

THE SACP-CONVENED NATIONAL IMBIZO DEMANDS

- ☞ An independent judicial commission of enquiry into state capture now!
- ☞ Sack the Eskom Board, reverse Brian Molefe's appointment & urgently address SOE corporate governance!
- ☞ End abuse & factionalisation of criminal justice system – the Hawks, the NPA, and the intelligence services!
- ☞ Strengthen parliament's oversight role!
- ☞ Implement Alliance demand for lifestyle audits now!
- ☞ Halt the roll-out of the nuclear programme!

NATIONAL IMBIZO

The Boksburg

This statement was adopted by the 33 organisations represented at the SACP-convened national consultative conference in Boksburg Gauteng on 19 – 20 May



The way forward: Delegates spent much of the conference identifying common perspectives. The SACP's Solly Mapaila (standing) in conversation with (from left) Jenny Schreiner of the SACP, ANC delegate Lindiwe Sisulu and Mapungubwe Institute's Barry Gilder

In the context of deepening, society-wide concern about challenges of leadership, moral decay and multiple social and economic crises, the SACP convened a National Imbizo.

The Imbizo was attended by more than 230 participants drawn from 33 organisations including the SACP, ANC, Cosatu, Sanco, ANC stalwarts and veterans, Young Communist League of South Africa, Joburg Against Injustice, Business Leadership South Africa, Save South Africa, various components of the community constituency in Nedlac and grassroots activists.

The Imbizo also received an important presentation from the South African Council of Churches (SACC) unburdening panel and participants shared their concerns on state capture.

Notwithstanding the diversity of

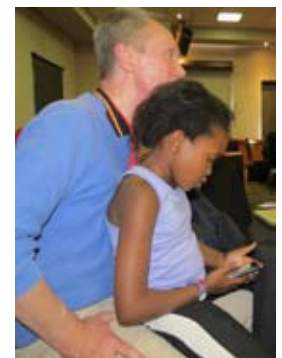
the participants present, we all broadly agreed about the nature of the challenges facing our country and the imperative of developing a common minimum platform. The important gains we made collectively as South Africans from the mid-1990s in terms of building a unifying sense of nationhood, a vibrant non-racial democracy and a progressive constitution are now under threat.

Despite many advances, we have not effectively responded to the persisting socio-economic crises in which the majority of South Africans find themselves. The ability to fundamentally transform society is now being corroded by systemic corruption in both the public and private sectors.

The national imbizo adopted a minimum platform of action that is anchored on the following demands:

- The urgent appointment of an independent judicial commission of enquiry into state capture which was the key remedial action required by the Public Protector;
- Urgent attention to ensuring good corporate governance and adherence to developmental mandates and public interest priorities in state owned entities. In particular we call for the dissolution of the Eskom Board and the reversal of the irregular reappointment of the Eskom CEO;
- An immediate end to the abuse and factionalising of the criminal justice system, notably the Hawks, the NPA, and the intelligence services. Important attention also needs to be paid to rebuilding public trust in the SAPS and SARS. This trust is being eroded by a perception that those respon-

Declaration



Top left: SACP's Jeremy Cronin makes a point to Xolile Nqatha (SACP) and Colin Coleman (Goldman Sachs and Business Leadership South Africa). Top right: The SACC's Frank Chikane in discussion with SACP's Sheila Barsel (back to camera). Left: SACP's Khaya Magaxa (right) drives home a point to Bonang Mohale (Business Leadership South Africa), Gilbert Kganyago and Marupin Lekwene (SACP). Centre: Lebohang Moremedi (YCL) makes a point to his discussion group. Bengeza Mthanjiswa is on his right. Right: Umsebenzi sub-editor Mark Waller, with his daughter Gracey

sible for arresting, prosecuting and convicting those implicated in corrupt activities are either selective or are lax in executing their duties;

- Strengthen the oversight role of parliament.
- Support and call for immediate implementation of the Alliance decision for lifestyle audits of public representatives; and
- Halting the roll-out of the Nuclear New Build programme pending the conclusion of consultations on the IRP 16.

We commit to campaigns to promote the constitutional values of non-racialism, to fight against xenophobia and tribalism. We further commit to fight against the epidemic of gender-based violence. We accept that we all have the responsibility to self-introspect, to reflect on our own shortcomings and to deal decisively with internal weaknesses.

Those of us from mass formations and grassroots organisations undertake to mobilise at a popular level and to

make the connection between the diversion of public resources through state capture and weaknesses in addressing the challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

We commit to raising this minimum programme and these perspectives in our own constituencies and to promote the initiatives we undertook this weekend. We will maintain a broad network of those gathered here and work to include others committed to the defence of our constitutional democracy. ●

NATIONAL IMBIZO

Back to social movement mobilisation & mass activism

This is a shortened version of the SACP input delivered by Blade Nzimande to the national consultative conference convened by the Party on 19-20 May

This is not an SACP gathering. It is an SACP-convened national imbizo for all of us gathered here today and others who will join this process as it develops.

Let me express concern about what appears to be an emerging endemic of gender-based violence that seems to be on the rise. This is part of the violence and crime that affects women, children and men. Its perpetrators are mainly men, as partly indicated by the fact that the majority of inmates in our prisons are men. I want to express our sincere solidarity with the victims of the scourge. We need to reflect on this problem as society and look for ways by which we can bring it to an end.

We have made massive social progress, but insufficient or no structural economic transformation compromises broader social transformation.

It is important for us to acknowledge the massive social progress we have achieved since our historic April 1994 democratic breakthrough. Millions of our people have gained access to human rights, workers rights, political rights and socio-economic rights as enshrined in our post-1994 constitution. Linked with this, millions of our people have gained access to housing, electricity, sanitation, including clean drinking water, social grants and indigent programmes, as well as education at all levels, among others. Nevertheless there is still a lot of work that needs to be done both in these and other areas of broader social transformation.

