

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT

July 2021

Voice of the South African Communist Party

Umsebenzi

SPECIAL CENTENARY ISSUE

**SACP
1921 - 2021**



**100 Years of
UNBROKEN
STRUGGLE**

**SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE
- BUILD IT NOW!**

CENTENARY: CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

People before profit: socialism is the future – build it now!

This is a shortened version of the SACP CC statement delivered by General Secretary Blade Nzimande

As we mark 100 years of the communist party in South Africa, this cannot be an ordinary anniversary celebration. We say this because it is both a centenary and because in the first weeks of July, we experienced an extremely perilous moment with many dangerous warning signs for all who cherish democracy and peace in our country. We cannot commemorate 100 years of unbroken struggle as if the failed insurrectionary attempt of July 2021 had barely happened.

For the moment, the insurrectionary offensive against our democracy has been halted by the broad unity of our Alliance in defence of democracy and the constitution, and by the overwhelming majority of South Africans, working together with an often weakened and destabilised state. But this victory has been at a huge cost to jobs, to food security, to health, and to lives.

Moreover, we cannot ignore the fact that this insurrectionary attempt was hatched from within the ANC and from within the post-apartheid state itself by renegade elements linked to state capture looting.

And so, as we mark 100 years of unbroken Communist struggle in South Africa, we also need to ask: How did it come to this? What lessons can we draw from 100 years of Communist struggle on the soil of South Africa?

Class and national oppression

The most enduring contribution that the communist party in South Africa



100 Years of the SACP

The SACP is observing its centenary from July 2021 to July 2022. This edition of *Umsebenzi* will be the first of several centenary-year editions reviewing & celebrating the Party's 100 unbroken years of struggle. Other issues of *Umsebenzi* will also prioritise the centenary. You are welcome to send us articles related to the centenary.

The Editorial Committee

has made in theory and, above all, in practice is our elaboration of the critical relationship between national oppression and capitalist class exploitation; between racialised patriarchal oppression and the hyper-exploitation of black labour; between the legacy of decades of white minority rule and the persisting subordination of our country as a crisis-ridden, semi-periphery within an imperialist dominated global system. This understanding of these critical interconnections has grounded our strategic perspective of a struggle for socialism as an integral part of a National Democratic Revolution.

It was this strategic perspective that led the Party from the 1920s to pioneer the call for majority rule and full citizenship rights for all who live in South Africa—long before the ANC was to advance this approach. And it was this strategic perspective that led to communists at every key turning point of the ANC's history being in the forefront—in the turn to a mass-line in the 1950s and the adoption of the Freedom Charter; in the regrouping of the movement following its banning and the enforced exile of most of its leadership; in the launch of an armed struggle; the elaboration of a people's war strategy in the midst of the rolling waves of semi-insurrectionary struggle through the late 1970s and 1980s; and in a negotiated settlement. At every key moment SACP cadres were present both as foot-soldiers and as strategic leaders and organisers.

On this centenary let us reaffirm the critical responsibility of the communist



Communists at the forefront of every key point in the ANC's history: delegates at the SACP's 2017 14th National Congress



General Secretary Blade Nzimande at the launch of the Party's centenary year

party and its militants to defend, to rebuild and consolidate a broad national liberation movement and a reconfigured Alliance. We will not allow a movement that communists in their tens of thousands helped to build, now to be hijacked by criminals and demagogues. This re-building of a broad national liberation movement can only happen on the basis of a return to the understanding of the interlinkage between the national democratic and socialist tasks – and in the present context this means a determined struggle against

those in our movement pushing neo-liberal austerity and timidity in disciplining capital.

Directly related to this is the second

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major pioneering and enduring contribution of the communist party in South Africa—non-racialism. Not just in theory: from the very beginning the CPSA was non-racial in practice. In fact, until the 1950s and a short-lived Liberal Party, the communist party was the only political formation in South Africa with an active, non-racial membership. Whites and blacks were equal members together in struggle. Through the 1920s, 30s and 40s, this non-racial membership faced persecution, endured police detentions and prison terms, and together faced and fought back against the fascist thuggery of anti-communist Grey Shirts, who sought to break up Party meetings and anti-pass law protests. Black and white militants learnt from each other, and developed a lasting tradition of collective, non-racial leadership.

This non-racial contribution in struggle of our communist party to our country is more relevant than ever, as we are called upon now to combat counterrevolutionary forces seeking to gain populist support through ethnic mobilisation, xenophobic agitation, through a narrow Africanism, through anti-minority rhetoric. The SACP's non-racial legacy was advanced by the Freedom Charter's clarion call that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. It was enshrined in our 1996 democratic Constitution. Let us defend this legacy with as much determination as ever before.

These cornerstones of Party strategy and practice have laid the basis for all the other major pioneering legacy contributions of the communist party – in building progressive trade unions, in organising community struggles, in popular education, in youth and women organisation, in progressive journalism, in rural struggles, and much more.

