

HAMBA KAHLE  
CDE RICA HODGSON!



February 2018 Voice of the South African Communist Party

# Umsebenzi

Dawn of the post-Nasrec era

**ONE BY ONE  
THE  
DOMINOES  
FALL**

Assessing life after Zuma



Now more than ever our Party must play its vanguard role!

NEW YEAR

# Advancing into new, uncertain times

*As South Africa moves into exciting, but uncertain, times, writes Jeremy Cronin, our Party must be strategically consistent, analytically alert and tactically flexible*

Lenin is reputed to have once said “there are decades where nothing happens, and weeks where decades happen.” It would be an exaggeration to claim decades have been happening in South Africa in the past few weeks. We are not exactly living through “ten days that shook the world” as John Reed once described the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

But we are certainly living through a rapid and considerable shaking up of South Africa and notably of the ANC and the state.

After a prolonged and painful period of ANC leadership paralysis, with one scandal piling up after another, suddenly, since mid-January, a flurry of long delayed developments has kicked off, and with an increasing tempo. There is a real sense of falling dominoes.

Most notably, of course, as *Umsebenzi* is being produced, an ANC recall of President Jacob Zuma, something the SACP has long insisted upon, is now surely imminent.

But a Zuma recall is just one of multiple and interconnected developments. There have finally been decisive moves on Eskom, led by the deputy state president Cde Ramaphosa acting as *de facto* state president and in clear disregard for the nominal president. In similar fashion, Cde Ramaphosa declared publicly at Davos that there would be no nuclear deal.

The Hawks have found wings, swooping on the scandalous Vrede dairy farm Estina deal, even dragging the current Public Protector into belatedly issuing her own pathetically anodyne report

on the matter (a report that somehow manages to leave the Guptas out of the equation).

Yes, much of what is happening is still half moves, reluctant shifts, or just the beginnings of long suppressed investigations. But we shouldn't underestimate what is afoot, or fail to act vigorously in support of the momentum that has now opened up.

Everywhere, former Gupta political lackeys are jumping ship. Scoundrels are running for cover. Looters are turning whistle-blowers:

- The former Group CEO of Prasa (Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa) has tossed a few colleagues under the proverbial bus (his trains don't work);

- A key player in the 1990s arms deal saga, Ajay Sookal, has crept from the woodwork to spill some of the beans at a People's Tribunal. (It is a tribunal that in a matter of days has put to shame the earlier, spineless Judge Seriti Commission into the arms deal).

Apart from implicating two French presidents and several prominent ANC politicians in a massive cover-up, Sookal has recounted some illuminating anecdotes, like how Duduzane Zuma was fired by the Guptas and left without taxi fare when his father was suspended by

Mbeki... only to be re-hired and gifted with a fancy Dubai apartment when his father's fortunes turned.

Over a year ago, the SACP called for an independent judicial commission into corporate capture of the state. The former Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela's *State of Capture* report took up this idea and added that, since he was implicated in the report, President Zuma could not select the judge. After many delays and court challenges, finally Deputy Chief Justice Zondo has been nominated by the chief justice and duly appointed, with terms of reference now published that focus on the public protector's findings.

There is much else that has happened. Former acting police commissioner Khomotso Phahlane and his wife have been criminally charged. Although it is being challenged in court, Shaun Abrahams' appointment has been set aside and Zuma has been disqualified from appointing a successor. In fact, Zuma has been losing court case after court case, or pre-emptively conceding at the eleventh hour, and, in the process, throwing those who had defended him to the wolves. Brian Molefe is also not having a happy time in the courts.

Recently elected ANC officials proclaim “Zuma is going nowhere” one day... and sheepishly change their tune the next. The MKMVA head does an inelegant somersault in the name of “unity” and is accused, understandably, by his own rag-tag organisation of desertion – as if this were not a well-known character trait.

Even the imperious and arrogant MultiChoice concedes that, oops, there might

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**Everywhere, former Gupta political lackeys are jumping ship & scoundrels are running for cover**



**VICTORY HUG: ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa is congratulated by his rival, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma**

have been a technical problem with the ANN7 deal – but (of course) they are still implausibly denying that it had anything whatsoever to do with trying to buy influence with government via the Guptas.

Obviously, this sudden flurry of positive developments has not emerged from nowhere. SACP structures, along with many comrades from within the ANC-led movement, have waged a sustained and principled struggle against state capture and in defence of our hard-won democracy, our constitution, and our national sovereignty. We have been accused of treason, of selling out to white monopoly capital, and much else – but we have not been intimidated. For some months now, many (but not all) ANC MPs (among them SACP members) have played a leading role in parliamentary hearings that have further exposed state capture. The role of many journalists needs to be particularly saluted.

There has been a steady accumulation of struggles, internal and external battles, and mounting crises, but the critical factor in breaking the logjam has surely been the ANC's December Na-

tional Conference. And yet that conference appeared to deliver a non-result, a 50/50 outcome between two apparently contradictory slates, and with everyone proclaiming this outcome as a victory for “unity”, when, in fact, it seemed to promise a persisting paralysis, a stalemate between warring factions. What is more, the SACP appeared to be the big loser at the conference with many SACP leaders not elected or re-elected as national executive committee members.

So how do we explain the paradox?

Like the 2007 Polokwane ANC National Conference, which marked the beginning of the end of President Mbeki's hegemony, December's ANC National Conference at Nasrec involved three and not two (as

is commonly portrayed) major lobbying alignments and electoral slates.

Back in Polokwane there was what turned out to be a 40% pro-Mbeki versus a 60% anti-Mbeki lobby. But the 60% anti-Mbeki lobby involved two very distinct tendencies – a left axis largely driven by the SACP and Cosatu, and a predatory primitive accumulation lobby, whose campaigning muscle was located within the ANC Youth League. In the case of the latter tendency, its anti-Mbeki stance was not ideological so much as a frustration that its leading personalities were excluded from Mbeki's privileged inner-circle of BEE beneficiaries. Soon after the Polokwane conference tensions developed within the 60% anti-Mbeki lobby, with the predatory and demagogic ANC YL-centred pro-Zuma faction morphing into the Gupta state capture agenda.

Things were not entirely dissimilar but perhaps a bit more complicated in December at Nasrec. Standing against what became labelled crudely as the Zuma-NDZ-Gupta grouping were two somewhat distinct alignments. On the one hand, an assortment of what we might

**It is important that the SACP & all progressive & patriotic forces do not to stand aloof from the sudden burst of momentum underway**

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(for want of a better word) describe as ANC “centrists” – stalwarts, veterans, some former Mbeki-ites, all disgusted by the deepening scandals and the loss of moral standing of the organisation, an organisation they had sacrificed to build. Generally, these comrades enjoyed widespread popularity from ordinary ANC members and certainly from millions of disappointed ANC supporters. But they typically lacked major organisational muscle within the ANC and therefore often depended on the machinery of the SACP and (to a lesser extent) of Cosatu to penetrate provinces that had become effective no-go areas for anti-state capture campaigning.

Against this tendency, the Zuma camp was able to muster considerable, well-resourced (from ill-gotten gains) organisational muscle in several key provinces and from the ANC YL and Women’s League.

So how did the so-called CR17 campaign still manage to win the ANC presidency and obtain a tiny numerical advantage in the election of other structures?

This is where things get a little complicated.