What has emerged as a major constraint facing the development of democracy in our country to its full potential, is that there was insufficient or no structur-

al economic transformation to support our social redistribution programmes on a sustainable basis. It is because of this, in addition to the persisting legacy of colonial oppression, including apartheid, and in addition, fundamentally, to the system and multiple crises of capitalism, that high levels of racialised and gendered class inequalities, unemployment and poverty persist in our country.

This is one of the reasons why, as the SACP, we were among the first to call for what is now our Alliance's shared perspective: the necessity to deepen the radical content of our national democratic revolution – our programme to complete the liberation of the historically oppressed including social and economic emancipation and democratic national sovereignty. We support the consensus to move our democratic transition on to a second, more radical phase. We have made available our documents discussing what we believe should constitute the content and strategic tasks of this phase of our revolution for further engagement and contribution.

Organisationally, the challenge we are facing as a democratic movement is that we are not going to succeed without embarking on a relentless struggle against our internal weaknesses.

Facing challenges inside and outside government, the weakest link is today within our own Alliance – with the ANC as the epicentre

Where else did things start going wrong?

The ongoing struggle to advance, deepen and defend our national democratic transformation has reached one of its more difficult and vulnerable moments. Whilst the sites of the challenges we face are both inside and outside government, the weakest link has increasingly become concentrated within our own ANC-headed Alliance (with the ANC as the epicentre) at both national and sub-national levels and both inside and outside government.

The ideology of private interests is the organising principle in many on those areas. This was never part of our organising principle as a revolutionary democratic movement. The nub of the matter is that alien substance has now found its way in the ranks of our movement and government and is contaminating the DNA of our revolutionary politics. This is the rise of private, personal and profit interests that seek to displace the interests of the people as whole and take control of our basic wealth and public resources.

Linked with the problem, both organisationally and in government, is the corrupting and factionalising influence of private corporations, including corporate capture of sections of leadership, public representatives and the bureaucracy at all levels. What we are faced with has therefore become a structural challenge compromising the strategic capacity and discipline needed at all levels in general and at the centre in particular to overcome the problem.

At the heart of the situation, domestically, is a stratum of the bourgeoisie which the SACP has characterised as the parasitic bourgeoisie – or, in short, the parasites. Externally, monopoly capital,



Blade Nzimande opens the national imbizo and provides the SACP's perspective on the current political situation

which has its own domestic manifestation dating back to the imposition and development of colonial-apartheid domination, remains the most formidable force that stood in opposition to our struggle for liberation, social and economic emancipation.

It is inconceivable that we will succeed to safeguard our democratic national sovereignty, overcome the stranglehold of monopoly capital, both its foreign and domestic colonial-apartheid-era strata, and drive our historical struggle to achieve freedom, without dislodging the parasites that are weakening our strategic capacity and discipline. This in our view has become an immediate task we all need to unite behind!

If the ANC did not exist it would have been necessary still to build a mass-based, national democratic, political formation. If the ANC declines gravely in the short, medium- or even long-term, it will still be imperative to build a broad, national democratic, multi-class formation or front. This has its expression in our very commitment to see to it that the ANC overcomes the challenges it is faced with, as our first choice, and cou-

pled with it to broaden engagements as wide as possible with other progressive social formations committed to deepening and defending our democratic transition. This National Imbizo is a notable step in that direction – principled unity based on a common, albeit minimum, programme.

Back to basics, rebuild and intensify social movement mobilisation to make the state serve the people

It is crucial to deepen our contribution towards rectifying the organisational style of work that, post-1994, shifted contact with the masses from social movement mobilisation, to mainly mobilisation for, and mostly during, elections. This

includes internal, that is organisational, elections. During these election periods, the mostly inactive and even non-existing structures are either revived or created in pursuit of internal competition for positions. Linked with this are fights for deployments or appointments during government elections, in the public service, in public projects, or tenders on the part of the elite or their aspirant sections.

The shift reformed the character of sections of leaders and members. Incumbency in deployments and appointments, coupled with consequent social distance, deepened the decay and produced cadreship degeneration. Instead of campaigners to solve the problems facing our people, a cadre of lobbyists or congresspreneurs emerged. The consequences of the shift were transmitted to many of the new recruits who joined the ranks of our movement after 1994.

The virtual abandonment of the theoretical struggle by our main mass formation in the forefront of the national democratic revolution contributed to the widening space for matters to slide for the worst. This includes the dearth

If the ANC declines gravely, it will be imperative that we build a broad, national democratic, multi-class front

of systemic, structured cadreship development, capacity building and political education in the frontline. Linked with this is the absence of a journal or publications to develop theory or facilitate intellectual development in relation to the challenges, including the constraints of power, facing the national democratic revolution in government.

The shift from social movement mobilisation to mere electoral campaigning impacted negatively on the relationship between our movement and the wide array of social formations that played an active role in the struggle against apartheid. There was, also, a demobilising effect. For instance those sections of the church that played an active role in the struggle against oppression were now told to abstain from politics and focus exclusively on praying. In contradiction, they had to accept to be open for use by politicians as a site of campaigning during both organisational and government elections.

The shift from social movement mobilisation to a style of leadership based on contact with the masses mainly for election purposes is highly problematic to say the least.

Nevertheless as the SACP we tried our best to keep the fire of social movement mobilisation burning post-1994 at least through our campaigns. This includes campaigns for housing; financial sector transformation; safe, reliable, affordable and integrated public transport system; accessible and quality healthcare including the National Health Insurance; and sustainable livelihoods to roll back hunger. We campaigned, together with Cosatu, against the post-1996 shift to a

privatisation agenda and liberalisation or deregulation shock therapy that almost completely destroyed the worst affected sectors and displaced many workers from employment.

In all of these and other areas there were relative successes. But there were setbacks as well. In general, there is still room for improvement.

Working together we can revitalise social movement, mass-based activism recognising that it is people who make history, rather than conceiving of our people as merely passive recipients of a top-down wheelbarrow delivery state. The organisation of the state, including the production and delivery of public goods and services, must in our view as the SACP reflect and be buttressed by the mobilisation and activism of our people.