Throughout 100 years of communist struggle, our Party cadres have been first in sacrifice. We number thousands of martyrs. Johannes Nkosi, murdered in 1930 while addressing a Party anti-pass rally. Vuyisile Mini, trade unionist, composer of songs, hanged on the gallows in Pretoria. His deep bass voice was silenced. His songs live on. Basil February, communist, MK soldier, died on the battlefield in the Wankie Campaign of 1967. Ahmed Timol, communist, teacher, tortured to death by the apartheid security police.

There was an outstanding 1976 generation of courageous young communists, among them Petros Linda Jobane (“Gordon Dikebu”), the Lion of Chiawelo, who, surrounded and alone, held off the apartheid police, down to his last bullet. Ruth First, communist, revolutionary intellectual, killed by an apartheid parcel bomb. Chris Hani, Party general secretary, assassinated 10 April 1993. And, tragically, the roll call of Party martyrs continues beyond 1994, beyond the democratic breakthrough. Bomber “Radioman” Ntshangase, fearless opponent of corruption within our own movement and government in Mpumalanga—murdered by unknown hands.

It is from the platform of this history, this 100-year legacy of theory and struggle that we must approach our own immediate reality.

What now are the tasks confronting the SACP in the interlocking struggles to rebuild a national popular movement, to advance, deepen and defend a national democratic revolution, and to advance to socialism?

Building working class and popular social capacity

Capitalism survives not because it is not constantly immersed in crises of its own making, but because it turns them into crises for the popular masses and for the sustainability of our environment.

The crises of capitalism weigh down on working class and poor communities as lay-offs and long-enduring, mass unemployment ravage communities.

The idea that “the worse things are for the working class and poor, the better



A symbol of hope for a better future: The SACP star painted on a home in the overcrowded Kayamandi township in Stellenbosch

for the revolution” is a terrible fallacy. In these conditions of social crisis, community members have little time and few resources to organise, learn and discuss. Communities might turn upon each other, gender-based violence is liable to spiral, and there is the senseless destruction of public property for which there is no sense of community ownership or responsibility.

That is why advancing, deepening and defending the National Democratic Revolution and building capacity for socialism must, in the first place, be about building social capacity, social resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

Social capacity for socialism

That is why the SACP joins a wide array of progressive forces, now calling for the introduction of a universal basic income

**The SACP’s non-racial
legacy was advanced
by the Freedom Charter’s
clarion call: SA belongs
to all who live in it**

grant. It is not a panacea. It is not a silver bullet. But, if set at an effective level, it can make a dramatic difference. If we have any doubt about this, then we are not learning anything from the early July days. Beyond and below the sinister hard-core of would-be insurrectionists, were elements of a food riot.

Public employment programmes, especially those directed at the youth, must now be dramatically scaled up. A 60%-plus youth unemployment level means we are living in a totally unsustainable reality. We cannot rely on a dysfunctional capitalist labour-market to solve this problem. There are millions of unemployed South Africans willing and able to work and there are vast areas of socially needed work (child-care, township infrastructure maintenance, sports coaching in township and rural schools, community health care work, community safety, shelter care for abused women, community food gardens, building environmental resilience). The profits-before-people, capitalist labour-market is not remotely capable or willing to address this huge challenge.

It is crucial to intensify the financial sector transformation campaign, not only to make banks and other financial



Funeral of the Cradock Four, murdered in June 1985 by apartheid security police because they were 'in the forefront of a revolutionary attack against the state'. The SACP banner at the funeral was the first on public display for a quarter century

services institutions serve the people but, as a key national transformation and development imperative, to build a developmental state and co-operative banking sectors. We must de-monopolise and diversify ownership participation in the financial sector.

In the same vein, we must resolutely continue struggling to speed up land redistribution. We must prioritise productive land use, to build sustainable livelihoods and contribute to the eradication of hunger and poverty, and ensure decent housing based on an integrated human settlement and industrialisation programme to tackle unemployment. The campaign to achieve access to water and sanitation for all is also as crucial as ever.

We need a more decisive advance to make quality healthcare for all a reality through the National Health Insurance.

In focusing on the building of sustainable livelihoods, much greater attention needs to be paid to the solidarity economy, to supporting co-operatives and to workers in the informal sector. Informal sector traders have been among the most negatively affected by the July events. But their challenges are continuous, whether confronting opportunistic xenophobia,

or ongoing harassment by the police and city officials, including confiscation of their goods.

Building organisational capacity

Building social capacity must go hand in hand with building organisational capacity.

The SACP itself must review its organisational capacity. We have grown into a substantial mass party, but are we sufficiently grounded in the daily struggles of the working class and poor? A key task now is to build a significant number of effective cadres within our broad membership, cadres capable of playing a non-sectarian, but active, vanguard role in their communities, in their places of work and study.

The trade union movement has been gutted by unemployment, by labour

brokering and informalisation. These realities have forced trade unions on to the defensive and even into internecine competition and fragmentation. Cosatu and the broader trade union movement need to be rebuilt, unity in action needs to be driven, and the critical links between formal and informal workers, between the workplace and community struggles forged.

The Alliance needs to be reconfigured in particular to build an active presence on the ground.