Not everyone in the anti-Zuma/anti-Gupta camp was (or is) against the parasitic looting of public resources. Key parts of what we formerly described as the “premier league” broke ranks with the Zuma camp in favour of a Ramaphosa presidency (and their own personal advancements). They did this not on principled grounds, but because they are business-rivals of the Gupta-parasitic network. They worked to secure a Ramaphosa presidential victory, but then struck deals with their fellow anti-communist, primitive accumulators in the “NDZ” camp on who would be in and who would be out of the NEC. This is how some prominent SACP and other principled comrades got excluded from the NEC.

So does this mean that Ramaphosa is simply a hostage of a coalition of new and old wave parasitic accumulators?

The answer is no, and the evidence is provided by the current flurry of important and encouraging developments of the past few weeks. And this why it is important for the SACP and all progressive and patriotic forces not to stand aloof from the sudden burst of momentum that is now underway. At the same time, in acknowledging and commending Ramaphosa’s evident leading role in the current drive, we must not indulge in naive euphoria and a belief that the



Supporters of Cyril Ramaphosa celebrate outside Nasrec

next “great man” will be our salvation. Apart from anything else, this would be no favour to the ANC president himself. The state-capturers are off-balance. So far, the best they can muster by way of a fight-back has been a sad little Black First Land First rented army and some tweeting from one of the presidential wives. But these forces must not be underrated. Disorganised they might now be, but they still have significant resources and strategic positions within the state.

The momentum of disrupting their capacity must be sustained. The blows against the Gupta parasitic network must spread to all parasitic networks like, for instance, those invested in Prasa where the Guptas have been handsomely emulated by others. Undue hesitation at this point could prove fatal.

In the midst of these developments, the SACP must also sustain a clear strategic understanding of our situation. Sending crooks to jail is essential but not enough. Rooting out the parasitic looting of state-owned enterprises is critical but insufficient on its own for advancing, deepening and defending a radical National Democratic Revolution. The SACP has called for a broad patriotic front

against state capture and in defence of our national sovereignty and our democratic constitution. The patriotic platform that emerged, for instance, from the SACP-convened imbizo last year is almost exactly what is now being driven from the presidency of the ANC itself, with the widest support of much of society. The growing hegemony within the ANC and across the state of this platform is to be warmly welcomed.

But the SACP also has other critical responsibilities. Across the scope of the broad anti-state capture patriotic front there are (understandably and even necessarily) many different strategic agendas and imminent challenges. To take one example: the damage done to key state-owned companies like Eskom and the resulting impact on the debt exposure of our country (and therefore vulnerability of our national sovereignty) must not be underrated. In the anti-state capture broad front we will now increasingly hear calls for the privatisation of key strategic entities like Eskom to bail out our economy. These calls will be coming, not just from the private sector, but also from within the ANC and state.

In this overall situation the sub-theme of the SACP’s July 2017 National Congress becomes especially relevant. More than ever before the SACP is called upon to play its vanguard role through: “strategic consistency, analytic alertness, and tactical flexibility”! ●

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**Sending crooks to jail is essential but not enough, on its own, for advancing, deepening and defending a radical NDR**

*Cde Cronin is an SACP Politburo member, co-editor of Umsebenzi, and the Deputy Minister of Public Works*



Greetings: Rica Hodgson greets close friend and comrade Nelson Mandela at a Nelson Mandela Foundation event

IN MEMORIAM

## Hamba kahle, Cde Rica!

*This is an edited version of a speech by Blade Nzimande on behalf of the SACP Politburo at the memorial on the passing of Cde Rica Hodgson*

The SACP lowers the red flag in honour of the gallant stalwart of our struggle for liberation and social emancipation, Cde Rica Hodgson. The SACP expresses its heartfelt condolences to the Hodgson family in mourning the death of a mother, a progressive author and one of the finest revolutionaries the Communist Party and our national liberation movement have ever produced. In honour of Cde Rica, we must, as a nation, and will, as the SACP, deepen our work to build a completely non-racial and non-sexist, just and democratic society. Our ultimate goal is a South Africa without the exploitation of one person by another – and free of imperialist domination – in short, a socialist South Africa.

The further they move away from the period of colonial oppression and exploitation, all liberation movements begin to lose their veterans and stalwarts who had acted as a crucial link between the struggles for freedom and the attainment of national independence – in our case the 1994 democratic breakthrough. Unless our movements carefully preserve this link through, amongst others, the telling of our history, there is always the danger of reversals as sections of new generations might fail to connect the liberation struggles and the tasks of building democratic societies.

The death of Cde Rica Hodgson on 11 January 2018 was one of the great losses of some of our finest revolutionaries. Honouring the memory and telling the

story of Cde Rica today and in future must act as a bond that connects the struggles to overthrow the apartheid regime and the current struggles for further democratic transformation and complete social emancipation. New generations without the first-hand experience of colonial oppression and direct experience and involvement in the struggles against apartheid have to be carefully nurtured to continuously understand this.

Unless we intensify political education and teach the correct history of our struggle, we will lose our institutional memory with serious political implications. As a political movement we cannot rely only on government to tell our history and educate younger generations about that history. Our own organisa-

tions must become centres of learning and teaching not only through institutionalised political education, but also through our programmes and consistent campaigning and mobilisation to complete the national democratic revolution and deepen the struggle achieve socialism.

Cde Rica was one of those few comrades who were involved in virtually all the major struggles from the 1940s until our 1994 democratic breakthrough and beyond.

In honour of Cde Rica, we must dismantle the networks of parasites (the parasitic bourgeoisie) and their corporate state capture and other forms of corruption. These networks have infested sections of our movement and the state, including state entities and agencies. The task to dislodge these parasitic networks will not become successful unless President Jacob Zuma resigns or is removed from office because he is at the centre of the reproduction of these networks that drop his name left, centre and right.

Cde Rica married Jack Hodgson in 1945, a communist with a distinguished history in our liberation movement, and they became key activists of both the Party and the Congress of Democrats, and were heavily involved in the Defiance Campaign. Cde Rica, banned at the time, tried her best to observe the proceedings of the Congress of the People that adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955. In her book *Foot Soldier for Freedom* she describes how she and Hilda Bernstein, another communist and member of the Congress of Democrats (once was a communist councillor in Johannesburg), managed to feel part of that auspicious event: "Hilda Bernstein and I were prevented from attending the Congress (of the People) due to ministerial banning orders. But we yearned to get a glimpse of it. We decided to drive out to Kliptown and try our luck. Hilda knew of an Indian man who owned a house that bordered the Kliptown field. A coal heap was piled up against his back wall for the winter affording us a strategic vantage point. The owner willingly opened his door to us and scrambled up the coal mountain, the heavily pregnant Hilda bobbing with her big belly as she climbed.

"We had a perfect view of the thousands who had gathered in the name of freedom and equality. We could see Bishop Trevor Huddleston addressing the throng from a platform. But our host began to worry. He had heard that the



**RICA HODGSON: nearly 80 years of activism**

Special Branch, or the 'Gestapo' as we preferred to call them, was patrolling the area. He wasn't looking for trouble and we didn't wish to compromise him further, so we left. But it didn't matter that our view of the congress was short-lived. It didn't matter that we were on the wrong side of the wall. That brief experience did to my heart what strong coffee does... I felt like something had been started that would have a domino effect, finally heralding freedom for our beloved country." (pp.69-70)

In fact, like Walter and Albertina Sisulu, Nelson and Winnie Mandela, the Cachalias, and the Meers, the story of Rica cannot be told outside of that of her husband Jack Hodgson. They are some of the families that contributed enormously to the liberation of our country and yet expected no favours from our movement. Unlike today, where we have completely unknown families who have abrogated to themselves, with the treasonous collusion of some of our own comrades, the right to loot our state. In memory of Rica and Jack Hodgson let us intensify the struggle to dismantle the parasitic networks of state capture surrounding our state and movement.

