toll project. And once again the patterns are the same. In fact,

The 'user-pays' approach will redistribute resources from the poor to the rich – instead of the other way around



A sea of red: part of the 100 000-strong march through Johannesburg

in a recent count by the Department of Transport, it was found that only 2% of the vehicles on the e-Toll roads are buses and minibuses. So these freeways are basically used by trucks and especially by private cars.

Even in Gauteng – the richest province by far – almost 70% of households don't have any access to a car. These households are reliant on public transport. And we all know that very often our current public transport is not reliable, it is often not safe, and on weekends or for a late shift it is often non-existent.

There are therefore many lessons we need to learn from this crisis:

Never again must we spend billions of rands on an infrastructure programme **without** first determining how it contributes to our key developmental priorities – jobs, overcoming inequality and poverty.

Some bureaucrats in Treasury are defending the e-Toll project because they want to apply the “user-pay” principle to the delivery of **all** infrastructure. If at public expense we provide a rail-line for a big mining house, then the user **must** pay. If we supply scarce electricity to an aluminium smelter plant that uses more electricity than the whole of the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, and which hardly creates any jobs in SA, then, again, the user should pay, and it should pay the full cost. But when we roll-out infrastructure

that is used by a wide range of people, in a country with incredibly high levels of inequality and poverty, then the user-pay principle is likely to **increase** the distribution of resources **from** the poor to the rich, rather than the other way around. Moreover, the danger with exaggerating the “user-pay” principle for infrastructure is that it is liable to deflect us into projects where government calculates that there are many users who can pay – to the detriment of many other infrastructure needs in rural areas, in townships, in poorer provinces, where the possibility of extracting tolls or other levies is much less.

We have weakened the power of elected politicians in favour of hundreds of quasi-public stand-alone agencies, like Sanral. As emerged from the court case, Sanral has deliberately suppressed many of the key facts about the project. They blacked out key facts in the documents they handed over to Cosatu. But Sanral

Opposition to capitalism is our duty – opposition to anti-worker tendencies in our government is essential

even held back information from the Minister of Transport himself. When you weaken the state through agencification into hundreds of “corporate” agencies with their own boards and CEOs, you are also weakening democracy, and the power of the ruling Alliance and its ability to mandate and monitor the state.

So how do we go forward?

We may have to pay for the R20-billion debt directly from the budget. But that will mean taking R20-billion away from other critical priorities not just in Gauteng – but in the whole of South Africa. Already, the R5,8-billion fiscal contribution to the e-Toll debt was R5,8-billion taken away from infrastructure roll-overs in other provinces.

We may have to increase the fuel-levy for the purpose of paying this R20-billion. That means that minibus drivers in Lusikisiki, or Galeshewe, or Mitchell's Plain, will be paying for freeways in the Gauteng that they will never use.

Or we might impose an extra Gauteng fuel levy, but that will mean the rich and poor in Gauteng will have to pay, and it will mean that the many Gautengers who do not use these freeways will also be charged.

We can't just default on the debt, for several reasons, amongst which is the fact that much of the debt is held by the PIC, using the Government Employees' Pension Fund, in other words the pensions of hundreds of thousands of Cosatu public sector workers are at stake.

The SACP says there must be an investigation into how we find ourselves

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in this situation today so that such a mistake is never repeated. However, the bitter fact is that we are sitting with a R20-billion public sector debt. As Lenin said several times: In politics mistakes are made – that is inevitable. The point is to correct them as timeously as possible, and, above all, to look the mistake straight in the eye, to admit the mistake, and to learn lessons from it, so you don't ever repeat it.

We are right to oppose and campaign against corruption, against labour brokers, against wrong spending on wrong infrastructure priorities.

But we also need to remember that Cosatu and the SACP are part of a ruling alliance. Neither of us are the ruling party as such, but we must surely share some of the responsibilities of governance – whether or not we happen to be deployed in government, whether or not we are working in the public sector.

Opposition to capitalism is our duty. Opposition to the impact of capitalist interests and opposition to anti-worker influences on our government are absolutely essential.

But of course, neither Cosatu nor the SACP are “the opposition”. We are not the DA, or Cope, or the FF+. Our profession is not opposition for its own sake. Nor are we the leaders of some nebulous neo-liberal idea of “civil society” – we are unapologetically socialist and working-class formations in an alliance with the ANC and premised on a far-reaching national democratic revolutionary struggle based on the pro-worker and pro-poor ideals of the Freedom Charter.

And that means that in addition to opposing things that are anti-worker and anti-poor, we must also together with the ANC take responsibility for **advancing positive** policies for progressive transformation. Opposition is sometimes the easy part; constructive transformation is often the harder part.

In fighting for affordable public transport and public infrastructure, we dare not make the mistake of only focusing on these matters in relation to one province. We must focus on infrastructure investment into all of South Africa, not just Gauteng. This is one of the most critical tasks of the working class in the current period.

Working class mobilisation for investment into public infrastructure

It is of utmost importance that the working class takes a lead in driving the massive infrastructure investments an-



Marching against labour brokers – modern-day slave-owners

nounced by the President. Part of this struggle is to ensure that workers pension and provident funds are invested into infrastructure that will create jobs and improve the conditions of the workers and the poor.