Principled unity and common programme

We must not compromise the activism of any of our social formations. We need that independence at its best as a contribution towards coming together and combining our respective strengths to drive a common, at least minimum, programme.

It is important to build and deepen social movement mobilisation and mass activism. State institutions, including

We need the activism & independence of our social formations to combine our respective strengths in a common programme

parliament, the executive and the courts are all important. But none of them is a substitute for active mass mobilisation. It is people who make history. It is people who must make state institutions, each according to its mandate, serve collective societal needs rather than private personal or profit interests. For example the courts adjudicate disputes, but on their own they do not alter the fundamental balance of forces that must be tilted in favour of consistently driving broader social transformation.

A minimum programme that we need and its immediate tasks must be driven through social mobilisation and mass activism.

Our top priorities should include deepening our efforts to confront the structural problems of persistently high levels of racialised and gendered class inequities, unemployment and poverty. This requires genuine radical economic transformation.

The people must be actively involved in the production and delivery of public goods and services. There is no reason why everything must be given to tenders, which are controlled by the motive of private interests rather than public good.

Last but not least we must escalate active mobilisation to fight corruption, corporate capture, misgovernance and maladministration. For example, decisions such as the irregular re-appointment of the former Eskom CEO Brian Molefe back to that position must not be allowed to prevail. Such decisions are pervasive, to say the least. ●

Cde Nzimande is the SACP General Secretary

Umsebenzi

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MONOPOLY CAPITAL

Neither the Guptas nor the Ruperts

Jeremy Cronin on the ruinous nexus between parasitic state capture and all monopoly capital – and the first steps needed to break it



South Africa's post-apartheid democracy is at a dangerous crossroads. The next few months will be critical in determining whether we finally advance on a real (not empty demagogic) radical phase of our revolution. Only a real advance in this direction will begin to make a serious dent in the crisis levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty. If we fail to move our society in this direction, the current rapid downward spiral of decay of the ANC and of our country will accelerate.

So what must change?

The SACP has called on President Zuma to step down. We have made this call along with Cosatu, and a wide array of ANC stalwarts and veterans, and many rank-and-file members of our Alliance. This is not because, on its own, such a move will change everything. Nor have we made the call out of personal "irritation" with President Zuma (as one senior ANC official has suggested). It is certainly not a call we have made lightly.

President Zuma has allowed himself to be placed at the very centre of an extremely dangerous, parasitic-patronage network. It is a network that is corroding the values of our hard-won democracy and parasitically diverting public resources into private pockets and into bank accounts in Dubai and elsewhere. The internal democracy of the ANC is being polluted by the politics of patronage and money. And there are signs of a menacing, parallel state, a corporately captured state, functioning outside of the formal channels of cabinet and parliamentary oversight.

This network is most obviously exemplified by the Gupta family with their

many tentacles of influence. For months now, in our official face-to-face interactions with the leadership of the ANC, the SACP has politely but formally called on the President to break his ties and those of senior politicians with the Gupta family, in the interests of the ANC and its electoral prospects in 2019, in the interests of our country, and, indeed, in his own interests. We believe that this well-intentioned, comradely advice has been rejected, at least for the moment.

It is in this context then, that we need to press on with popular mobilisation against the parasitic state capture, against corruption, against money-patronage



within our movement. As the SACP, as Cosatu and as hundreds of thousands of concerned ANC supporters, we cannot allow the surge of legitimate popular anger against corruption and state capture to be led by a coalition of forces who have never supported the idea of fundamental transformation of our society.

We need to call for:

- The judicial commission of inquiry into state capture that was the key requirement by the former public protector's "State of Capture" report.
- The immediate signing into law of the Financial Intelligence Centre Amendment Bill. This legislation seeks to tight-

en scrutiny on all politically exposed persons,

- The delay of any hasty attempt to drive through a multi-multi billion rand nuclear deal that our country can't afford, and doesn't need.

- The recall of non-performing ministers, and life-style audits of all senior politicians, senior managers in government, and board members of state-owned enterprises.

As we make these calls, all manner of Gupta-hired ideological hit-men, the Andile Mngxitamas and the Jimmy Manyis with their pop-up "NGOs", will tell us that we are falling into an "imperialist plot" and that we should turn our mobilisation instead against "white monopoly capital".

The SACP needs no lessons from these opportunists who attack "white" monopoly capital because they aspire to be part of "black" monopoly capital. From the very beginnings of the Communist Party in South Africa, all the way back in 1921, our party has identified monopoly capital (regardless of how it is colour-coded) as the principal strategic opponent of the working class and poor.

Why would we take advice from Manyi? In 2007, it was none other than Jimmy Manyi who avidly defended Tiger Brands, a "white" monopoly capital corporation if ever there were one, before the competition authorities in the bread price-fixing scandal. These are the zig-zags of all opportunists. As for the SACP we continue to regard established monopoly capital in South Africa as the principal blockage to the radical transformation of our society.

So why do we focus now on the Guptas and their ANC-connected network? It is precisely because the likes of the Guptas and their parasitic-patronage

networks are actively corroding the two most critical weapons that the working class and the poor have in the struggle against monopoly capital's strangulation of jobs and economic inclusion. These two weapons are a democratically-elected state and a once-proud ANC-led liberation movement.

While the Guptas and their kind might sometimes be rivals of established monopoly capital, there are also a myriad networked connections between established

monopoly capital and the new wave of parasitic looters of public resources.

In most of the major scandals of our times you will find both established white capitalists and tender-based black parasites networked into a common profit-making feeding frenzy – whether it is the looting of the SABC by the combined efforts of Naspers-owned MultiChoice and the Gupta-owned ANN7; or the pillaging of the social grant system by ANC-linked parasites working with a Nasdaq-listed

monopoly capitalist entity Net1, aided and abetted by local (largely white-controlled) private corporate interests like Grindrod Bank with its major shareholder just happening to be the Rupert family's Remgro!