The upwelling of Community Action Networks in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, organising food gardens, food distribution, and much else need to be supported. As the SACP we need to learn from and be among them, but in a non-sectarian way. And the same goes for much of the myriad of grassroots, often non-racial, community safety, volunteer networks that emerged in the face of the attempted insurrection against our democracy.

Building developmental state capacity

The developmental capacity of our public institutions has been seriously weakened both by state capture and by a mindless, self-imposed and self-destructive

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tive austerity.

Lives are lost. Billions of Rands of damage are incurred and all because we think we are saving money. Of course, we cannot just throw money at an often-dysfunctional police force, for instance, corrupted by state capture and disabled by poor training. Certainly, now more than ever, we need a thorough clean-up of the police. Policing failures and perhaps even deliberate failures in early July must be investigated. But what we cannot allow is for short-sighted (and ultimately costly) austerity to pose as if it were the answer to dysfunctionality.

Building state capacity must also involve rebuilding the capacity of the critical SOE sector, to drive a major, state-led infrastructure build programme; to expand the state-led industrial programme; and to build environmental resilience and sustainability through a just green transition. All of these must prioritise job creation.

State capacity must be built to ensure that we consolidate a core pillar of any national democratic effort – namely building democratic national sovereignty, forging as much as possible the ability to overcome the fate of forever being a semi-peripheral, subordinated economy continuously locked into an imperialist-driven reproduction of our own crises of under-development.

One aspect of this struggle in defence of democratic national sovereignty has been the important global struggle President Ramaphosa has led against vaccine nationalism (it's really vaccine imperialism). But there is much more to the struggle to consolidate democratic national sovereignty, including the critical struggle to avoid dollar-denominated debt enslavement to the IMF.

Our state financial institutions, including regulatory institutions and the Reserve Bank, are frequently extolled as models of perfection and bastions against state capture. Where they have played a role against state capture, we salute them. And yet there has been a massive failure in these quarters to curb huge financial outflows out of our economy, much of it illicit. We now know that the Gupta network alone illegally smuggled out at least R60-billion. Were the Guptas really that smart that they could outwit our financial regulators? And what were our private commercial banks doing?



Building state capacity must centrally be about building the capacity to discipline private capital in the public interest. It is something we have largely failed to achieve over 27 years. To take just one example: why, with the Brent Crude oil price now hovering around US\$75 a barrel, are we not exacting a windfall tax on Sasol? It provides around one-third of South Africa's oil needs. We pay Sasol for this as if it were oil imported from somewhere in the Middle East. It is estimated that Sasol's production costs are around US\$35 a barrel.

Over the past two years the SACP has asserted that the struggle is a struggle on two fronts—against state capture and the networks behind it, and against neoliberal austerity and the bending over to please private capital interests at the expense of the public interest. These past July days have underlined just how relevant that strategic perspective is.

Forward to a socialist-oriented national democratic revolution

On this solemn but celebratory occasion of the SACP's centenary we affirm what we have affirmed for most of these past 100 years. We do so now with greater conviction than ever before: ***the struggle for socialism in South Africa and the national democratic struggle are not***

**The full CC statement
is on www.sacp.org.za
and will be in the
next issue of
*The African Communist***

two separate struggles. They do not occur in two separate times zones, or geographical spaces. Without a deepening socialist orientation, the struggle to defend the popular electoral mandate will be further eroded by ongoing submission to the will of undemocratic ratings agencies, the prophets of austerity, and their local mindless sycophants.

Without a deliberate placing of people before profits, the goals of the Freedom Charter and the aspirations so clearly expressed in our democratic 1996 Constitution will forever recede. Without boldly reclaiming socialist values, without instilling a popular morality of solidarity, without upholding that profound working-class slogan “an injury to one is an injury to all”, unless we do this in the face of those who proclaim “I didn't struggle to be poor”, who glorify personal primitive accumulation—the continued degeneration of our movement will persist.

We are not hitch-hikers. We are not entryists into the broad national democratic movement. Over 100 years, the militants of the communist party in South Africa have contributed immensely to building this movement. We will not allow it to continue to decline into deeper degeneration. But the ANC does not own the national democratic revolution. If we, together with many thousands of incorruptible ANC members and supporters, fail to halt the decline, then it will still be necessary to build a broad, national popular movement to overcome the deep legacy of racialised oppression, to defeat patriarchy, and to put people before profits.

We are committed to this strategic perspective as socialists. We assert that the national democratic movement will only be renewed if there is a deepening socialist orientation to its character and in its activism. We do not say this as left sectarians. We do not decline to work with all democratic, peace-loving, anti-sexist, non-racial patriots, whether they regard themselves as socialists or not. But, as our Party militants have affirmed over the course of 100 years, it is imperative that we roll back the empire of private profit accumulation. We are more convinced than ever of the correctness of this perspective.