We, once again, call upon Cosatu to join the SACP in taking up the financial sector campaign, so that workers' funds are invested in a manner that will transform our society and support government's priorities, including investment into productive activities and infrastructure.

The SACP reiterates that too much of the money in the hands of the financial sector is being invested into elite projects and investments into consumption rather than productive activity. The rise in unsecured debts is a serious matter, and shows the reckless lending that still characterises the financial sector. Workers must address this through their organised power.

Defend and strengthen workers' gains and organisation in the workplace

Among the most critical challenges fac-

ing the trade union movement today are casualisation and outsourcing. The struggle against labour brokers must not only be fought through once-off national strikes, but daily in our various workplaces. Workers in their various workplaces know who is hired through labour brokers. It is ultimately in these workplace struggles that we will defeat the modern-day slave owners.

The SACP calls upon, and pledges to work with, the trade union movement in strengthening shop-floor organisation. One of the consequences of increasing casualisation has been an ever-growing army of vulnerable workers, thus leading to the weakening of a number of Cosatu affiliates.

The SACP calls upon both communists and worker leaders to use this May Day to focus on the organisation of vulnerable workers and to strengthen the weaker affiliates.

Part of strengthening trade union organisation must be to intensify the struggle against corruption. We must intensify the struggle against business unionism – the use of one's position in the trade union movement to advance private business interests. Whilst unions are workers' organs to defend their interests, to the capitalists they are a source of business because of the pension, provident and insurance funds in their hands. It is for this reason that sections of business will seek to corrupt worker leaders in order to grab these billions. Let us therefore intensify the struggle against business unionism!

The SACP calls on Cosatu to join our campaign to transform SA's financial sector

Intensify the struggle for a decent social wage

The SACP agrees with Cosatu that, increasingly, we must unite our alliance in action and in campaigning around what we call **social wage** issues. Of course, a trade union movement will always have as its bread-and-butter concern the economic wages of workers. But as long as we confine our attention to the economic wage, to the pay packet, we will remain trapped within the exploitative confines of capitalism. We will continue to treat workers as commodities struggling for a so-called “fair price” for labour.

But workers are human beings, with a wide range of social needs. Employed workers, under-employed workers and the mass of unemployed can be best be united around issues of common concern:

Decent education and training opportunities for all, especially for working class families.

Housing that is well located, affordable, and part of building communities with amenities, with parks and sports facilities. No more dormitory townships. Away with rows and rows of houses built miles away from work. Let us put pressure on the banks to fund affordable housing for those stranded in the gap



Doing our duty to oppose wrong spending on wrong infrastructure priorities

so that the cost of land and of affordable housing isn't gambled away by the private speculators building more golf estates and shopping malls for the rich.

Let us refuse to be pulled into factional battles that the media continuously seeks to foment within our ranks. Factional battles around personalities divide our formations from within; they run the risk of dividing our alliance. Over the past 18 years the critical Cosatu-SACP axis has been especially important. It was the Cosatu-SACP axis that helped to rescue the ANC from the grip of the neo-liberal “1996 class project”. It is the Cosatu-SACP socialist axis that must help our key alliance partner, the ANC, to focus on the key struggles of our time. In a world in which capitalism remains dominant, however deep its crisis, in a country in which the capitalist class, and particularly huge monopoly capital interests, are deeply entrenched, a socialist axis is absolutely critical. Without a coherent, well organised, active Cosatu and SACP – the National Democratic Revolution will be betrayed and lost.

Let us re-commit ourselves during this 2012 May Day to deepen the relationship between Cosatu and the SACP, as part of deepening the unity of our Alliance! ●

housing market – who do not qualify for RDP houses, and who are nonetheless turned away by the banks.

Let us together campaign for decent, affordable and safe public transport.

We will never have effective and affordable transport for the working class if townships continue to be built far away. If we continue to let property speculators and the private banks dominate our land use policies, and we allow corrupt politicians to sell off well-located land to these speculators.

Let us struggle for active land reform – both in the rural areas to ensure sustainable livelihoods – and in urban ar-

The May Day massacre no-one remembers

*This excerpt is from Govan Mbeki, **The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, 1992***

1 May 1950

Eighteen workers were killed along the Witwatersrand on that day by the apartheid regime, according to Govan Mbeki, writing in 1992.

M P Naicker, national spokesperson of the ANC and editor of *Sechaba*, writing in 1976, recorded the number of dead May Day Reef “freedom strikers” as 16.

Michael Harmel, writing for the Party’s fiftieth anniversary, records the number as 18.



Govan Mbeki

Of names, today we have none. That research remains to be done. Maybe they can be found in *Guardian/New Age*, for which both Mbeki and Naicker had worked before they had been sent to respectively Robben Island (Mbeki), and exiled (Naicker).

What Mbeki and Naicker agree about is that this was the moment when the working class and the liberation movement came together in defence of the Communist Party, and

faced the enemy unto death.

This is very surprising since anti-communism was not completely absent from the ranks of the ANC at the time. And the Communist Party of South Africa was about to cease to exist as a consequence of the Suppression of Communism Act.