Cde Jack Hodgson passed away in exile in 1977. This is what Cde Joe Slovo, our late Party National Chairperson, had to say paying his last respects to Cde Jack:

"For many years Jack shared important responsibilities in vital sectors of our struggle, yet he always insisted that

he was just a musket bearer. And he said this not to invite reassurance, but with pride. For Jack believed deeply that what you plan for others you must be ready to do yourself, and if not, then as he always put it, you must get off the pot. And Jack lived by this philosophy throughout his life. He painstakingly got this across to the many that he helped to prepare for revolutionary work. And they went to their tasks without the feeling that they were being sent. They felt, these revolutionary militants, that he was at one with them. And their sense of loss at Jack's passing must indeed be immense. And this feeling about Jack transferred itself not only to those who knew him but to those who didn't know him. And when news came of Jack's death when we were in Luanda, a meeting of those who didn't know him, most of them, expressed their affection for this great revolutionary."

I also feel honoured that I have personally had to work closely for a few years with the son of Rica and Jack, Cde Spencer Hodgson. I know that given Cde Spencer's modesty he may not like me to say this. But working through the Wits Architecture Department, Cde Spencer was part of the core team that helped me to build the two new universities of Mpumalanga and Sol Plaatjie in my stint as Minister of Higher Education and Training. Without his hard work and dedication we might not have pulled off these projects during such a relatively short time. We hope one of these universities will one day start academic or research projects in honour of the Hodgson family in acknowledgement of this contribution.

The SACP has waged a major campaign for transformation of the financial sector, including for the banks to include the unbanked but also avoid reckless lending that is so destructive of the poor and low-income earners. Given the African Bank experience it is understandable that people are anxious about claims that Capitec is financially challenged, but we are very concerned about Viceroy's possible profit motive and possible involvement in driving speculative financial activities, including "short selling". We call for the Financial Services Board and other relevant institutions and law enforcement agencies to fully investigate this matter, including Viceroy's role.

Long live the memory of Rica Hodgson! ●

**Cde Nzimande is General Secretary of the SACP**

# Rica Hodgson: an unstinting revolutionary

BY SHEILA BARSEL

**C**de Rica Gampel was born in Johannesburg on 1 July 1920. Her father had emigrated from Warsaw where he had amassed wealth by selling grain to Tsarist Russia. He left Poland for South Africa in 1880 to escape anti-Jewish pogroms. Her mother was from a poor family in Lithuania.

Cde Rica was one of 11 siblings and matriculated at Athlone High School.

At the outbreak of World War II, Cde Rica joined the Air Force and later became involved with the Springbok Legion, started by left orientated ex-WW2 servicemen to preserve the values for which they were fighting – anti-fascism and anti-racism. Cde Rica became a formidable fundraiser for the legion. When her husband strongly opposed her activities, she divorced him.

Jack Hodgson was the national secretary of the Springbok Legion. Cde Rica and Jack met when he was on a visit to Cape Town. They married soon after.

She was involved in the founding of the Congress of Democrats (COD), organising white progressives into the Congress Alliance.

In 1954 Cde Rica served on the National Action Council organising the historic 1956 Congress of the People. In 1957, following the arrest and prosecution for treason of Alliance 156 leaders, she became fund-raiser and secretary of the Treason Trial Defence Fund and later, in 1961, for the Johannesburg branch of the Defence and Aid Fund. In 1959, she was secretary for the groundbreaking musical production King Kong that launched the international careers of Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela and many others.

Cde Rica was detained for 100 days during the 1960 state of emergency. After an eight-day hunger strike she was released without charge.

Overcoming her doubts about armed struggle, she helped turn their Hillbrow flat into a bomb factory where they manufactured explosives and timing devices for the 1961 Sabotage Campaign.

In 1962, Cdes Rica and Jack were placed under house arrest. Jack had to quit his job. Cde Rica's small salary as a reporter at New Age, the influential leftist newspaper, which operated from 1953 to 1962, had to support the family.

They fled South Africa in mid-1963 months before the Liliesleaf Farm raid in which the police caught leading members of the Alliance underground. In the subsequent Rivonia Trial, Jack was cited in the indictment as a "co-conspirator". Cde Rica became a leading figure in the international anti-apartheid movement, and is perhaps



**RICHA HODGSON**

best-known for her long and important contribution to the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF).

From 1964 to 1981, Cde Rica worked full-time for the fund, heading the welfare section, covertly channelling funds for legal defence of apartheid prisoners and support of their families.

Cde Rica volunteered and joined her son, Spencer, his wife Claudia and their daughter, Tanya, in the development of and administration work at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, which was established by the ANC in Tanzania after the Soweto Uprising.

On her return to South Africa in 1990, she worked as secretary to the late Walter Sisulu until her retirement in 1996.

She was awarded the Order of Luthuli by the South African Government in 2007. ●

***Cde Barsel is a Politburo member and veteran SACP activist***

## HIGHER EDUCATION

# Fee-free higher education was inevitable

*Buti Manamela argues that the announcement of fee-free education was not an individual's attempt to regain popular support but a victory we should celebrate*

Fee-free higher education for the working class and the poor in South Africa has become inevitable after years of it being the policy of the ruling party and of almost all the alliance structures. The announcement by President Jacob Zuma, right on the eve of the 54th ANC National Conference, was not a stroke of genius by an individual. It was a result of many years of struggle by the student movement, and should be celebrated as their victory whose last push was the "Fees Must Fall" movement. But the struggle continues on this front. So, raise our glasses we should, but we should not empty them just yet. A new range of challenges will emerge.

Before the 16 December announcement, higher education in South Africa was mainly the preserve of the few, those with money. It was inaccessible mainly because it was costly, and the rite of passage was also controlled through complicated and highly unnecessary 'meritocratic' prerequisites that excluded millions of young black South Africans. Less than 40% of those funded by NSFAS (who constituted more than 80% of your historically black contact universities) were black and could only manage to make it because their parents managed to scrape together some money to pay off their high upfront application and registration fees.

This can obviously be traced to the apartheid government, but was intensified, instead of being undone, by the democratic government in the early years when we cut social spending through GEAR (the Growth, Employment and Redistribution economic policy). This meant that student funding and the philanthropy of white capital constituted the bulk of university funding. The state's contribu-

tion from 65% to just under 35% in 2016. Universities, especially historically black universities, could only provide tuition and could not be what a university should be, given the demands of human capital in the new South Africa.

Although the surplus of the national fiscus was growing, social infrastructure in education and health demanded resources for expansion or maintenance, only to be met by Treasury bureaucrats who demanded of them to work within their means as the country was servicing the apartheid debt. Countless student marches on campuses were met with brute force and a further rationalisation of the 'size and shape' of higher education. Like all other prescripts of GEAR, its impact – growing inequalities, deepening poverty levels and high unemployment partly because of poor human resource development – coincided with the impact of the global economic crises some 12 years later in 2008.