Socialism is the future! Build it now! ●

Early target: A burnt out truck on the N2 between Durban and Johannesburg - one of the dozens targetted by counter-revolutionaries in July, as they attempted to bring the economy to a halt



CENTENARY: CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT

The July counter-revolutionary conspiracy

This extract from the SACP's Centenary Statement details the failed insurrection that took place in July

The insurrectionary violence and turmoil of early July was both planned and promised, sometimes brazenly, by those behind it. It was at once well-funded, relatively professional, and hopelessly inept strategically. The plotters deliberately triggered and then lost control over a wave of mass looting, mostly by the most marginalised strata in our society. But shopping malls were not the prime target of the conspiracy itself. The real target was to cripple major transport arteries, and particularly the key South and Southern African N3 corridor, to block Durban harbour, to strangle Gauteng, and to take out electricity, oil

pipelines, communications infrastructure and the burning of food depots.

There have been mixed messages and debates about the nature of the July events. Were they a planned insurrection? Or the work of mafia-style criminal

gangs? Or an opportunistic, mass looting spree – as if what happened did not involve all of these dimensions.

As the SACP we believe that it is important to understand that the unfolding events had three general layers of participation. There was an inner conspiratorial core. The signs point to the strong likelihood of the planning and triggering of the attempted uprising coming from renegade (past and perhaps even current) elements in intelligence and related circles. It was from within this inner circle that key strategic targets appear to have been selected.

It is notable that the first actions did

There are active connections between political counterrevolutionaries and criminal networks



Alexandra residents clean up after looters devastated the local Pan Africa Mall

not involve looting, but rather arson, and notably the destruction of some 40 trucks on the N3 to block this critical artery. It is unlikely that the inner conspiratorial core would have been directly involved in these arson attacks, which followed the pattern of earlier, criminal attacks on the N3 directed against non-South African truck drivers. It is highly probable that the July truck and other arson attacks were carried out by the same or similar criminal elements associated with mafia-style, so-called “business forums” seeking to muscle in on existing businesses. These criminal elements have been particularly active in KZN.

All of this suggests what we have long believed: that there are active connections between political counterrevolutionaries and criminal networks.

Finally, the third social layer involved in the events of July were those who participated in the anarchic spree of mass looting. The mass looting had no political or business agenda, and it was largely (but not exclusively) carried out by the marginalised poor. However, the mass looting was clearly fanned by a relatively professional social media capacity, linked to renegade ANC and other networks.

Despite a compromised intelligence capacity (deliberately neutered by years of state capture), some of the most dangerous plans were forestalled by the

security forces. But the vulnerable N3 was shut down for some five days, using well-planned strategies that had been rehearsed earlier in the xenophobic attacks on non-South Africa truck-drivers.

The mass looting was actively encouraged to stretch the security forces, to create a smokescreen for the more hardcore insurrectionary objectives, and to win some popular sympathy. With the crisis levels of unemployment and poverty, with food insecurity a reality for millions of South Africans, it was possible to stir up opportunistic looting that had little to do with any political agenda, and with those doing the looting barely advancing any political demands during the plundering.

Triggering this destructive plundering was bound to fail as a sustained strategy. As malls were gutted, as local corner shops were plundered, food and other necessities quickly ran out. Instead of winning popular sympathy for their

The plotters found themselves on the back foot in the face of a massive, and country-wide popular groundswell

political objectives, the insurrectionary plotters, who themselves had been involved in high-level, globalised looting on an industrial scale for a decade and more, quickly found themselves on the back foot in the face of a massive, and country-wide popular groundswell.

Community champions

Workers and the trade union movement understood that jobs were being lost, many of them permanently. There was no support from that quarter. The taxi industry, notwithstanding its own tendencies to volatility, understood its symbiotic relationship to shopping malls and played an active role in defending these commercial assets. Informal workers trading in and around shopping centres were collateral victims. Conservative traditional leaders spoke out and sought to dissociate themselves and their supporters from any ethnic mobilisation either for the Zuma-related political adventurism, or for the looting. Religious formations condemned the mass looting and the attack on the rule of law.

Above all, it was local community policing forums, neighbourhood watches, community action networks, that had sprung up in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, and spontaneous volunteer groupings that protected neighbourhoods and community assets. At times



Community policing: Residents escort a man they caught looting at Chris Hani Mall in Vosloorus in mid-July

there was some race profiling, and cases of lower-middle class communities (black and white) excluding their more marginalised informal settlement neighbours.

In a few localities, there was ugly criminal vigilantism – often justifying itself on the basis of minority fears, typically fanned, in turn, by rabid, anti-minority race-baiting of the kind that emanates from the leadership clique in ANC splinter organisations and elsewhere. There is a symbiotic relationship between one set of racist chauvinism and another. This does not, of course, remotely excuse vigilante violence, and those responsible must face the full might of the law. The SACP salutes the role played, particularly in Phoenix, by the Young Communist League, defending non-racialism, the rule of law and our democratic constitution in a very challenging situation.

But negative features were not the dominant reality of the nation-wide response.