This is why we say: Neither the Guptas nor the Ruperts! Neither the new nor the historic profiteers at public expense ●

Cde Cronin is the SACP's 1st Deputy General Secretary

SACP POLITBURO

Fire Molefe, appoint state capture judicial commission

The Molefe case exposes just how badly state capture blocks REAL radical economic transformation

The SACP Political Bureau met on Friday, 12 May in Johannesburg in an ordinary session. The Politburo noted with deep concern the growing evidence of a reckless, parasitic network within government and within the ANC that operates outside of any collective discipline of either cabinet, or of the ANC's National Executive Committee and other constitutional structures. What is more, this network appears to enjoy the support, tacit or otherwise, of President Jacob Zuma himself.

Hardly a week goes by without further evidence of structures gone rogue. In the past week Northern Cape Premier Sylvia Lucas fired members of the provincial government's executive council in a blatant (and futile) effort to influence the outcome of the ANC's Northern Cape conference. In the same week, having correctly stepped in to stop Eskom's outrageous plan to gift former CEO Brian Molefe a R30-million pay-out package, Lynne Brown, the Minister of Public Enterprises inexplicably did a U-turn and announced that it made "fiscal sense" to irregularly re-appoint Molefe as Eskom CEO.

Molefe was hurriedly smuggled into Parliament a few months ago with the clear intention of making him Finance Minister. When this failed thanks to robust opposition from the SACP and others, Molefe is now to be returned to a

position which he disgraced in the first place. The dark cloud of the highly suspect Gupta Tegeta coal deal still hangs over him.

The original intention to controversially deploy Molefe as Finance Minister was surely to drive a nuclear deal that our country neither needs nor can afford. Back at Eskom he will still pursue that same ruinous agenda.

This is the context in which we once more re-assert the call, originally made by the SACP, for a judicial commission of inquiry into corporate state capture. This was the principal (and mandatory, subject to legal challenge) remedial action recommended by the former Public Protector's "State of Capture Report". At least one prominent constitutional expert has argued that given the fact that President Zuma is deeply conflicted in the matter, with one of his sons featuring prominently in the Tegeta matter, an alternative approach to appointing such a Commission must be considered. The lawyer argued that the Constitution provides for the Deputy President to appoint a Judicial Commission Inquiry in cases where the President is unable. This is surely an angle that must be considered by the ANC.

The SACP commends the ANC for formally condemning both the actions of Premier Lucas and Minister Brown. But the ANC needs to take matters further, as

a governing party. The ANC's major partners the SACP and Cosatu have called on President Zuma to step down – in the interests of the ANC itself, of our movement, and indeed of our country and our hard-won democracy. President Zuma has said he will not go unless asked to do so by the ANC. The ANC NEC needs to convene as soon as possible to address the challenge that the ANC, and by extension all South Africans, now confront.

The SACP re-affirmed the Party's decades-long commitment to a radical National Democratic Revolution which deals, amongst other things, with the extraordinary high levels of monopoly concentration in our economy, and the doleful legacy of a colonial and apartheid past that continues to reproduce crisis levels of black poverty and unemployment, along with racialised inequality.

It is precisely for this reason that we reject the false "radicalism" of those whose intention is radical looting. We cannot deal with the skewed, racialised and monopolised realities of our society if public resources in Eskom, Transnet, Prasa, Denel, the social grant system, and the PIC are looted by a parasitic elite. The first step in advancing a second, more radical phase, of our NDR, including real radical economic transformation, is, therefore, dealing decisively with parasitic state capture. ●

MAY DAY

2017



CUBA: Parents join the thousands of Cubans marching to Havana's rally keep their sleeping child cool – under a giant Cuban flag

Celebrating past victories and others yet to come

MAY DAY – recognised as workers' or labour day by about half the countries in the world, and celebrated by socialist activists in many more – has its roots in brutally and often murderously suppressed workers' struggles for a living wage and an eight-hour working day.

Today, 130 years after it was first linked to workers' struggles, it is a public holiday, celebrated as Workers' Day, International Workers' Day or Labour Day (or, in parts of Europe as Spring Day to mark the first day of spring) in 100 of the world's 195 countries (excluding Japan, where it falls between two other public holidays and

an unofficial bonus holiday). In the USA it is a national holiday - but as an explicitly anti-communist and anti-trade union celebration. The link to workers' struggle is only acknowledged by the CPUSA and worker and anti-capitalist activists.

The first to link May Day to the struggle for workers' rights was the Second Interna-



USA (above): Police block opponents of Donald Trump's anti-immigration policies marching through central Los Angeles – one of hundreds of protest marches on a day officially designated 'Loyalty Day'



INDONESIA (right): Trade unionists push through police line on the way to the presidential palace in Jakarta to demand better pay, an end to outsourcing, and free health care

tional (full name: the Second International Workingmen's Association) in 1887. The Second International, established in 1880, was an international federation of communist, socialist and workers' parties and trade union federations strongly influenced by Marxist perspectives, in which Frederick Engels, co-author with Karl Marx of The Communist Manifesto was honorary president.

The organisation recognised the day to

mark the savage suppression the previous year (1886) of a general strike in Chicago in the US. The strike had culminated in a mass protest on 4 May 1886 in Chicago's Haymarket Square during which police shot four strikers and activists and arrested hundreds of others after a bomb exploded, killing a dozen policemen and strikers. Four union leaders were put on trial for murder, found guilty and hanged

– only to be pardoned seven years later by the state governor who acknowledged they and other, imprisoned, activists had been victims of "hysteria, packed juries and a biased judge". The four are still remembered in the US labour movement as the Haymarket Martyrs.

The Second International recognised May Day as "international workers' day" in 1899, and in 1904 called on "all Social



FRANCE (above): A French policeman in flames after being hit by a Molotov cocktail thrown by anarchist protesters in Paris



EL SALVADOR (left): Workers and leftwing activists march through San Salvador – with planned privatisation of pensions a key target

BRAZIL (below): Thousands demonstrate against President Michel Temer in Sao Paulo



Democratic Party organisations and trade unions of all countries to demonstrate energetically on the First of May for the legal establishment of the eight-hour day, for the class demands of the proletariat, and for universal peace.”