The memory of May Day 1950 is a solemn one for South Africa’s communists.

To know that lives were sacrificed in this way for the sake of our Party, at what might have been its loneliest moment, is unforgettable. The Party’s bond with the working class and with the liberation movement was consecrated on that day in a way that can never be reversed.

The historic consequences for South Africa are as recorded by Govan Mbeki, in the excerpt reproduced below, which is followed by excerpts from Naicker and Harmel. ●

JOE SLOVO MEMORIAL

Building on the legacy of Cde Joe

This is an edited version of a speech given by Bheki Mvovo at the Joe Slovo Memorial in Khayelitsha

As a Christian myself, I attend lectures every Sunday, where only one person speaks during preaching. But that person quotes from the same bible that everybody is reading.

I am also going to speak the same politics that you know, but try to put it in a way that must inspire us moving forward.

Cde Joe Slovo was born on 23 May 1926 and died on 6 January 1995. At the time of his death he was SACP National Chairperson, a member of the ANC NEC and NWC, and Minister of Housing:

A communist, negotiator, strategist, and tactician, Cde Slovo served in National Consultative Committee of the Congress Alliance leading up to the Congress of the People in 1955 where the Freedom Charter, which he contributed, was adopted. However, he could not attend but observed from a distance because of the restrictions imposed on him.

We celebrate Cde Slovo as a reminder of his work to enhance our ongoing endeavours for the transformation of society by reflecting on his exemplary conduct. Like the symbolism of Christ in making wine for the hundreds at a wedding, by flavouring the revolution with Cde Slovo we are ensuring that after 50 years of MK struggle, the people of South Africa continue to remember and appreciate his role.

Let me borrow from Lenin when he says “the role of a vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided



Joe Slovo: we celebrate his life

by the most advanced theory”. In South African politics it is not difficult to find that party and also that the most advanced theory is there. Lenin continues to say that “it is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link ...”

We therefore need to develop an understanding of where we are as revolutionaries every time and re-examine our theory and build Marxism for our own contemporary conditions.

We cannot treat the current political conjuncture as if we are spectators who are waiting for somebody to make a mistake and then say “we told you so”. But as the Party, we have made scientific analysis based on both historical and dialectic materialism and our contribution and desire for the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which is based on

the need for the radical socio-economic transformation of South Africa.

The CPSA’s *Black Republic Thesis* of 1928 and Cde Joe Slovo’s *South Africa: No middle ground* in 1978 provided clear confirmation from the Party that we could not wait for the ANC to hoist the black, green and gold flag in South Africa before resuming the struggle for socialism.

These policy positions were identifying the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) as the direct route to socialism. This meant that as the Party we had to raise the importance of the struggle for national liberation whilst at the same time raising the importance of the class struggle.

The issue of the two stage theory has never been the Party’s agenda but an antithesis of the dialectic materialism of the SACP. The NDR is about the emancipation of the black people in general and African people in particular while addressing the three interrelated contradictions of national, gender and class.

They are interrelated because when addressing the National Question you must ask yourself, what is the gender and class component of what you are trying to address and vice versa. That is how the transformation of our society will be possible. For example the significant advances that have been made by the Department of Higher Education and Training were because of sticking to basics. Even the proposals of the NHI and programmes by the Minister of Health make so much sense because of those basics.

We do not celebrate or raise the name of the dead in order to persecute the living, hence we appreciate the work that



Bheki Mvovo



Cde Joe: the people remember his role

the current leadership of the Party is doing taking from the work that was done by past leaders. The SACP is not an NGO but a Marxist Leninist party whose struggles are found in all terrains. That is why Cde Slovo was a Minister in the Mandela Administration in 1994.

The significance of 1994

The 1994 ANC election victory significantly altered the balance of forces in the country. But the biggest problem was the conceptualisation of that period by the ANC. This was reflected in *Mayibuye* which presented the situation as the culmination of decades and even of centuries of struggle, as it is the moment, liberation, the real change. The Party admitted that “elections altered the balance of forces, however the balance of forces remained complex: the security forces, the civil service, control and ownership of the economy, the media, the judiciary, in all these areas we are inheriting a white minority and capitalist legacy. Protracted transformation struggles lie ahead, and clearly such transformation requires effective use of our new positions with our traditional power base – our mass and community-based structures”.

War was waged against the revolution after the 1994 breakthrough with the ANC’s election victory by liberals inside and outside our movement. The RDP was the first victim. The attack on the RDP was the initial attack on the Alliance as the strategic centre because it was a programme of the Alliance. Cde Nelson Mandela in his first post-election

interview with the *Sunday Times*, said the RDP document contains not a word about nationalisation though the document mentions the need for “increasing the public sector in strategic areas” through, for example, nationalisation. And the Party has been calling for Mittal Steel and Sasol to be nationalised in line with that.

The then Minister of Labour, Cde Tito Mboweni, declared triumphantly to *The Economist* that minimum wages and nationalisation are not mentioned in the RDP (wrong in both counts). The RDP was hijacked by conservative politicians such as the NNP’s Hernus Kriel and the IFP’s Frank Mdlalose who said that they were ready to implement the RDP. The soul of the RDP had been removed and it was liberalised. The people were stripped of their participation in their own development.