Beyond the critical KZN-Gauteng axis, the insurrection plotters failed to trigger an expansion of the mass looting to other provinces. Generally, ANC structures in all other provinces stood their ground, partly from principle, and partly for their own regional reasons. In the case of pockets of RET-sympathetic elements who might have been tempted

to fan chaos in their provinces, the popular backlash against the looting in KZN and Gauteng would have been a definite damper. In parliament, President Ramaphosa actively united all political parties but one, and in the Western Cape legislature all political parties (including that party) supported the defence of democracy, the constitution and condemned the looting and violence.

What were the objectives of the conspirators? Obviously, the immediate triggering of a presumably long prepared action, was the jailing of Jacob Zuma. The first objective was to prevent his going to jail, and, when they were caught by surprise by his Wednesday incarceration ahead of what they had anticipated, they then attempted to secure his immediate release.

Grounding the conspiracy on the persona of Zuma was another weakness. As a result of years of exposure of the level of state capture looting, and of Zuma's

own evident self-serving duplicity, outside of, and even in, KZN, Zuma's popular appeal has waned massively. Zuma's cause has also not been well served by the rag-tag, discredited inner circle of acolytes, spokespersons, and wealthy offspring surrounding him.

Caught out by the backlash against the mass looting, some in the conspiracy camp sought to back-track. There were desperate contortions, epitomised by one of the offspring calling on looters to "please do so carefully and please do so responsibly". A ridiculous plea which sought simultaneously to distance itself and to support a twin sister's earlier inflammatory "Mooi River. We Still See You. Amandla!". One disgraced character, ostensibly acting on behalf of MK veterans, who had previously boasted they would never allow Zuma to go to jail, now vaingloriously delivered a 14-day ultimatum to President Ramaphosa to release Zuma or face some unspecified consequence. It was an indirect admission that this network of degenerates was behind the chaos in the first place. They were hoping to present a freed Zuma as the only person capable of restoring peace. But with the mass looting in KZN halted by the combined efforts of the security forces and community self-defence, this card, too, was not viable.

If the release of Zuma became the immediate demand, the medium-term objectives were (and remain) the displacement of the Ramaphosa-led ANC and therefore of a Ramaphosa state presidency, reversing progress being made within the ANC to clean up, and to halt the slowly gathering momentum of the criminal justice system in dealing with state capture crime and corruption. Although this conspiracy has lost serious ground in the course of July (but at huge cost to our country, and particularly to the working class and poor), we must remain extremely vigilant and united in the defence of democracy, the constitution and the rule of law.

But we must go beyond vigilance. We must ask how any of this was possible in the first place. How, 27 years after the democratic breakthrough, could this have happened?

There are three inter-related factors: the degeneration of our liberation movement; a weakened state; and the failure to use the 1994 democratic breakthrough as a platform to drive a serious National Democratic Revolution with the resulting persisting crisis of extreme levels of poverty, inequality, unemployment and chronic violence. ●

The SACP salutes the role played, particularly in Phoenix, by the YCL, defending non-racialism

CENTENARY: ANC STATEMENT

SACP's guidance, partnership, leadership needed more than ever

African National Congress President Cyril Ramaphosa's message of support to the SACP centenary celebrations stresses the role of the SACP in building the liberation movement and calls for reaffirmed commitment to developing the Alliance and its revolutionary programme of transformation

The birth of this vanguard of the working class was a monumental moment in the history of the South African people against all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Inspired by revolutionary events taking place on foreign shores, the Communist Party of South Africa was a direct and audacious challenge to the deprivation that had been visited on the workers and peasants of our land.

It established itself as a militant foe of both the racist authorities that governed our country and the capitalist system that exploited our people.

And in doing so, it earned the respect, the support, the confidence and the love of the struggling masses of our country.

If we had it our way, we would be gathered in a stadium so that all may join in the celebration of this centenary.

Unfortunately, this occasion takes place when our country and the world is in the midst of a devastating pandemic, when we cannot gather together, when to remain apart is necessary for the preservation of life and health.

Yet, although we cannot be together, this pandemic has demanded more than ever that we strengthen the bonds of human solidarity and compassion.

It has laid bare the deep divisions and glaring inequalities that define our world and our society.

This pandemic has had a devastating impact on the working class and the poor.

It has deepened unemployment, inequality and poverty. Across the world, millions have lost income, jobs and livelihoods.

The pandemic has demonstrated the huge divide in access to health care, shelter, water, electricity and other basic services. It has shown the vulnerability of millions of people to hunger and food insecurity.

While the disease is caused by a virus, the pandemic is caused by humans.

Through our actions and our inaction, through our indifference to suffering, through our tolerance of injustice, through our inability to confront inequality, we have – as a global community – provided the means for this virus to cause such devastation.

And this is why this occasion, the centenary of the South African Communist

Party, is imbued with such significance.

The social, political and economic conditions that made this pandemic possible are precisely the conditions that the SACP has dedicated its existence to overcoming.

The late SACP General Secretary Comrade Chris Hani said:

“Socialism is not about big concepts and heavy theory. Socialism is about decent shelter for those who are homeless. It is about water for those who have no safe drinking water. It is about health-care, it is about life of dignity for the old. It is about overcoming the huge divide between the urban and rural areas.