The day is deeply rooted in workers’ struggles for an eight-hour working day (with a second eight for recreation and the final eight for sleep) – drawing on Marx’s

assertion Capital in 1867: “By extending the working day, therefore, capitalist production...not only produces a deterioration of human labour power by robbing it of its normal moral and physical conditions of development and activity, but also produces the premature exhaustion and death of this labour power itself.”

Although skilled workers had successfully achieved an eight-hour working day

in New Zealand and parts of Australia, the first country to adopt eight-hour working day was the Soviet Union – doing so four days after the October Revolution in 1917.

The first international treaty to mention it was the Treaty of Versailles (in 1919, marking the end of World War I) in an annex establishing the International Labour Office, now the International Labour Organisation. ●



KENYA: Not yet uhuru – domestic workers demanding 'decent work' march towards Nairobi's Uhuru Park



NIGERIA: Workers gather in Lagos' Agege Stadium to celebrate May Day



SOUTH AFRICA: Let's go! Cosatu and SACP prepare to march on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange to deliver a memorandum demanding fundamental changes to the South African economy

Cde Ivana – Died fighting for Rojava

A banner in the May Day march in London commemorated the death of German teenager Ivana Hoffman (right) – an activist born of South African parents. She was killed fighting for the Turkish-Kurdish Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP) against Islamic State (Isis) extremists near Tel Tamr in northern Syria.

Cde Ivana, 19, from Duisburg in Germany, was killed in a clash in on 6 March after joining MLKP late last year. In a

video taken shortly before the clash in which she died and posted on her Facebook page she says,

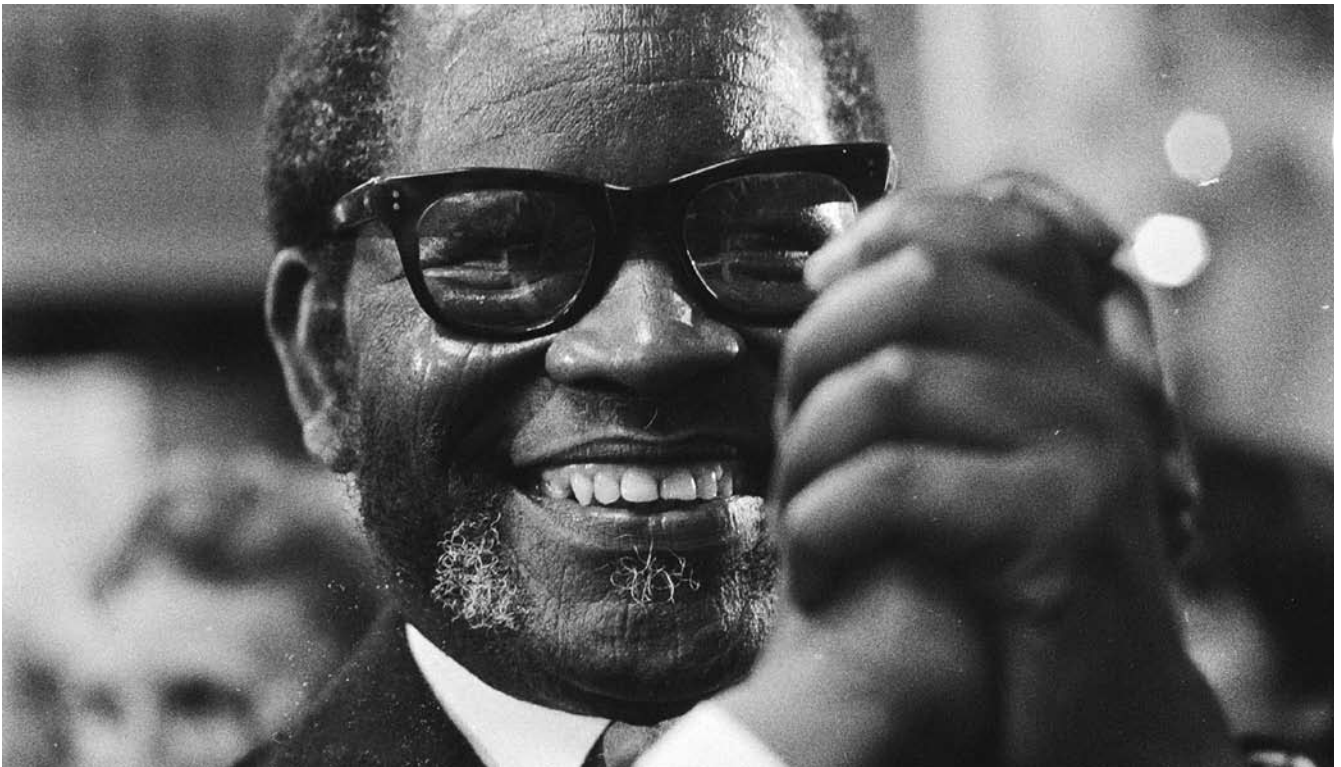
“For one week we’ve been holding our base to defend the Rojava (the Kurdish term for liberated Kurdish territory) revolution. I decided to come to Rojava because they are fighting for humanity here, for rights and for internationalism that the MLKP represents. We are here as the MLKP to fight for freedom. Rojava is the beginning.” ●



ANC IN GOVERNMENT

Our country needs servant leadership

The legacy of the leadership collective of Tambo and Mandela is one all would want to emulate, writes Popo Maja. But what legacy do their successors expect to leave?



What is happening in the country in historical terms is, to use the words of W B Yeats in *The Second Coming*: We are “turning and turning in the widening gyre; the falcon cannot hear the falconer; things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; mere anarchy is loosed upon the world”.

It seems that the theory of vulgar individualism and fetish corruption has triumphed over the political firmness and sharpness of the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) in defending its political line and organisational discipline, and thus, of the entire

society.

This does not however, establish catastrophism as some sort of messianic truth. As we know, equilibrium by its very nature is unstable. Unthinkable events and countervailing tendencies, which among other things create social stress and sombre moods in terms of political timing, are part of the dynamism of the reality of our lives.