The transformation of security forces remains a problem hence we find situations like the Andries Tatane incident. The judiciary is used by those who have failed to get a political mandate through elections and the civil service is providing third class service to the working class. Without overemphasising the importance of the transformation of the security forces, the word revolution means an act of force. As the working class we are just wasting our time if we think we can achieve revolution when we do not have security forces on our side.

Sovereignty of nations

What makes the current conjuncture

extremely difficult is the unipolar world that has made our struggles for self-determination and sovereignty impossible. No country in the world can claim sovereignty today except the US.

The so-called protests in the Arab world where leaders like Muammar Gaddafi are killed like dogs and buried are examples. Another example is when the US undermined the sovereignty of Pakistan, in assassinating Osama Bin Laden. And in case our security forces are still controlled by the former apartheid officers. What is the future for the NDR?

As a result our government tries to deal with this by introducing laws such as *The Protection of State Information Bill*. It is imperative the masses of our people are mobilised to own this piece of legislation. The masses overwhelmingly vote the ANC because they have confidence in it.

The Medium Term Vision (MTV) gives us an overall direction on where we need to put our efforts to hegemonise the working class. Only when the working class is hegemonic can we say we have attained socialism.

At the same time we have to make advances within the current bourgeoisie epoch by making some advances for the working class such as in provision of running water, electricity, housing, free education and access to food. These are the basic necessities that nobody should go without.

The MTV is about hegemonising the working class in the communities, economy, workplace, international sphere and most, importantly, in the ideological front. The MTV seeks to put our mass base and the working class in the driving seat of the developmental agenda.

The SACP has declared year 2012 as the year of building working class power for a solidarity economy. Our Programme of Action then focuses on increasing communist activism on the education front by improving the functionality of our schools and with intensified focus on skills development, especially the skilling of the working class.

We have a task to engage all our communities, teachers, school governing bodies, pupils and government to improve the quality of education in our country and also pay more attention to closing the infrastructure gap in our education system and the ideological orientation of our curricula. ●

Cde Mvovo is a SACP Western Cape member and President of Sasfu

ANC

Respect and discipline – the obligations of every member

Apson Sepadi Makaung argues that the revolutionary discipline demanded by Cde Oliver Tambo is vital in the run-up to the ANC's Mangaung National Conference

The African National Congress practices democratic centralism. It also advocates discipline and promotes constructive criticism as opposed to grand-standing. The organisation supports Amilcar Cabral's philosophy of telling no lies and claiming no easy victories.

In the 8 January statement of 1984, Cde Oliver Tambo outlined the politics of revolutionary change. He emphasised the special responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the ANC and the broad democratic movement, to act as revolutionaries when waging the revolutionary struggle. He urged revolutionaries to be conscious and ensure the involvement of the masses of our people in building a strong and disciplined revolutionary movement.

Significant events

Some of the most significant events in the history of our country include: the formation of the ANC in 1912, the 1960 Sharpeville massacre that led to the formation of Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), the 1993 Boipatong massacre and the assassination of comrade Chris Hani.

It was discipline within our movement that led to the 1994 democratic breakthrough. 2012 marked the centenary



Cde OR Tambo – the politics of revolutionary change

of the ANC's respect, discipline and unity in action. It also marks the ANC's remarkable ability to overcome political challenges. Indiscipline in our movement emerged in the ANC Stellenbosch Conference where some in the movement were said to be part of the "1996 class project" and others "ultra-leftist". The Polokwane Conference was characterised by fierce lobbying as if people were not coming from the same organisation. Nevertheless, the ANC emerged from this conference as a united force because of its experience in

managing these contradictions.

Robert J Jackson and Doreen Jackson once wrote that lobbying becomes bad when special interests use money to persuade politicians or bureaucrats, or offer 'entertainment', cash gifts or donations for political campaigns. Their views send a signal to ANC members that they must be careful and guard against the fat cats taking advantage of the poor. Cde Karl Marx in his article titled *Alienation in Capitalism* said "Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win." The ANC is not for sale and will liberate itself to fulfil its historic mission.

Factionalism

The tendency to buy votes in many cases has led to the rise in factionalism. Usually it starts with the formation of lobby groups before the conferences. The lobbying becomes very divisive and the elected leadership is then regarded as a faction. Even leadership at highest level engages in factional activities and decisions are taken outside organisational structures and criteria for deployment is based on factionalism.

The "victims and victors" phenomenon in an organisation is a recipe for disaster. After the Polokwane conference some thought that they had lost and decided to split and establish the Congress



of the People (COPE). Fortunately some are now coming back as they have seen their mistake. Yet others thought they had won and purged comrades who differ with them. Elections in the ANC must be regarded as a process of choosing the right leadership to manage the organisation.

The culture of “slates-lobbying” is a new phenomenon in the ANC, that must be uprooted as it abuses the ANC membership system. It encourages gate keeping, sometimes ghost members, commercialisation of membership and other fraudulent practices. Mangaung should be based on the goal for the good cause, and not as a battle field. Mangaung is where the organisation was launched; the spirit of 1912 must fly high in the minds of every comrade. The delegates must go there thinking of consolidating the mission for the second centenary.