“It is about a decent education for all our people. Socialism is about rolling back the tyranny of the market. As long as the economy is dominated by an unelected privileged few, the case for socialism will exist.”

There can be few who reflect on the state of the world today who would not agree that the case for socialism still exists.

As we observed in our January 8th Statement this year, the SACP has – throughout its history – remained a dependable ally not only of our liberation movement, but of the oppressed and exploited of South Africa.

It has been at the forefront of the struggle against racial discrimination and capitalist exploitation, understanding the inextricable relationship between

The Party was a direct and audacious challenge to the deprivation visited on the workers and peasants



'The relationship between the ANC and the SACP is not an accident of history ... it is a living organism grown out of struggle.' – ANC President Oliver Tambo, 1981

race and class in South Africa.

From even its earliest years, it has been embedded in the struggles of communities and in the mobilisation of workers.

Members of the Communist Party were among the first to feel the repressive wrath of the apartheid state and were prominent among the first men and women to take up arms to defend our people.

The revolutionary alliance between the ANC and the SACP was forged in the crucible of struggle.

We recall the words of ANC President Oliver Tambo when he spoke on the 60th anniversary of the SACP in 1981. He said:

“The relationship between the ANC and the SACP is not an accident of history, nor is it a natural and inevitable development...

“Ours is not merely a paper alliance, created at conference tables and formalised through the signing of documents and representing only an agreement of leaders. Our alliance is a living organism that has grown out of struggle.

“Within our revolutionary alliance each organisation has a distinct and vital role to play. A correct understanding of these roles, and respect for their boundaries has ensured the survival and consolidation of our cooperation and unity.”

As we reflect on this Alliance, we

need to recognise the critical role that the SACP has played in the political and ideological development of the liberation movement. The policies, programmes and perspectives of the ANC have, over the course of many decades, been greatly enriched by the political discourse of the SACP.

The ANC has also benefited from the involvement of SACP members in building the structures of the ANC and in forging a progressive labour movement. They have done so as fully fledged members of the ANC, understanding the need to build a powerful national liberation movement capable of advancing the National Democratic Revolution.

These members of the SACP have brought to the ANC intellectual rigour, political consciousness, discipline, integrity and a profound understanding of the South African situation.

Now, as the SACP enters its second century, as we confront the challenges, contradictions and opportunities of the present, we need to reaffirm our commitment to this Alliance and to its revolutionary programme of fundamental transformation.

In this moment, we must understand, as President Oliver Tambo did, that our relationship is not an accident of history. Nor is it static. It is a living organism that must adapt to the circumstances and the tasks of the time.

And so, as we celebrate this centenary, we must look to the future.

Drawing on our rich history of struggle, we must determine the role, content and form that our revolutionary Alliance must take to realise our shared goal of a National Democratic Society.

We must strive with the sincerity and the rigour of those who came before us to develop a common understanding of the current conditions in our country, on our continent and in the world – and work together to define the tasks that we must undertake.

Our Alliance derives its value and its meaning – and its strength – from its position with and among the masses of our people.

It is an Alliance that must be engaged in the daily struggles of South Africans, that must serve only their interests, that must champion only their needs, and must relentlessly strive for the betterment of their lives.

As we celebrate this historic milestone, let us recommit ourselves to the age-old values of our movement such as self-sacrifice, humility, service to the people, tolerance, discipline, hard-work and integrity.

Let us work hard to preserve the unity of our movement and our country.

Let us hold fast to our culture of open debate, tolerance and vibrant internal democracy.

Let us combat all forms of patriarchy within our ranks and remove all impediments to the advancement of women within our movement.

Let us stand firm against factionalism, patronage and division.

Let us be unrelenting in our resolve to end state capture and corruption, wherever it may be and whatever form it may take.

Let us place the interests of the people above all else.

For the past century, the South African Communist Party has been a force for progressive revolutionary change.

It has been a vital part of the struggle to achieve and to build a democratic South Africa.

Now, as we undertake the difficult task of economic recovery, as we seek to accelerate the fundamental transformation of our society, we once again look to the SACP for guidance, partnership and leadership.

As the African National Congress, we salute the SACP on this historic anniversary and pledge our support and solidarity for the work that lies ahead. ●

CENTENARY: COSATU STATEMENT

The SACP, class struggle, the NDR and the strategies for today

Cosatu's message to the SACP centenary focuses on the historical role of class struggle in the emergence of the Party and outlines solid ideas for how to wage that struggle now

Exactly 100 years ago this July, the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was formed, which later became the South African Communist Party (SACP) as we know it today. It was in 1921, immediately after the First World War, that several communist parties were formed, with much historic significance to the class struggle. They include the Communist Party of China.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels expressed the most fundamental essence of the class struggle in the Communist Manifesto. They wrote: "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes".