It is at times such as these: of political, social and economic uncertainties that servant leadership must rise to the occasion. Of servant leadership, Lao Tzu says; “Do not look only at yourself, and

you will see much. Do not justify yourself, and you will be distinguished. Do not brag, and you will have merit. Do not be prideful, and your work will endure.” And in another text from his colossal works, Lao Tzu educates us thus; “the wicked leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people revere. The great leader is he who the people say, ‘We did it ourselves.’”

I agree with Antonio Gramsci: “The entire science and art of politics are based on the primordial fact, in that there really do exist rulers and ruled, leaders and led”. Sustaining his thought, it will have

to be considered how one can lead most effectively; how leaders may best be prepared to be leaders; and how they can tell the lines of least resistance from the rational lines along which they should proceed to secure the constant admiration of the led or ruled.

Respect and obedience must be earned and solicited. Understanding of this principle and its strict observation by those who are charged with leading is necessary. This distinguishes a true leader from those who think that they are bigger than the organisations that made them, and whose weaknesses are the hardest to correct.

In honour of the history of our liberation struggle and the future of the country, we need servant leadership. Leaders cannot expect that respect and obedience are automatic and that their decisions and actions must be followed without question. The majority of collective (political) disasters occur because no attempt is made to avoid repeated political mistakes, or that there is no consequent account for costly transgressions. Servant leaders must be accountable to the people they lead, and by so doing accept public scrutiny (but not personalised insults) and be prepared to explain their political actions and inactions at all times, instead of hiding behind conspiracy theories.

As an MK soldier, my comrades and I were prepared and capable of going without food for days because our leadership made an effort to explain the situation to us, and in some instances it was obvious that it was physically impossible for supplies to reach us. The political and organisational discipline was derived precisely from this ability to explain organisational action or inaction. In that way, staunch political training ensured that a contingent of young leaders refused to be run-over by personal ambitions or dictatorial habits of people who did not have the interests of the struggling mass at heart.

Although it seems that ‘things fall apart; and that the centre cannot hold’, as a cadre of the ANC, I still hold the strong conviction that there is a core of leaders within the ANC who are de-

On servant leadership

The wicked leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people revere. The great leader is he of whom the people say, ‘We did it ourselves’

*Chinese philosopher
Lao Tzu, circa 400BC*

termined to bring back the ‘soul’ of the organisation within the precepts of the political principles that the ANC and MK were founded on. Put differently, the ANC worked hard for the democracy we enjoy today. By so saying, I implore our leaders not to allow our hard-earned gains to die because of brutish individualism. They need to examine scrupulously all political ideas and actions in the light of the needs of the country and ruthlessly fight against all tendencies which divert from consulting widely. They must work tirelessly to unite us for the common good.

I do not want to praise the dead in order to vilify the living, but Oliver Tambo’s hard work for organisational unity, even to the detriment of his health, must not be in vain. It was not for nothing that Nelson Mandela put the interests of the country and collective leadership of the ANC before his personal interest or position. It is in this very important sense that the lessons of the Rivonia Trialists and of the exiled leadership of Tambo in building an organisation that was destined to be the ruling party must be adopted and practised by all those who are prepared to lead. Political and organisational culture cannot be abandoned for the convenience of individual interest.

In an epoch where ‘politics of the stomach’ is tempting, it is exactly on the questions of servant leadership and discipline for organisational work that political differences become explicit. Some people seem to regard the ANC as simply a contractual discipline to stop individuals from going off the rails as

they react to class pressure. But it is more than that. Leaders must become the servants of the people in word and deed – true representatives of the general interest of the country and shining examples of paying allegiance to the country’s Constitution.

In the current situation, differences of opinion can be allowed within the leading collective provided such differences do not set out to undermine the programme and policy of the ruling party and the Constitution of the country.

In seeking to unite the membership and the country, the ANC needs to address the pressing issue of ethnicity in line with the founding creed of the ANC in 1912. To be seen to be selecting Ministers and leaders of state-owned entities from one ethnic group is unfavourable to the historical objective of the ANC. We need to see to it that the experiences of the elders in the struggle are utilised to educate our membership and citizens in the superiority of the servant leadership method; which is essentially the superiority of a democratic collective leadership.

Any attempt to resolve our differences, based on mistrust and factionalism, will have serious consequences for the future of our organisation and the country. That is why a servant leadership must be the most vigilant custodian of democracy and the firmest defender of the discipline and rights of the membership as a whole.

It is the interrelationship between democracy and the servant leadership method that causes so much yearning for the leadership of Tambo and Mandela. The leadership collective that the two represented kept the unity of the organisation under difficult conditions as their priority and as a necessary condition for victory. They left a legacy that any honest leader who has the interest of his or her people at heart will want to emulate. The question is: What legacy does the leadership that followed Tambo and Mandela want to leave for future generations? ●

Cde Popo Maja is member of the SACP and a former MK soldier and Robben Island political prisoner

SACP 14TH NATIONAL CONGRESS

10-15 July 2017, University of Pretoria

OCTOBER REVOLUTION CENTENARY

Marking the Great October Revolution

Chris Matlhako reports on the preparations to mark the revolution that made socialism a reality for millions of people, and changed the world



The Working Group (WG) of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties (IMCWP) convened from 21 to 23 April in Moscow in the centenary year of the Great October Socialist Revolution. It was attended by the 19 member-parties of the WG and 10 non-Working Group parties, representing almost all of the communist and workers parties forming part of the left Solidnet global network.

The WG meeting discussed the upcoming 19th International Meeting of the Communist and Workers Parties, which will be held in the historic city of St Petersburg (Leningrad after 1924), which was the site of the activities of the Great October Socialist Revolution. On 25 October (7 November) the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, stormed the Winter Palace in an event known thereafter as the October Revolution, which led to the end of the post-Tsarist provisional government, the transfer of all political power to the Soviets, and the rise of the Communist Party. The city acquired a new descriptive name, “the city of three revolutions”, referring to the three major developments in the political history of Russia of the early 20th-century.