## Enter #Fees Must Fall

Before 2016, many students' struggles were relegated to township and rural universities and were primarily around academic and financial exclusions, the quality of food and residences, or spiralling student debt. If the peace at historically white universities was disturbed at all, it was either over broader issues of transformation or worker's demands for better wages. When the effects of the global economic crisis started hitting the (black) middle class through loss of income, depleting savings, higher cost of debt and layoffs; their children at Wits, Cape Town, Rhodes and Tukkies began to revolt, demanding fee-free higher education (with strong emphasis on the so-called missing middle).

For the first time since 1994 student protests received widespread support and solidarity in word and in action. The national mood was captured by a refreshing, but hippie-sounding youth voice that included remixed struggle songs, hippified regalia and traction in the social and mainstream media. Their ultimate trophy in capturing the national mood was when the liberals in the DA, and in every little hidden corner, came out in their support, compromising the very ideals they stood for. After meeting vice-chancellors and student leaders, the President announced that government will bear the increase that universities would impose on fees, and then went on to set up the Heher Commission of Inquiry into the Feasibility of Fee-Free Higher Education. The commission based its work on the outcomes of several task teams and working groups set up by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

## And so came December 16

Let's be clear. If the president did not make the announcement he did on 16 December, registration for the 2018 academic year would have been challenging. The signs were there in the sunset of his term as ANC president. Both CPUT and UCT were theatres set for the revival of the 2016 actions, although without success. A call to shut down Wits did not catch the ear of an anxious student population that was only focused on writing their exams and the idea of living to fight another day. A call for a national shutdown could only yield just under 50 students on the day the Minister of Finance was making his debut Medium Term Budget Statement.

So, 16 December was a relief. But it was also a shock to the system as univer-



**Wits SRC president Nompandolo Mkatshwa (in her trademark ANC doek), leads a march at the height of the 2015 Frees Must Fall campaign**

sities, the foot soldiers to implement this decision, were grumbling about not being consulted and the announcement lacking detail. One could only suspect that some of the university management were acting only to sabotage the decision even after several agreements announced with DHET.

This meant going into overdrive if the decision was to be phased in without major hassles. But there were other issues. People started asking where the money would come from, and calling for fiscal prudence as we faced yet another downgrade from the rating agencies. Some used it as a platform to further criticise a president who had already lost political affection, and saw the 16 December announcement as a last push from him to buy back the lost love of South Africans.

Whatever the reasons and whatever the criticisms, the class nature and the preservation of privilege in our education system are being laid bare. Those who have created these institutions as their enclaves, and are unashamed to refer to them, as belonging to this or that group would obviously not open the doors wide open willingly. And this is part of the fight.

It is therefore important that, as we mount a battle within the Alliance and in

society, on other broader political issues, we do not drop the ball.

The implication of the announcement is that more black and poor students will have access to university as the state, through NSFAS, which becomes their guarantor for fees. It means that more students will (as we have already seen) flock to technical vocational education and training (Tvet) colleges to be trained as apprentices and artisans. It may not mean a drastic change in quantity: the announcement has no effect on the number of students who have access to post-schooling education in the short-term, but the content of the university population will no longer be the same.

We also need to look to the future that these graduates will represent. It means stronger university branches of the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA), with even sharper political and ideological work. We also need these structures to ensure that the policy on fee-free higher education is implemented by giving information to students and helping them navigate through a still very confusing system. Only a strong PYA that will ensure that students understand why it is important for them to work for their country after they have studied through the system without paying fees. Universities have recently proven to be

fertile soil for most political parties: they present ready intellectuals waiting only to be installed with new ideological operating systems.

A significant portion of expenditure on education goes to the building of new infrastructure, the maintenance of existing infrastructure, transport, catering and accommodation; Tuition comprises only a fraction of the total cost. The Heher Commission emphasised the need for investment in blended universities. There is a real need to look more seriously towards virtual universities to respond to the high demand.

The expansion of the Tvet system, together with improvement in its quality, should become an urgent priority. The same should go for the expansion of integrated workplace learning, which has the potential to resolve some of the bigger demands we face posed by skills shortages. The next step should obviously be the transformation of the curriculum, and a whole range of transformational issues that faces the post-school education sector. For now, let's celebrate this victory by ensuring that it is embedded firmly into the future of South Africa. ●

***Cde Manamela is an SACP Central Committee member and is Deputy Minister of Higher Education***

YCLSA

# Towards the YCL's 96th anniversary

*As the Young Communist League prepares for its 96th anniversary, Mluleki Dlelenga warns of the dangers of excluding young South Africans from economic development*

**O**n 25 May 2018, the Young Communist League of South Africa will celebrate its 96th Anniversary. The league was founded in 1922, banned in 1950 and re-established in 2003, as a voluntary mass youth organisation. It is devoted to the interests of all young people and dedicated to the revolutionary cause of the working class of our country and the globe.

The YCL is committed to and struggles for the transformation of South Africa from a capitalist society to a socialist society in which there is no exploitation of one person or group by another. The YCL recognises the South African Communist Party as the political party of socialism in our country and enjoys political and ideological guidance from the SACP. Young communists promote the unity of progressive young people of our country with the progressive peoples and youth of all countries.

Our approach has been to strengthen the branch, district, province and national committees to advance the struggle for socialism, to champion the needs, interests and aspirations of the youth and for the youth to appreciate the struggle for socialism which is not delinked with strong ANC Youth League, the Congress of South African Students (organising secondary and high school learners) and the South African Students' Congress (organising students at tertiary institutions).

The other very critical work of the league is the organisation and building of relations between YCL and Cosatu Young Workers. As part of establishing and strengthening the relations is on how we play a contributing role in keeping the federation and its affiliates to both unorganised and organised young workers. The other important aspect is to mobilise

young people in and out of employment to support and join Cosatu affiliated unions as the only vehicle towards socio-economic justice, the labour laws, decent minimum wages and good health as well as safety conditions for workers including fair work contracts.

We are united in insisting that the youth of our country, regardless of race, class or gender, have equal access to the government, participate in elections and express their interests through political formations of their choice and statutory structures such as the National Youth Development Agency. Today, the youth of the country can study in any university or college of their choice irrespective of the colour of their skin. Today's youth can join any political formation regardless class, colour and gender.

South Africa is experiencing a youth bulge – more than 20,5-million South Africans are aged between 14 and 35. It is essential that we factor this into national, provincial and local planning: economists argue that a youth bulge could increase the number of working people proportionally (while decreasing the proportion of non-working dependants) – provided there are policies and programmes that enable this large working-age population to participate in the economy. This is known as a “demographic dividend”. The economic benefit accrues because, under these circumstances, consumption will be lower than production. It is argued that this will avail resources for national savings, recapitalisation of the economy and for social investment in health, education and skills development.

The biggest challenge that we face as a country is how to help young people enter the labour market and get decent jobs.

Youth unemployment is the most pressing issue facing young people of today and is public enemy number one. One could argue that youth unemployment has become a primary threat to the National Democratic Revolution. To advance the NDR requires a more dedicated focus on job creation for the youth and affirming youth employment creation as an apex priority of society, not just of government. All social partners must contribute to addressing both demand and supply side causes of youth unemployment.

It is important to contextualise youth unemployment as not something that is new or unique. Youth unemployment in South Africa has been on the rise since the late 1970s, growing to almost 20% in the early 1980s. Many countries across the globe are struggling to create jobs for their youth populations. Countries such as Spain (at 53,5%), Greece (49,8%) and Italy (43,9%) have higher youth unemployment rates than South Africa, with 36,1%. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates global youth unemployment at more than 75-million young people. Globally, in the first quarter of 2017 it increased by 1,2% to 27,7% – the highest figure since September 2003.