Following the devastations of the world economy by inter-imperialist rivalries that resulted in the First World War – a war between imperialist powers, for the balkanisation of Africa and other parts of the developing world, territorial conquests and colonies in order to the partition the world into monopoly spheres of each imperialist power – the working classes arose to the reality of capitalist greed and de-

structiveness that led the whole world into common ruin. This led to the birth of several key communist parties that changed the course of human history forever.

This underlines the fact illustrated above about the history of all hitherto existing society as the history of class struggles. History has proven that no class wage a struggle on behalf of another, hence the indispensability of class consciousness and class analysis in all our struggles. Without class consciousness, workers and other social forces are unable to unpack and expose the class contradictions and the class interests behind every decision, move and policy. Towards that end, it is the cardinal pillar of any revolutionary and working class organisation to remain guided at all times by class consciousness.

In the history of the South African revolution, we owe a special tribute to the role of the SACP in the ideological, organisational and political sphere for offering its sharpest analysis, insights and advanced ideas during the most difficult period of the underground and exile. We did not doubt that, for every difficult question facing the revolution; from narrow national chauvinism and tribalism, to sexism and patriarchy, to colonialism of a special type and racial capitalism, to superstitions, myths and stereotypes and all sorts of backward

ideas, the SACP was at the forefront clarifying the foundation of our class analysis and the advanced theory of the class. We have benefitted from the historic work of Moses Kotane, JB Marks, Ray Alexander, Yusuf Dadoo, Brian Bunting, Dan Tloome, Michael Harmel, Ruth First, Chris Hani, Jack Simons, and Dora Tamana.

Strategic role of the Alliance in leading the NDR

The significance and role of the Tripartite Alliance and its components must be understood in this context. It is the revolution that defined what alliances and class forces define the essence of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and how do they relate to each other and the revolution in general, during the different phases of our struggle. The Alliance must be understood in its totality and as a convergence of different components representing specific constituencies and forces that share a common perspective called the NDR, but with separate social constituencies.

Towards this end, the Alliance must and should always clarify the overall thrust of the NDR in each phase but remain alive to the fact of each constituency's immediate and pressing issues, which, if ignored, could lead to a strategic detour or even an outright rupture. This clarity and understanding of the forces constituting the Alliance and the mass



On the march: Members of Cosatu's transport workers' affiliate, Satawu, marching in Johannesburg - Cosatu pays tribute to the role of communists in building the federation

democratic movement is very important, otherwise we either conflate, confuse or downplay the essence of each component and its unique role and contribution to the Alliance and the NDR in general.

This is where the nuances, postures and overtures become more pronounced on either strategic or practical and tactical matters. This is very important for our shared understanding of the NDR in motion and how it shall be continuously evolving and throwing new and unprecedented challenges.

We have been engaged in matters critical to workers and the working class in general, as the Alliance and components, in the recent past, as has been the case throughout the history of our revolution. We have experienced the difficulty of clarifying what the NDR mean for workers losing jobs, to workers losing Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration protection and the general disruption of the whole bargaining system as a result of the neoliberal restructuring of capital. We have sometimes felt each other to be on one or other extreme. This is the challenge of the conjuncture and the necessity to clarify the actual stage of our revolution and its practical meaning for us as revolutionaries and leaders of the NDR.

Cosatu pays special tribute to the role and contribution of communists in building Cosatu and working class power in general, with the result that

our revolutionary character as a trade union basing itself on the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism is to a very huge extent, the influence and contribution of the SACP. In the same way, that the ANC can be regarded as being a force of the left and, using revolutionary tools throughout its history of struggle against apartheid, as a tribute to that role we are speaking about.

Cosatu and the SACP are the key axis of the left in the Alliance and critical forces of the NDR in driving a revolutionary and progressive content of the whole struggle. The dismantling of apartheid is not complete, neither is the transformation of society. We are still in a stubborn transition from a racist, capitalist society to a democratic and developmental society. This is the imperative and understanding we must always never take for granted.

The journey the SACP has undertaken towards this centenary is a very arduous and difficult one, but filled with rich lessons and experiences that make us a lot richer, more wiser and more sharpened. In that way, we all share in these evolutionary and revolutionary gains and insights of that journey.

Towards that end, Cosatu would want to use the centenary celebrations moment to call for a broad strategic focus on the following:

- Deliberate focus on heightening ideological development, to intensify the

building of working class consciousness and advancing unity of workers against neo-liberalism and imperialism, particularly in this difficult period of outright capitalist barbarism, extreme exploitation and poverty;

- Building a Popular front for social and economic justice, bringing together community and social justice movements, coordinated by both the SACP and Cosatu in actual struggles against the ravaging crises in communities and job losses;

- Dedicated focus on organisational development and building peoples organs to strengthen our organisations, build organs of people's power and reclaim the mass movement for revolutionary transformation, including fighting corruption, as well abuse of public resources and parasitism;

- Being more decisive in fighting against gender-based violence, women and children abuse, crime, as well as for environmental justice to save the planet and the future of humanity from the path of capitalist greed;

- Building more joint technical oversight capacity to advance and monitor policy development, implementation and evaluation in the state; and

- Advancing a more robust internationalism and solidarity movement, with special focus on Africa, Cuba, Palestine and Venezuela and the whole Latin America and the Caribbean. ●

UMSEBENZI SACP CENTENARY EDITION



100 Years of
UNBROKE
STRUGGL

SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE
- BUILD IT NOW!