The participants of the WG meeting discussed the preparations for the 19th International Meeting of communists and workers’ parties which will be held throughout this year under the theme: “The 100th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution: the ideals

of the communist movement, revitalizing the struggle against imperialistic wars, for peace and socialism”. The WG also paid homage to Vladimir Lenin on his 147th birthday by joining in a rally at Moscow’s Red Square and visited the tomb of Lenin.

Various activities across the world will be organized by different parties of Solidnet and these will culminate in the international activities under aegis of the 19th International Meeting of the Communist and Workers Parties. These year-long activities mark an important historic event in world history - the Great Socialist Revolution of 1917, which led to the establishment of socialism and notwithstanding its internal contradictions, made an immense contribution in humanity’s endeavour to bring about an alternative and better world for the working class and the poor, and forged international solidarity between the working peoples of the world.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), which will host the centenary of the Great October Socialist Revolution activities, is the heir of the traditions and legacy of the Communist

Party of the Soviet Union and the historic legacy of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The events of October 1917 did not only shake the world by their sheer scale and grandeur, but laid the foundation for sustained, consistent development and progress of the world towards destroying exploitation of man by man, and the building of a just society - socialism.

By replying to the formidable challenges of the 20th century, the Great October Revolution proved to the world the right of socialism to exist. The October Revolution turned an imperialist war into a struggle against oppression marking the start of a mass movement for socialism in various corners of the world. The October Revolution defeated imperialism’s most reactionary expression - fascism.

The October Revolution destroyed the world colonial system paving the way for equal development of people of different colours and faiths. It among others things also blazed humanity’s trail to outer space. The October Revolution made it possible to harness the atom and put it to peaceful uses.

It opened for people the path forward, towards peace and progress.

At the same time the century-old legacy of socialism has confronted communists with many questions and have required appropriate responses and which calls for precise and balanced thinking. The theory and practice of socialism depends in many ways on us 21st-century communists. The task facing us is not

October 1917 laid the foundation for progress towards destroying exploitation and building socialism



Lenin arrives at St Petersburg's Finland Station - to deliver his historic demand: "All power to the soviets!"

only to mark the centenary of the Great October by festive events, but to also analyse the factors that led to its demise and the conjunctural challenges of the day.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation started preparations for marking the jubilee of the Great October Socialist Revolution in March 2015 when the Plenum of the CPRF Central Committee reviewed the legacy of the Great October Revolution and discussed the Party's tasks. Based on its results, work got under way and a plan of activities to prepare the celebrations was made. The Jubilee Committee was created and held its first meeting on 26 January 2017. A special enrolment of new Party members was begun.

The CPRF programme

It declared that the 19th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties dedicated to the centenary of the Great October Revolution will be held in St Petersburg in November. An International Forum of the Left, 'October 1917: Breakthrough towards Socialism' will be held concurrently.

The traditional mass events conduct-

ed by the CPRF will be devoted to the October Jubilee. They are:

- Soviet Army and Navy Day (23 February);
- The birthday of Vladimir Lenin (22 April);
- The Day of International Solidarity of Working People (1 May);
- The Day of Victory of the Soviet People in the Great Patriotic War (9 May); and
- Events devoted to Young Pioneers and other dates.

Other events the Party considers to be important include the Economic Forum under the CPRF, participation in the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students, and the holding of a Rally-Cum-Concert "Anti-Capitalism-2017."

Many of the events timed for the jubilee have an ideological-theoretical and propaganda character. They include: an International Round Table on the "class struggle: experience, problems of our time and perspectives. Towards the 100th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution" (as part of the Forum of the Left) and International Scientific-Practical Conference on the topic "So-

viet Socialism: a Phenomenon of World History."

Russian academics have already held round tables on "Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Modern World" and "Liberal February and Proletarian October."

The same series of round tables will discuss such topics as:

- "From War Communism to NEP. What did Lenin mean when he said that NEP was serious and was here for a long haul?"

- "From Lenin's Goelro to Stalin's Industrialisation"

- "Was there an Alternative to Collectivisation?"

- Soviet Culture: the Pinnacle of Russian Culture

There are plans to establish an annual CPRF prize for achievements in scientific study of the issues of theory of Marxism-Leninism and problems of Soviet history. Not all the major events are concentrated in the Russian capital. The city of Penza will host an All-Russia Scientific-Practical Conference "Labour: the Basis of Development of Society: History, Theory, Practice."

The CPRF has teamed up with scien-



Demonstration of Putilov workers on the first day of the February Revolution of 1917

tists and publishing houses to organize the issue of a large number of books devoted to the theme of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Some of them have already been published. Forthcoming are a book-cum-album *The Life of Lenin*, and the collection *Topical Issues of Marxist-Leninist Theory in 21st-Century Russia. Academic and Journalistic Essays*.

Also planned are festive rallies, demonstrations, pickets and other mass actions in all the cities of the Russian Federation as well as participation of CPRF delegations in events to be held together with fraternal communist and left-wing parties and movements.

The climax of the jubilee celebrations will be Gala Sessions and Evenings in Moscow and St.Petersburg in November of 2017. The preparation and holding of CPRF jubilee events will be regularly covered in the newspaper *Pravda* and local CPRF press, on the Internet, and on the CPRF Red Line TV channel. ●

Cde Matlhako is an SACP Politburo member and Secretary for International Relations

Great November Revolution?

The October Revolution took place in Russia on 25 October 1917 – but under an outdated calendar system, still in use by the Russian czars, after being abandoned by the rest of Europe centuries earlier. Most of the rest of the world had replaced the Roman Julian calendar with the Gregorian calendar (the first to include leap years) 400 years earlier. By 1917, Russia, without the leap years, was 13 days behind – so 7 November everywhere else was 25 October in Russia. Within days of taking power, the Bolshevik-led government replaced the Julian calendar with the Gregorian calendar. But it retained the “Great October Revolution” title.