As we engage on youth issues as part of our struggle, our main focus is on the Ten Youth fronts as explained in the Youth manifesto. In our manifesto we understand youth to be every person between 15 and 35 and youth development as “an intentional, comprehensive approach that provides space, opportunities and support for young people to maximise their individual and collective creative energies for personal development, national development and sustainable livelihoods”.

Youth constitute a significant, growing

and distinct group in society. Much can be said about how society views youth. The way in which society views youth is critical to shaping perceptions by the adult population and how youths view themselves. There are three contending social perspectives on youth; youth as consumers in society, youth as problems to society and youth as assets to society.

The problem perspective is dominant in South African society. The media in particular has played a significant role in shaping a dominant perspective of youth as either consumers or problems to society. There is a need to change our social perspective to be more dominant in viewing youth as assets to society as opposed to a drain on society.

It can also be said that South African society is suffering from adultism (disrespect for youth based on the assumption that adults are better than young people and are therefore entitled to act upon young people without their agreement). In 1996, John Bell argued that the prevalence of adultism must be recognised if society is to make effective progress in having youth as equal partners. Young South Africans want to be treated as equal partners and not as 'adults in waiting.' The fundamental belief that adults know what is best for youth often interferes with the development of a genuine dialogue about youth participation and youth programmes.

Since 1994 great strides have been made to advance the development of young people. In 1996, the National Youth Commission Act was passed, establishing the National Youth Commission in 1996 followed by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2001. These placed youth development at the centre of the nation's developmental agenda. Over the years the institutional distance between the National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund led to fragmentation and the lack of a seamless, integrated and sustainable response to the needs, interests and demands of young South Africans. To address the structural and operational challenges, the 52nd National Conference of the ANC resolved that, "a National Youth Development Agency that will ensure seamless integration, sustainability and responsiveness to the demands and aspirations of South Africa's youth is established through the merger of the National Youth Commission and Umsobomvu Youth Fund."

The establishment of the National

Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was first proposed by the ANC YL's 2004 national congress, affirmed by the ANC NGC in 2005, endorsed and affirmed by the National Youth Convention and the Young Communist League National Congress in 2006, recommended for resolution by the ANC National Policy Conference in June 2007 and resolved by the ANC National Conference in December 2007.

On the 6 February 2009, the President signed into law the National Youth Development Agency Act 54 of 2008, ushering in a new era for youth development in the country. Since then, great strides have been made to ensure that young people are adequately supported and empowered to better their lives. The NYDA remains the most viable and relevant institution



**OUR YOUTH: Vital assets for our revolution**

to facilitate youth development. Since the inception of the NYDA, more than 6-million young South Africans have benefitted from some kind of product or service to better their lives. Given the millions more who may need support from the agency, it is imperative that the mandate of the NYDA be reviewed and more funding allocated to supporting more young people in need with programmes, products and services.

Over the years we have consciously monitored the effectiveness and efficacy of our legislative, policy and strategic interventions. While progress has been achieved, the landscape has radically changed with the institutionalisation of democratic values, social media, deepening socio-economic disparities and new, rapidly evolving youth cultures.

Post-2014 South Africa is a younger nation, with the youth population between the ages of 14 and 35 increasing to 36% of the total – with the youth bulge projected to last until 2037.

A skilled, productive and socially conscious workforce is essential for a second, more radical phase of the NDR, with the youth constituting the majority of this workforce. Society can ill afford the consequences, from costly welfare dependency to higher youth prison populations, when the economy fails to absorb all segments of the population effectively, especially its youth population.

Many youth find themselves in abject poverty associated with weak endowments of human, capital and financial resources – low levels of education, few marketable skills, low productivity and generally poor health. Many young people are trapped in a culture of entitlement and dependency, turning to alcohol and drugs or a life of crime as an easy way out.

Young people are – or should be – assets and benefactors of the South African Revolution to bring about meaningful change and the realisation of a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa. The youth population in South Africa is growing at a faster rate than the adult population and may be able to create new socio-economic opportunities if adequately supported.

Youth must lead their own development and the state must support. Youth must be at the fore of building schools, libraries and community centres as community builders and leaders of society. Young South Africans must never destroy or damage buildings such as schools or hospitals simply because of anger and frustration due to the lack of access to these buildings or to demand something else. Youth anger must be challenged strategically where youth build and not destroy, where youth repair and not damage and where all youth are intellectually and productively militant and not destructively emotional.

Our manifesto constitutes a declaration of intentions, motives and views of the Young Communist League of South Africa in advancing youth development on 10 fronts. Young women, youth with disabilities, youth from rural areas and poor, working class youth are prioritised in all of the 10 fronts.

We need to be united in action and influence to expose and denounce this system and ensure that we create a system where we can all live together, equally, as the youth. ●

**Cde Dlelanga is the YCL National Secretary**

14<sup>th</sup>

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## DEBATE

# Managing internal ANC differences

*Our Movement's leaders must respond to criticism from below with empathy – strictly, but fairly & justly – writes Lechesa Tsenoli*

**H**ow should we react to ANC members and leaders going to court to seek the enforcement of their organisational rights? What is this a symptom of? Ill-discipline? A desire to be right all the time? A betrayal of our organisational culture and principles?

Maybe, maybe not.

Could it be a dramatic evidence of the failure of internal mechanisms to offer redress and enforce organisational rights? A failure to intervene by the leadership of higher structures? A failure to enforce a fair, just management of differences of opinions, disputes and conflicts? A failure, perhaps, to be accessible, engage genuinely and be responsive to issues raised in private and in constitutional structures?

Surely, democratic centralism means lower structures should respect higher structures. But the converse is also true, that higher structures should respect lower structures. Flowing from this assertion leaders must respect followers just as followers must respect leaders.

When this system breaks down in reality or even as a perception, it leads members to resort to rebellion which often takes the form of desperate actions to seek recourse outside the organisation.

Given the recent frequency and successful outcomes of many of these court cases against the movement, isn't it a critical comment on our own internal processes? A failure of the NEC to govern the organisation strictly, fairly and justly in the interests of all members and the movement's image?

External adjudication of these matters outside the organisation is a bitter pill to swallow because it also suggests a criticism of the NEC – that it has failed the 'self-awareness, self-confrontation and self-management' test.

Members and lower structures often approach higher structures because systems, (of what we might term "hearing the baby cry") have failed. The usual way the higher structures responds, if they do

comes in the interests of the movement. We need to reflect on those interventions and replicate them.

The impulse to discipline and cast out fails to recognize the risks in the environment – that we are not waging the campaign to transform society on our own terms, that others wait vigilantly to drive a wedge into the organisation, taking advantage of differences including those that are not antagonistic!