It is disturbing when an ANC member tries to outshine others at the expense of the movement. Some individuals discuss people, attack other people and others defend individuals whereas the forbearers of this organisation told us to defend the organisation, not the individuals. The ANC is bigger than all of us, let us respect it and maintain discipline at all times so as to obey rule 25.1. (a) of ANC Constitution.

Root out ill-discipline

The ANC as a movement is the embodiment of collective behaviour and is action orientated. It must never be used as faction for a particular individual who is aiming to advance narrow political interests. The members of this glorious movement must unite and collectively work to root out any form of ill-discipline. Leaders will always come and go but this beloved movement will remain for the next centuries, provided we are all respectful and disciplined

Let us learn from past experiences which were faced by the ANC while operating underground and, learn from the Marxist dialectics that made the SACP survive the Suppression of Communism Act. We should analyse our current conduct and seek the ways to promote the organisation instead of individuals. It is the organisation as a whole that is negatively affected by public attacks on the leadership collective. Respect and discipline in the organisation is the obligation and should be observed by all. ●

Cde Makaung is the Acting SACP Secretary of the Tshwane District

DISTRICT CONGRESS

Lawrence Phokanoka District Congress Declaration

The Lawrence Phokanoka District held its 5th Congress at Giyani Comprehensive School and made the following declaration

We, the 139 delegates from 64 branches in the District, together with Young Communist League and Alliance, having acknowledged the role of the Party as the vanguard of the working class noted:

Challenges facing our society such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inadequate health care, ineffective education and rural underdevelopment.

The need to rebuild the SACP in the District after the disbandment of the Party structures in the Province, and the role played by renegades from the disbanded structures whose aim was to resist the rebuilding process and to advance their narrow material interests at the expense of the Party.

The centrality of the Alliance in guiding the political direction and oversight of the current phase of the National Democratic Revolution and the lack of an alliance programme in the District.

The plight of vulnerable sections of society and the key motive forces of the socialist revolution such as farm workers and the rural poor and the lack of skills among young people.

Developments on the international front, and the struggles of the working class against imperialism notably the upsurge and turmoil in the so called “Arab spring”.

Congress therefore resolved to continue to build working class power through the Medium Term Vision to claim the Party’s character as the vanguard of the working class.

This character and role of the Communist Party shall be realised through building party branches with communists who will lead Party

campaigns rooted in society.

This includes building a vibrant Young Communist League to take up issues of the youth and use the platform of the impending District council.

Congress further resolved to give political guidance to the workers’ struggles against exploitative employers and support the banning of labour brokers and to campaign against the privatisation of public assets such as public roads through e-tolling.

The Party must mobilise communities to form cooperatives led by, among others, rural women and the youth.

Congress further resolved to reclaim the role of the Alliance as a centre of power to give political guidance and oversight to the current phase of the National Democratic Revolution as the direct route towards socialism. The District must adopt a programme to convene an Alliance Summit to adopt an Alliance programme.

Congress welcomed the decision of the ANC to instil discipline within its ranks which is critical for the revolutionary alliance.

In deepening working class struggles for a radical National Democratic Revolution, the party will not only grow in quantity but will also identify itself with the struggles of society at large.

Congress elected the following District Executive Committee: Percy Ndlala (District Secretary); Sam Manganyi (District Chairperson); Marcus Kgatla (District Treasurer); Pule Shai (District Deputy Secretary); Joyce Khosa (District Deputy Chairperson); and additional members: Gilbert Shingange, Mavis Malesa, Naomi Nziane, Pat Mathebula, Eric Hlungwani, Alec Nkuna, and Penny Shingange ●

INTERVIEW

US socialism – sooner than people think

SACP Politburo Member Solly Mapaila interviews Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) stalwart Susan Webb



Solly Mapaila

Mapaila: What are the key features of the current international economic and financial crisis?

Webb: The dominance of parasitic finance capital that produces nothing except unproductive jobs, it is more of a speculative economy that led to the crisis, even in Greece. It distorts the economy. Globalisation of production has led to the destruction of manufacturing, and to job losses. National debts have increased because of imbalances in exports and imports of economic goods and services. There has been a decline in living standards and the consumption power of the working class, insecurity as people are losing their houses, and declining tax bases for municipalities and states (provinces). People are losing their health insurance and communities are undermined as they lose public services, including amenities like parks. Post office services have become poor, and public schools are declining. There are cuts in health services and medical care for senior citizens because of the deficit.

Mapaila: How are you responding to the global crisis in your country?

Webb: The people are very angry. The crisis began in 2007-08. The banks were failing after making false mortgages – and Bush bailed them out. Obama continued with the bail-out programme. Now ordinary people are saying: where is our bail-out? The Congress blocked oth-



Susan Webb – CPUSA stalwart

Obama's election was a blow against racism – a critical factor in US politics

er possible changes as Obama was not aggressive enough to sell his plans to the American people, and the Republicans are the main obstacle. They are blocking social assistance to the working class. We need a movement to push Obama to be aggressive for relief of the American working class, for jobs. Labour has been meeting constantly with the Administration. Obama has an open door policy to labour but also to Wall Street. It is a balancing act with the occupy movement of 99% versus the 1%, and also gives more power to Obama. The Right was dominant in the first two years of Obama's leadership.