Terms used in the CPRF programme that may need clarification are:

- **New Economic Policy (NEP)**, was introduced by Lenin in 1921 to improve the accumulation potential of the Soviet economy in the wake of the civil war, using free market capitalism under state regulation, or “state capitalism”. See *The New Economic Policy and the tasks of the Political Education Departments, Report to The Second All-Russia Congress of Political Education Departments 17 October, 1921*. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1921/oct/17.htm>

- **The Goelro plan**, announced on 21 February 1920 called for the major restructuring of the Soviet economy based on total electrification, removing all differences between cities and rural areas, raising the level of Soviet culture, driving down ignorance, poverty and disease. From late 1920 the Goelro State Commission for the Electrification was responsible for electricity output, which it increased four-fold by 1931. ●

SWAZILAND

Hiding democracy from our people

This statement by the Communist Party of Swaziland examines why Afrobarometer polls on democracy have little relevance in Africa's last absolute monarchy

The report issued last November by Afrobarometer on attitudes to democracy in 36 African countries, finds among other things an increase in support for democracy in our country, Swaziland – to 25%. The report reflects the views of people polled between 2014 and 2015.

Apparently, the demand for democracy in Swaziland has increased since the previous Afrobarometer survey, conducted in 2011-2013. That earlier report put the demand for democracy in our country at 16% – low on the list of the 34 countries then covered.

Swaziland does not figure in a couple of the core questions used to gauge public attitudes (such as the attitude towards “presidential dictatorship”).

But under the theme of “support for democracy”, Swazis evidently take a dim view of the subject, coming in third from last with 45%. Under the rubric of “Rejection of one party rule” it comes fifth from last, with 65% although under “Rejection of military rule”, Swazi respondents scored high, 86%, eighth from the top.

What do these figures tell us about how people in our country feel about democracy?

Given the lack of press freedom in our country and the many decades of consistently negative press propaganda against democracy, it is no wonder democracy has relatively few supporters. Views on one-party rule also reflect this negative view: the existence of puppet parties – such as the Swazi Democratic Party and others – offering no opposi-

tion to the royalist autocracy (aka dictatorship), and apparently tolerated as nothing more than window dressing to give the impression political parties are tolerated.

Of course in reality opposition parties – at least real ones – are not tolerated. They are banned.

The view of the Communist Party of Swaziland (CPS) is that polls such as Afrobarometer, though interesting at a certain level, provide little useful information. This is for two reasons.

First, the long established anti-democracy discourse of the monarchy, the lack of press freedom and general freedom of expression, and the lack of possibility for organisations such as the CPS to operate freely and to conduct political education work means that polls of Swazi attitudes to something they are denied information about are bound to yield results of dubious value.

Second, people polled and the Afrobarometer audience are offered no overview of what type of democracy we are being asked to consider. This is a general failing of the middle-class world outlook – often imported from Europe, North America etc – typical of the NGOs/civil

society organisations that monitor and lobby on democracy and rights issues.

According to this worldview, democracy simply means that there are competing political parties that the electorate votes for every so often at national and local level.

But does having a bunch of political parties mean you have democracy? Not really, in our view. Look at the US, where the age-old tussle between Democrats and Republicans offers zero options to change society.

Where is the “people’s power”, which is the original meaning of the word democracy?

The CPS is most vocal in its demand for the unbanning of political parties in our country and for full rights of freedom of assembly. But we know well that the former is only one possible aspect of the democracy needed in Swaziland.

There is no democracy without opposition. The dynamic of political development demands a diversity of voices. This diversity may be offered by having plenty of political parties.

But it may – as the experience of the struggle years in South Africa’s townships and the situation in revolutionary Cuba showed – be even better assured by street and community-level people’s power, where decisions on how to run things are put to people directly, and ideas are thrashed out before being put into action.

Middle class ideas of democracy are light years from this sort of approach.

This is because they assume: that’s the running of the economy is divorced

Where is the “people’s power”, which is the original meaning of the word democracy?



from much political decision-making. They leave that to capitalist market forces. The result is that much real power is not in the hands of parliaments or local government but in the hands of the owners of capital.

But it is not only the macro economy that is affected. People have little or no control over how budgets are amassed and spent and how resources managed. People's power – real democracy – covers all areas of society: health care, culture, education, sports and recreation, agricultural and industrial policy, and human development in general.

So when we ask our people what they

think of democracy, we are doing them a disservice if we don't give them the full picture of what democracy can mean in its expanded and dynamic form. We also end up with opinion poll results of little

value.

This is why the CPS aims to foster a full, countrywide campaign of political education in Swaziland to bring the ideas of democracy to our people. Such a campaign is crucial to the democratic development of our country in a post-Mswati setting.

That way our people will have the power of knowledge to wield against the likes of the dictator Mswati and his regime who propagandise against democracy. And they will be able to shrewdly ask "What do you mean?" when some smug pollster comes along to find out what they think of the big "D" word. ●

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Slovo, at 1990 launch of the SACP as a legal Party, with Nelson and Winnie Mandela (on his left) and (right) ANC intelligence head Joe Nhlanhla

A Letter to Joe Slovo



BY AKIS APERKIS

Address: *The balcony of immortality
at The pantheon of heroes, saints and martyrs for freedom*

Destination: *The non sin non aged country of the Olympians*

Dear Joe

Firstly, I managed to send you a bunch of jasmin and
Sweet basil for freshness
And moisture from the tears of my wife, Mary
For when you turn on the other side of the moon

After the news, your silence that night
Flooded our memories with red socks,
And we followed every explosion in every step of yours, for freedom and peace

The socks were a covering for your traumatised legs
From the long walk between the ravages, the human corpses and the tears
created all over
By the sharks and the crows with human bodies

Those cynical ones, those with crutches, those with guns
Those with the bible that every Sunday like to purchase paradise with a few
coins from the first beggar at the door step of their holy places
Those in Africa, the north, the south, the west, and the east

Those with perversions
Those that sanctify and bless in their holy places the genocide of colonialism
and neo colonialism
As virtue and grace
In order to enter the doors of their banks; and stock exchanges

Like the endless winter ahead
There is no other road to pass
For us with the small summers