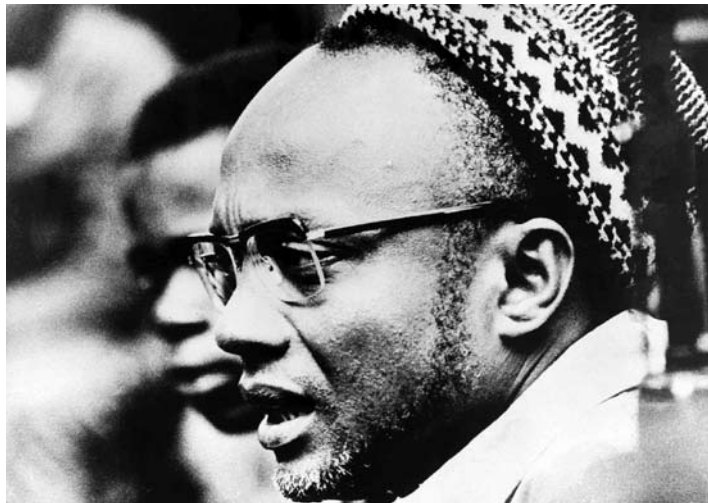
The perceptions and reality of discipline, meted out fairly and justly, oils organisational coherence, thwarts enemy-opposition attempts at dividing us, builds trust in the masses, that we will deal with their affairs in similar manner and cements the unity we so desperately need. Unity, to paraphrase the late Lawrence Phokanoka, must be the result of a robust debate, not an imposition from higher up in the organisation, as he said at Polokwane.

Given that we have just closed a term of office, ac-

knowledging our role as leadership in the current problems facing the organisation would go a long way to creating the mood and willingness in all parts of the organisation to effectively self-correct.

Nothing short of decisive, demonstrable actions that shows we mean what we say will improve the political mood inside our ranks and support base.

We owe it to Cde Oliver Tambo and his fellow builders of this movement – let's take heed of the wise words of the late Guinea Bissau revolutionary Cde



**WORDS OF WISDOM: Amilcar Cabral cautioned: Tell no lies, mask no difficulties, claim no easy victories**

at all, has largely failed, producing the understandably irritating reaction by some in the leadership to resort to court actions. Instead of being irritated we should rather react first with empathy and urgently resolve internally in a manner that is fair, just and impartial. We should in other words react politically to create an environment in the movement of fairness.

There are certainly instances where the NEC, through its leadership, intervened properly, demonstrating responsiveness, thus creating satisfactory out-



**ANC members enforcing rights in court: leaders should react with empathy**

Amilcar Cabral when he cautioned: Tell no lies, mask no difficulties, claim no easy victories.

The temptation to punish harshly is seductive. It may give immediate satisfaction but the medium and long term consequences are too ghastly to contemplate! The crisis, the problem, should not be wasted, it gives us an opportunity to creatively respond to a difficult and complex environment; the people, the masses, whose confidence we need badly – expect no less from us!

Was it not OR Tambo himself who oversaw the putting together of the principles that underpin our country's constitution, was it not the Alliance itself

that had to agree for the constitution to pass through?

Should we not be the ones who first protect the judicial officers when they do what the constitution and laws allow them to do – especially because we have recourse in case they themselves make problematic rulings. We can't rubbish presiding officers of the courts when they decide against us but celebrate when they decide in our favour. Public attacks of courts and its officers especially by lower structures are unseemly and cast the movement in a bad light!

Revolutionary morality critically helps us to understand our personal and organisational conduct has meaning be-

yond ourselves; it impacts dramatically on society's willingness to support us!

As the ANC-led movement, we present ourselves as the leader not just of our members and supporters but of South African society as a whole. To effectively fulfil the National Democratic Revolution, we need the support of a wide range of classes and strata, not just in our movement. And we need this now more than ever. To ensure that we get this cooperation, we need to exercise our revolutionary morality more than ever! ●

***Cde Tsenoli is an SACP Central Committee member and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly***

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TRIBUTE

# Hamba Kahle, Bra Hugh!



Hugh Masekela blows away the 16th Cape Town International Jazz Festival three years ago

A South African musical genius has gone, and the South African Communist Party mourns with the rest of South Africa and millions of music lovers across the world the passing of Ramapolo Hugh Masekela. We convey our its deepest condolences to his son Sal Masekela, Bra Hugh's sister Cde Barbara Masekela and to the rest of the Masekela family.

His trumpet and his harsh voice are silent, but his work – the musical score to

key stages of our struggle against apartheid and for justice – lives on. Many of his compositions are seasoned with his commitment to the struggle against oppression, injustice and exploitation. They include *Soweto Blues* (1977), his response to the 1976 uprisings, and *Bring Him Home* (1986), which demands the release of Nelson Mandela. His latest album, *No Borders* (2016), maintains that activist flavour.

Born in Witbank in 1939, Bra Hugh

showed early signs of musical talent, and was given him first trumpet at school (St Peter's Secondary, now St Martin's in Rosettenville in Johannesburg) by Trevor Huddleston, the school's activist anti-apartheid chaplain. By the age of 19, he was playing in the orchestra of *King Kong*, the South African global blockbuster that rocketed Miriam Makeba to fame.

Masekela's music closely reflected his life experience. The agony, conflict, and exploitation South Africa faced dur-



A promotional portrait shortly after Masekela released *Bring him home*

ing the 1950s and 1960s inspired and influenced him to make music and also spread political change. His music vividly portrayed the struggles and sorrows, as well as the joys and passions of his country.

He shaped and revamped South African jazz – doing so on a platform of struggle – and contributed hugely to the genre globally.

He left South Africa shortly after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 – and just

months after he, Abdullah Ibrahim, Kippie Moeketsi, Makhaya Ntshoko, and Johnny Gertze had formed the Jazz Epistles, and become the first African jazz group to record an album.

He returned home in 1990, but continued his international career which included several US hits and collaborations with his mentor, Harry Belafonte, his former wife Miriam Makeba, Marvin Gaye, Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, Abdullah Ibrahim, the Byrds, and fellow trum-

peter Herb Alpert.

On 23 January he “passed peacefully, surrounded by his family ... after a protracted and courageous battle with prostate cancer”, his son, Sal Masekela (a US-based TV show host), said after Masekela’s death: “To know Hugh Masekela was to know ... he stood with empathy and compassion, locked arm in arm with the distressed, displaced and downtrodden everywhere and anywhere on this planet.” ●

# Joe Slovo – an amazing life of activism



JOE SLOVO: with ANC spokesperson Pallo Jordan in 1992

Cde Joe Slovo was born in Lithuania in 1926 and came to South Africa with his family as a nine-year-old. He was active in the CPSA from 1940. He was banned by the apartheid government in 1954. In 1955 he actively contributed to the Freedom Charter, but couldn't attend the Congress of People – he watched it through binoculars. In 1956 he was a Treason Trialist. He was a founder member of MK and narrowly missed arrest at Rivonia while on an external MK mission. He served as Chief of Staff of MK and played a leading role in Special Ops and in Operation Vula.

He was elected general secretary of the SACP in 1986. In the course of the 1980s the apartheid regime portrayed him as Enemy Number One, and spread the lie that he was a KGB colonel. His wife Ruth First was assassinated with a parcel bomb that might have been targeted at him. With the unbanning of the ANC and SACP, and the beginning of negotiations, the ANC selected him as one of the lead negotiators. The regime tried to block this but Mandela and Tambo stood firm. In 1991 Cde Chris Hani became SACP general secretary and Cde JS was elected SACP chairperson. He was the first Minister of Housing after 1994 and died in January 1995, 23 years ago.

Consistently throughout this amazing life of activism, Cde JS made important strategic interventions that, to use a favourite Slovo phrase, “belled the cat”.

(“Belling the cat” is an old-fashioned English saying meaning that we must undertake the prickly task of placing a bell around the neck of a wild and furious cat – a more modern phrasing would be: “Let’s grab the bull by the horns”.)