The labour movement is the main organiser of the working class in terms of calling for relief in the current period. Obama has appointed pro-labour officials who are also making regulations to make it easy to organise trade unions. He has also appointed people in agencies to fight fraud and corruption, to fight for the environment, and strengthen civil rights, women's rights, and gay and lesbian rights. These issues are not talked about in the international community but are important to America. Obama's election was a blow to racism, which is a critical factor in America. It also helped the movement for socialism as we rely on democracy and the unity of people. This is something profound. The right wing reacted, as they knew this, they even used Nazi slogans, including creating an atmosphere of potential assassination.

Mapaila: What has been the response of the working class to your approach, in particular the role of the trade unions?

Webb: The Party doesn't believe in just

raising slogans but always raises a deeper vision of what needs to be done. We fight for unity and defend the labour movement, and they appreciate our role. We say things that they believe in but can't say like the need to change capitalism. We see the labour movement as a central force. We have respect and reputation even though we are a small Party. The labour movement played a major role in the working class in the USA.

Mapaila: *How are you linking your programmes on the crisis with the struggle for socialism?*

Webb: We try to show in our newspaper the negative impact of USA foreign policy on Afghanistan, Libya etc, try to educate the public about the negative consequences and why it is in the interests of the people to call on their government to halt these policies. Because of the crisis, the public also realises that the military budget is a factor in draining the American fiscus. They see the cost and no end in Iraq and now with Afghanistan. Our main contribution is to build conscious-

ness on these issues, including on Cuba. We need a solidarity movement including on trade with Cuba.

Mapaila: *Do you think the USA will advance to socialism?*

Webb: Maybe sooner than people think, America will advance towards socialism. We have a history of local democracies, cooperatives, mutual farmer cooperatives, popular militant action, the fight against slavery and for democracy and equality. These qualities give us hope to advance qualitatively towards socialism. There are grounds for optimism. America is diverse, and the American people cannot be equated with USA imperialism. Most people don't realise the real situation in USA. Some cities have elected an Asian Mayor. The workers are aware of the need for international worker solidar-

**The rightwing reacted ...
using Nazi slogans**

ity. The head of the United Auto Workers Union went to meet his South Korean counterparts and the Korean Auto Workers visited their USA counterparts, with no attack in mind, but unity.

Mapaila: *What is your work on the environment?*

Webb: The communist movement has neglected the question of the environment and yet it is very important, and a challenge for us. Communists must see this issue as a potential component of the revolutionary process. Capitalism pollutes the environment - and the activists in this area are potentially anti-capitalism. For America, this will be part of the solution to the economic crisis - the focus on the green economy. It will create many jobs and thriving communities. There are big divisions within the ruling class in the USA because of the energy and oil crises. They do not seek to curb global warming as they will be curbing their profits, and some owners of the oil industry are part of the right wing political forces in the country. ●

YOUNG REDS

Cheap labour for blood-sucking bosses

No excuses by the government will make this reactionary proposal attractive, writes Mangaliso Stalin Khonza

The proposed youth wage subsidy is projected in some quarters as the only policy that can curb youth unemployment in South Africa. At the forefront of the support for the government proposal is the Democratic Alliance (DA) and its youth wing.

The DA is liberal and a product of the transition of capitalism during the time the country moved from apartheid to democracy. Marx defined capitalism as an "ever-changing system" that adapts to the conditions it exists within - this process is clear in South Africa.

The DA has been at the forefront of onslaught to derail the national democratic revolution. And as an agent of capital, it has sought to defend the status quo and reverse the gains of democracy by using the judiciary, rooi gevaar and a liberal interpretation of the Constitution - projecting the Constitu-

tion as a document cast in stone. It has constantly fought any transformation of our society and its institutions by using the same untransformed judiciary which is one of the last bastions of apartheid rule. Its defence of the Constitution is a fallacy, also supported by the neo-liberal media that serves to entrench the prevailing conditions of exploitation.

The subsidy is meant to entrap working class youth in poverty. It flies in the face of the struggles of generations of the working class against the exploitative labour regime that built apartheid capital.

The youth wage subsidy will build a two-tier labour system that will not be beneficial to the youth - it will compensate business for exploiting young people. Capital thrives on cheap labour and the youth wage subsidy is just another response of the blood sucking capitalist system to find cheap labour

The youth under this corrupt scheme will be pitted against organised and formal labour. Young people employed

through the youth wage subsidy will be vulnerable since the scheme seeks to allow bosses to maximise profits by circumventing the labour laws. It will be the preferred choice for employers who may increase the number of people employed only to access the subsidy. It will also encourage retrenchment of permanently employed workers who are protected by progressive labour laws.

No amount of excuses by the government can make this reactionary proposal attractive. The money should instead that will be used for the community works programme, cooperatives, youth entrepreneurs, green economy and the NGO sector. These proposals have been put forward by the YCLSA and other progressive formations.

The people's government must look at this intensely and be reminded of the commitment to decent work and a history of struggle that got us this far. ●

Cde Khonza is the YCLSA National Spokesperson

YOUNG REDS

HIGHER EDUCATION

Towards a higher education summit for youth input

Mangaliso Stalin Khonza reviews decisions of this year's National Committee Lekgotla

The YCL's National Committee Lekgotla was resolute in ensuring a vibrant Programme of Action for 2012.

It served as a political school for the YCL leadership, preparing them to become effective agents of socialism and to pursue vigorously the campaigns of the organisation. It was also meant to ensure that the YCLSA is in the forefront of youth development.

The Lekgotla was addressed by the Deputy General Secretary of the SACP, Cde Jeremy Cronin, on perspective of the South African Communist Party on the African National Congress' 100 years and future challenges in the NDR and socialism.

The Director General of Higher Education Cde Gwebinkundla Qonde gave an input on the Green Paper on Higher Education and Training that is meant to change the higher education and training landscape.

The Lekgotla discussed basic education, health, the green economy, unemployment and other issues that affect the youth and youth development.

There were commissions on league-building, constitutional review, international relations and socio-economic transformation.

League-building

The league-building commission resolved that the organisation must maintain current programmes and campaigns as adopted by the National

Congress and the last National Committee Lekgotla; and ensure that we encourage the structures and membership of the YCLSA to intensify ideological capacity-building work through memorial lectures, seminars, political schools and study groups.

The Secretariat was tasked with the development of a module for the Communist University that will focus on a more comprehensive ideological training of the membership.

It was further resolved that the organisation be involved in more socially responsive programmes like winter schools, painting and cleaning of public institutions (schools, clinics, orphanages and such), and serve as information centres for the youth on issues of education, employment, health etc.



Mangaliso Stalin Khonza

Socio-economic transformation

The socio-economic transformation commission resolved that among the immediate challenges to be addressed is a national summit on higher education to solicit inputs and finalise submissions of the youth sector on the Green Paper on Higher Education.

The commission also resolved that the campaign against the publishing of matric results must be intensified, and that a call be made for drivers' license training in the basic schooling curriculum.

The Lekgotla also resolved that cooperatives should be considered as vehicles for manufacturing of local

goods and services and for promoting youth activism in the economy and decreasing unemployment.

The Lekgotla totally rejected the current land reform regime and resolved that the 'willing buyer-willing seller' approach has failed and has to change.

There is a need for training on farming skills as part of the land reform process. To ensure this it was resolved that YCLSA branches must embark on an agricultural revolution in back yards in our homes and schools.

International relations

The commission on international relations took some key decisions on the changed international conditions and balance of forces.

It decided on support for the people of Swaziland through their liberation movement, intensification of solidarity with the people of Western Sahara and Zimbabwean workers and strengthened contact with Cuba, Venezuela and Vietnam.

It was resolved to expose the imperialist underpinnings of US involvement in Africa and globally, to campaign for the release of the Cuban Five and an end to the illegal US embargo on Cuba.

The YCLSA will work hard to fulfil the resolutions of the National Committee Lekgotla and ensure that socialism is realised in our lifetime. ●

Cde Khonza is the YCLSA National Spokesperson

YOUNG REDS

Hands off our cake (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16)

of the economy.

At the core of the challenge is the reality that the democratic breakthrough did not only give space for black South Africans to stand in the line and cast their vote but equally ushered in, for those in power, the ability to extend their patronage. This was an extension of those who were in power to lure those who opposed them and to get them to forget matters of principles and begin to think with their stomachs. After all, he who pays the piper plays the tune.

So this state machinery has now begun to be viewed as a source through which those in power live. These could be identified with some sections of our ANC leadership. The state has become significant for some in the ANC not as a means of changing our people lives but to tame people's views so as to ensure that they lead unopposed and get a bigger slice of the cake.

The ANC is now not the vehicle to change people's lives but a vehicle for self-enrichment. This was confirmed post-Polokwane where a "homogenous" united front broke immediately when some of those in the engine-room of the Polokwane train realised that things were not going as they thought. Their grievance exposed that they were in it for the money – and political position was a vital means to access this. Many thought that they would be Ministers; others wanted their friends or husbands or wives to attain political office. When they did not achieve this, it was an indication of an "irretrievable communication breakdown", as the former President will say. The change of leadership in our days has less to do with ideological differences and is more about who can best distribute the pieces of cake. .

The ANC now has been arrested by some who want to change its revolutionary morality and path. They cannot wait to be at the driving seating of this glorious movement to turn it and run it in accordance with their desires. Our people have been made to believe that, their issues will be attended to at the ascendance of this group into power. In reality the advances made will be two steps backward. They want our people

to think that they are true representatives of their interests. Their desperation has made them break loose from organisational discipline and to mobilise even those they once despised. Our people are mobilised now and again as a demonstration of the "popularity" they have. The working class has become a playground for thieves and liars.