Slovo’s ability to intervene timeously, and his ability to connect a strategic perspective to the tactical tasks of the moment had much to do with Slovo’s Leninism. (Lenin was, after all, the master of “belling the cat”).

In the mid-1960s the ANC suffered a major strategic blow with the mass arrests of its leadership and the scat-

tering into exile of its remaining structures. The apartheid regime felt that it had destroyed the ANC for all time. There was considerable disarray in exile, including a certain denialism that is often the sign of depression: “we didn’t make mistakes”, “things are on track” many declared. In 1975 Cde JS published a crucial intervention *No Middle Road* in which he boldly admitted that strategic mistakes had been made by the ANC and MK and that we

had suffered a serious blow. In particular, there had been an exaggerated expectation of what the launch of the armed struggle in 1960 would achieve. And there had also been a serious underestimation of the enemy’s strengths. The launch of the armed struggle in 1960 was not at the most favourable moment for the movement. But “rather untimely action”, Slovo wrote (quoting Lenin), “than untimely inaction”.

Moreover, he went on to argue, the very strength of white minority rule within South Africa encountered by the ANC, when compared to other anti-colonial struggles – namely a large and historically rooted white population; its effective control over the territory linked to a modern logistics network; a significant industrial base – all of these strengths could also become points of vulnerability. The modern logistics network was also a point of vulnerability and with countrywide insurrectionary struggles the regime could be stretched. The significant industrial base increasingly required a huge army of semi-skilled black workers. A white minority with nowhere to go could be forced to the negotiating table without reducing the country to ruins if the balance of forces could be changed through struggle. Slovo was always thoroughly dialectical in his strategic analysis of a situation.

Published the year before the 1976 student uprisings, *No Middle Road* made a major contribution to developing within the movement an appropriate strategic posture to the prolonged wave of semi-insurrectionary struggles throughout the late 1970s and 1980s and into the early 1990s. ●

## MEDIA

# MultiChoice does the wrong thing – again!

*Both Icasa and Parliament must immediately investigate MultiChoice's corrupt influence on government policy, argues Blade Nzimande*

**W**e once again focus on the private monopolisation of our media and communication spaces by Naspers and its subsidiaries, in this case particularly MultiChoice. Our Political Bureau met on Friday and Saturday, 2 and 3 February and, among others discussed this issue.

Naspers and MultiChoice never learn! It is worse to carry out a sham internal inquiry on its relationship with ANN7 than not to do an inquiry at all.

Given the low viewership of ANN7, MultiChoice cannot justify its payments to ANN7 as purely a market decision. It was clearly meant to influence government policy on set top box encryption. Now that the Guptas' influence on government decisions has drastically declined, MultiChoice has dumped them. While we think that ANN7 is a right-wing, toxic channel, with its phony commentators targeting those fighting corruption, and presents the world-view of the state capturers, we do not believe that it should be removed from MultiChoice's DSTV bouquet unless it violates the constitution and laws of the country. ANN7 often gives space to the new elites who are from the previously oppressed and who seek to replace our previous oppressors in the exploitation of the masses and abuse of public resources. It is ironic that ANN7 presents itself as opposed to white monopoly capital and yet is desperate to be given favours by it.

If MultiChoice implements its decision, it has the responsibility to ensure that the workers are absorbed by its other channels or find work elsewhere. The internal inquiry into ANN7 was held to distract attention from the far more nefarious MultiChoice-SABC deal that



**Naspers headquarters: Home of Africa's biggest company**

compelled SABC to oppose government policy on set top box encryption. Why was there no inquiry into allegations that MultiChoice paid Hlaudi Motsoeneng and others to deliver a new policy on set top boxes without encryption?

But fundamentally: how can MultiChoice investigate itself? And why did the investigation exclude Naspers chairperson Koos Bekker, the leader of the campaign to oppose encryption? In addition, MultiChoice will not develop measures to end its own monopoly. Urgent measures are required, including an immediate review of the broadcasting digital migration policy, to bring the MultiChoice monopoly to an end.

The SACP calls on Icasa to thoroughly and expeditiously investigate the role of Naspers and MultiChoice in regulatory and state capture, and its continued dominance of 98% of the Pay-TV market. We also call on the Hawks and other investigative agencies to investigate Naspers, MultiChoice and those within the state, including politicians, accused of corruption in the set top box encryption issues, including the allocation of tenders. We

also call upon the ANC Chief Whip, Cde Jackson Mthembu and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications to implement their promise to undertake a hearing on MultiChoice's pernicious influence on government policy on encryption.

We want to see more competition in the Pay-TV sector, cheaper costs and greater access for people. MultiChoice's extreme dominance of the market must end. As we have repeatedly said, we are opposed to all forms of state capture. Not just the Guptas, but the Bekkers, the Patels and others. And all forms of monopoly dominance and corporate greed. In the interests of the people, the state must deal with McKinsey, KPMG, Steinhoff, Naspers and others who have obviously or admittedly been involved in or are accused of serious wrongdoing.

*This is an extract from a speech by Cde Nzimande at the memorial event for Cde Rica Hodgson* ●

**Cde Nzimande is General Secretary of the SACP**

## MEDIA

# ANN7 – a symptom of a more sinister problem

*The real pollutant of South Africa's media isn't ANN7, writes David Niddrie – it's the toxic monopoly of Naspers and Multichoice*

There has been altogether too much debate about the what the Multichoice media monopoly called its decision to remove Jimmy 'Mzwanele' Manyi's ANN7 news channel from the DStv satellite pay-TV platform in August.

Before looking at the merits of the debate, it is worth noting the many terminological inexactitudes ("terminological inexactitudes" is the parliamentary term used to politely describe a lie) in that sentence:

- Firstly Multichoice did not take a "decision" – the contract to carry ANN7 ends in August: a "decision" would have been to renew the contract;

- The second inexactitude is to call ANN7 a "news channel" (and to accept that ANN stands for African "News Network"); it isn't a news channel any more than the SABC provided "news" before 1993. It is a propaganda platform for the state capture project – ask anyone who tried watching it to understand what was happening at the 54th ANC national conference; and

- Finally, the occasional description of the channel as belonging to Manyi. Manyi's "purchase" of the channel and of The New Age "newspaper" – using vendor financing (read "Gupta money") to do so – was, it has been suggested, nothing more than a complex money laundering exercise.

The entry into the debate by Multichoice CEO Calvo Mawela to justify vastly overpaying the Guptas for the privilege of hosting the channel only added



**KOOS BEKKER : Naspers chairperson and the brains behind its monopoly growth**

to the confusion. It is worth remembering Mawela's first major appearance in the media two years ago: in an amaBhungane report that tracked directly to Mawela's Multichoice office computer the multimillion Rand media campaign against the SACP's Cde Yunus Carrim as Minister of Communications.

Complaints by the South African Editors' Forum (Sanef) that allowing ANN7

**Closing ANN7: we're witnessing a media monopoly behaving as we expect a monopoly to behave. No surprise there ...**

to die would limit media diversity and leave ANN7 staff jobless compounded the confusion. "Media diversity" is not a condition of maximising the amount of fake news in circulation. It is a circumstance maximising the range of real "news" sources, of fact-based analysis and perspectives. And as to the staff: they chose to work for the Guptas' fake news platform, rather than as journalists ...

The main question to be asked in the debate, though, is this: why on earth are so many usually sensible people spending so much time discussing a non-decision by a company that has, for the past century, operated entirely in its own interests to secure and maintain a media monopoly at the expense of a majority of South Africans?