There is growing need for the ANC to assert its authority and rein in all its members, guided by the collective leadership of the ANC. There is a need for the ANC to start conducting political classes, not to pay lip service to this. The ANC is now governing and this means that its membership increase must not be understood as an indication of holy devotion to it. Being a member of the ANC has begun to be a symbol of better life and good connections to address the immediate challenges of one's life, primarily jobs, tenders, accessing money and fame. What is at the core of ANC challenges today is the desire by some members and leaders to use the ANC to accumulate. The ANC has now been turned into a means to an end, for those whose intentions is accumulate and "defeat capitalism from within".

Like most liberation movements, the ANC had at all times maintained within it, two contending classes. . These two contending class are reflected through its membership and leadership. Although the "capitalist" class possesses a great deal of influence assisted by its upper arm in the society, the liberation movement has never deviated from serving the working class and poor through it policy and programmes.

It is therefore the responsibility of the working class to make sure that the liberation movement maintains its revolutionary morality and mission. The workers of this country must continue to make sure the ANC continues to intensify the fight against corruption, nepotism, fraud and many other ills. The road towards the Centenary Conference of the ANC must not be dominated by those who play with working class interests.

The rank and file must once again assert dominance of the ANC. The ANC must re-educate its members and

reverse the call to mobilise our people along tribal lines. It is important that the ANC carries forward Cde Pixley ka Isaka Seme's message: "It is urgent that this Congress should meet this year, because a matter which is so vitally important to our progress and welfare should not be unnecessarily postponed by reason of personal differences and selfishness of our leaders. The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tongaas, between the Basutos and every other Native must be buried and forgotten; it has shed among us sufficient blood! We are one people. These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance" (Imvo Zabantsundu, October 24, 1911).

The ANC has not moved an inch from this foundation of uniting the society, particularly indigenous Africans. It is this ANC that has now developed itself to be the disciplined force of the left, thus taking a bias towards the working class. It is this development that has rooted out the option of dividing our people according to tribes. It is this view that must be affirmed in the Centenary Conference of the ANC and anything that stands opposed to that must be rejected with contempt. .

It is vital that ANC return to prioritising political education of its members. Political education will also protect the ANC from wrong tendencies which are brought into the ANC by its own members. The party that cannot protect itself is not worth living, says Lenin. In this historic conference the ANC must ensure that its places organisational work as the main area of focus, not government, to ensure that enough consciousness is developed within its ranks which will be translated to government work, not the other way round.

Let the centenary conference of the ANC say in unison: let us build a strong disciplined force of the left, and let us build a strong ANC looking forward to another centenary! ●

Cde Mkhize is KZN YCL Organising Secretary.



SOCIALISM
IN OUR
LIFETIME!

Y-REDS

VOICE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA ★ MAY 2012

ANC NATIONAL CONGRESS

Hands off our cake!

The ANC faces an attempt to turn it into a vehicle for personal enrichment, warns Mloni Mkhize

This paper assesses the current events in the democratic movement and more specifically in the African National Congress (ANC), building up to its centenary conference. It seeks to locate the current challenges and to raise dialogue on the approach to solving them.

The current disagreements in the ANC began some time ago in a more decent manner but with time the situation is getting worse, and some outside the movement have begun harping.

In such windy days the movement, particularly the ANC, requires self-inspection.

Disagreements in an organised formation are inherent, partly because change in society is as a result of disagreement, thus giving space for new societal outlooks. It is within this context that disagreement must never be shut down, but must be debated with discipline and while upholding. The ANC is faced with ill-discipline disguised as the need to change. Carried within this behaviour is a total disrespect for the movement, but is a serious challenge that requires the movement to deal with decisively. Otherwise it will deal with the ANC decisively.

The current commotion in the ANC is a commotion geared toward a consolidation of the movement for the total change of the movement's morality and its focus. The focal point of this moral shift has everything to do with the accumulation of capital and nothing to do with working class and the poor.

It has everything to do with inculcation of capitalist methods of living and nothing to do with changing the society for its own benefit. But what could be the cause? Is it possible that this is a new syndrome? These are some of the fundamental questions we need to tackle for a better and broader comprehension of the challenges that face the ANC.

As Frans Fanon has noted: "The national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime

of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket." (Fanon F, *The Wretched of the Earth*).

This affirms that the quest of most liberation movements never loses sight of the fact that those who come into power want to replace those who are in power without changing economic relations, thus transforming the economy. If not stopped this becomes an inevitable cycle. This will lead to the situation

where even internally the liberation movement the change of leadership does not reflect the change of thought but the change of those who get to "have a bite in the cake". This leads to the belief that the struggle is about who gets what and through whom.

These are ideas that have been passed on to the current youth who do not intend to wait in getting a piece of the cake. It is against this background that some section within the youth hold the view that that the youth can pursue the working class

struggle simply because they are feeling the pressures of capitalism. We, the youth, must uphold the correct teaching that we can never be a class on our own, but we reflect the class formations of society. We must continue to fight that our ANC differs from most liberation movements which have no interest in changing economic relations beyond de-racialising the commanding heights



is an under-developed middle class. It has practically no economic power, and in any case it is in no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country which it hopes to replace ... Neither financiers nor industrial magnates are to be found within this national middle class. The national bourgeoisie of under-developed countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labour; it is completely canalised into activities

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