Naspers (and its TV wing MultiChoice) used ANN7 and the Guptas when it was useful to do so. It stopped using them when it was no longer politically expedient. What we are witnessing is media monopoly – Naspers owns most newspapers and magazines sold in South Africa and dominates the TV sector – behaving as we expect a monopoly to behave.

No surprise there . . . particularly when the monopoly has its cultural roots in the ideological swamp that gave birth to apartheid.

What we should be discussing is how to end that monopoly; how to end a situation in which a handful of directors and executives at Multichoice's and Naspers' offices in Randburg and Dubai can control what 55-million South African TV viewers can watch.



Trust me, I'm a media mogul: Ajay and Atul Gupta, after the 2013 launch of ANN7



The SABC is theoretically the alternative. But it has had a “new” board for four months – and an interim board for six months before that: that is nearly 11 months in which the SABC has done absolutely nothing to terminate an illegal, anti-competitive contract (“the SABC-Multichoice Agreement” signed without board approval by Hlaudi Motsoeneng) that chains our public broadcaster to Multichoice like a vassel.

And then there is our communications regulator, Icasa (Independent Communications Authority of South Africa). The regulator was an early victim of regulatory capture – two councillors on the first council (board) of what was then called the Independent Broadcasting Authority, were forced to resign prematurely after receiving “gifts” from Multichoice in the mid-1990s. The regulator has treated Multichoice and Naspers with kid gloves ever since.

With acclaimed author Mandla Langa as chair, Icasa exempted Multichoice and Naspers from restrictions on cross-media ownership – owning dominant print and broadcast platforms simultaneously. This allowed it to consolidate its dominance of South Africa’s media through Multichoice (satellite TV), MNet (terrestrial pay TV) and News 24 (print). Langa subsequently served as chair of Multichoice’s South African subsidiary and remains a “special adviser”.

Multichoice used its hegemony to secure exclusive access to the major audience driver, sports rights – rugby, football, cricket, boxing, formula one motor racing, tennis and golf, blocking commercial competitors and the SABC from sports audiences and from access to an increasing array of international content (first run movies, series and documentaries). This practice was common globally, but governments

and regulators – particularly in the European Union (although the UK under Tony Blair and successive Conservative Party governments stuck to the monopoly path) – reacted by introducing legislative and regulatory tools to force monopoly broadcasters to share, at affordable rates, key programme genres: live sports, first run movies and so on. Neither successive ANC administrations nor Icasa followed this example, instead allowing Multichoice to strangle access by millions of South Africans to previously free broadcast content.

Debating ANN7’s fate may be entertaining. What is necessary is to plan and implement a campaign to pressure parliament to draft and pass laws that destroy Multichoice’s monopoly control of South Africa’s TV market and allow South Africans, for the first time in two decades, to decide for themselves what they want to watch. The objective of this campaign must be regulation of the media sector based on public interest, rather than profit maximisation and special treatment of an apartheid-era monster. ●

***Cde Niddrie, a recipient of the Moses Kotane Award, is a veteran SACP media activist***

# Global action again



Palestinians scaling the Israeli 'Separation Wall' near A-Ram, north of Jerusalem. Israel built the wall in 2000 to control the movement of Palestinian West Bank residents.

Pix: Oren Ziv/GroundTruth

*Palestinians need and deserve the same level of solidarity mobilised across the world to back South Africans' struggle against apartheid, writes Michia Moncho*

The 14th annual Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) of actions will take place all around the country between March 12 and 17 March 2018. IAW is an international series of events that seek to raise awareness of Israel's apartheid oppression of the Palestinian people and to build support for the growing Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. It is endorsed in South Africa by more than 85 organisations, trade unions, political parties and other groups.

A report released last year by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) found that Israel has imposed a system of apartheid on

the entire Palestinian people and calls for BDS measures to end Israel's apartheid regime.

Inspired by the popular resistance across historic Palestine and South Africa's struggle against apartheid, IAW 2017 included a wide range of events: lectures, film screenings, cultural performances, comedy shows, and BDS actions, postering and graffiti in major cities across the country, setting up apartheid walls on campuses, and many more. These actions took place in more than 200 cities across the world.

2018 mark 70 years of Palestinian popular resistance against the ongoing process of dispossession and ethnic

# nst oppression!



**Palestinian women and girls, forced to squeeze between concrete blocks to access checkpoints in Israel's 'Separation Wall' to attend Friday prayers – on the other side. Israeli troops and police forcibly separate males from females crossing the wall to attend their mosque.**

cleansing, since the 1948 Nakba (when more than 700 000 Palestinian fled or were expelled from their homes, during the 1948 Israeli war on Palestine). The Palestinian people's resistance to colonisation has in fact been longer than that. From the Balfour Declaration of 1917 to the present, Palestinians have fought for their dignity, their rights, and their lands.

IAW is an opportunity to reflect on this resistance and further advance BDS campaigns for the continued growth and impact of the movement. Despite Israel's legal and propaganda war on BDS internationally, IAW and the BDS movement continue to build linkages and solidarity

with other struggles to achieve freedom, justice, and equality.

For us South Africans and our liberation, people of the world mobilised in their hundreds of thousands, if not millions. During the 1980s, they held protests, music concerts, free Nelson

**Israeli Apartheid Week is inspired by the popular resistance across historic Palestine and South Africa's struggle against apartheid**

Mandela events, lectures, film screenings and a host of other events to raise awareness of apartheid South Africa's racist policies and to build support for the successful boycott, divestment and sanctions against South Africa campaign.

IAW began in Toronto, Canada in 2005. It has since spread around the world to include campaigns in Australia, Austria, Brazil, Botswana, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, the UK, and the US. ●

**Michia Moncho is convenor of the 2018 Israeli Apartheid Week in South Africa**

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DO GRAFFITI, DO A PAINTING, BE CREATIVE USING "ISRAELI APARTHEID" AS A THEME. TAKE PICTURES OF IT. PUT IT UP ON SOCIAL MEDIA & SHARE THEM WITH US!



ARRANGE A TALK AT YOUR CHURCH/MOSQUE/SYNAGOGUE/TEMPLE OR PLACE OF WORSHIP ON PALESTINE AND ISRAELI APARTHEID.



GET YOUR SCHOOL, SRC, UNION, MOSQUE, CHURCH, POLITICAL PARTY OR ORGANIZATION TO ENDORSE IAW THEN EMAIL US THE ENDORSEMENT!



GET YOUR SCHOOL TO SCREEN A FILM ON PALESTINE (WE HAVE CERTAIN MOVIES FOR CHILDREN) OR HOST AN ART COMPETITION, SPEECH CONTEST OR SIMILAR EVENT. GET STUDENTS TO LINE UP ON THE SCHOOL FIELD/YARD IN THE SHAPE OF #IAW OR #ISRAELIAPARTHEIDWEEK, TAKE A PHOTO OF THEIR FLASHMOB AND THEN POST THIS TO SOCIAL MEDIA.

# JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

If you would like to organise and be part of Israeli Apartheid Week on your campus, school, church, community, branch or in your city please visit our website [www.iawsouthafrica.com](http://www.iawsouthafrica.com), find us on twitter @IAWSouthAfrica and Facebook (Israeli Apartheid Week South Africa). Or send us an email at this address: [southafrica.iaw@gmail.com](mailto:southafrica.iaw@gmail.com)