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CENTENARY: YCLSA STATEMENT

It's time to confront capitalism head-on

YCLSA National Secretary Tinyiko Ntini delivered this message to the SACP's virtual centenary rally

We celebrate the centenary of our party, the South African Communist Party – the only vanguard party of the working class in South Africa and the first in the African continent. We celebrate the 100 fighting years of the revolution towards socialism and international solidarity characterised by active campaigning, armed struggle against apartheid, a fight against post 1994 neoliberal trajectory, anti-state capture campaigns that today resulted in many of the beneficiaries launching a fight back.

We pay tribute, on behalf of the children of mineworkers, domestic workers, security guards, municipal workers, the health workers, teachers and the entire working class in our South Africa. Being workers ourselves, being the unemployed youth and youth in education we find it our duty to honour this event of our party that has over the years fought selflessly in the best interest of our struggles. We hope and believe this milestone will take the party from one strength to the other in uniting the working class and confronting capitalism head-on.

The Communist International's crucial role

We celebrate Chris Hani, Moses Mabhida, Albert Nzula, Joe Slovo, Ruth First, Lucas Masele, Sidney Bunting, Moses Kotane, Dora Tamana, Josie Mpama and many other great revolutionaries. We are here to pay tribute to the Communist International that played a critical role in the formation and building of this organisation.

On the 7 December 1917, the International Socialist League (which was later to merge with other formations into the Communist Party of South Africa) itself stated: “The abolition of the Native Indenture, Passport and Compound Sys-

tems and the lifting of the Native Workers to the Political and Industrial Status of the White is an essential step towards the Emancipation of the Working-class in South Africa.

“Society is divided into two classes: the working class, doing all the labour; and the idle class, living on the fruits of labour. Strictly speaking therefore there is no ‘Native Problem’. There is only a working-class problem.”

This analysis paved a way to what is today recognised as the first non-racial and oldest communist organisation in the African Continent, the SACP.

The founding manifesto of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1921 stated:

“For the immediate future, indeed, the main duty of the party and of every member of it is to establish the widest and closest possible contact with workers of all ranks and races and to propagate the Communist gospel among them, in the first instance among the industrial masses, who must provide the “storm troops” of the Revolution, and secondly among the rural toilers. Even that path will not be smooth. Immediate repression in the form of raids, prosecutions, mob attacks and bloodshed by “Black (and Tan) Hundreds” or “White Guards” may be looked for as the propaganda is seen to be working among the submissive helot races whose enlighten-

ment and organisation the ruling class dreads above all. The Communists will therefore proceed neither timorously nor tactlessly, losing no opportunity of demonstrating that, inasmuch as the cheap docile labour is what attracts the world capitalist investor to South Africa, so its understanding of and conscious entry into the working-class movement is the deadliest blow South Africa can deal to world capitalism.”

Soon afterwards, the Executive Committee of the Communist International adopted a resolution on the South African Question, which was to lay much of the groundwork for developing the work of the Party in nurturing mass activity and building the ANC.

The resolution stated: “The Communist Party of South Africa must combine the fight against all anti-native laws with the general political slogan in the fight against British domination, the slogan of an independent native South African republic as a stage towards a workers’ and peasants’ republic, with full equal rights for all races, black, coloured and white.”

The bitter truth that we must tell at times is that our party was not formed in alliance with the ANC. The Alliance of the party and the ANC is one of struggle, as well articulated by President OR Tambo, and for once we are clearly going to pronounce ourselves; that the SACP is not a stepchild of the ANC, and if the ANC cannot treat our party as an equal ally, then the time to do justice to that situation might have arrived.

Alliance rebuilding must be inclusive

We are not reckless, neither are we bitter, but we are not going to be convinced that there is an alliance where one organisation claims to be the compass to all Alliance structures. Currently, the ANC is

**The Alliance
of the Party
and the ANC
is one
of struggle**



On the shoulders of giants: YCL acknowledges the role of the Communist International for providing direction to what would become the SACP

waiting for its National General Council to discuss the document on the 'reconfiguration of the Alliance', outside collective Alliance process. This means we are at the mercy of one organisation instead of establishing a common approach either at the Alliance Summit or purely convening councils to deal with the subject matter.

A reality that we all know is that the SACP came into an alliance with a liberation movement, however what we see today it's a totally different organisation that we allied with. The gains of our National Democratic Revolution are under siege, noting both the extreme groupings in the liberation movement. As correctly said by our vanguard party that we are neither for state capture parasitic network masquerading as catalysts for radical transformation of our policies nor the neoliberal and austerity cartel that their zeal is to privatise our state-owned entities.

Formative struggles

A year after the establishment of the CPSA in 1921, mineworkers embarked on a strike in 1922 – the popular mineworkers strike of 1922. In the party's message to our 99th anniversary a few months ago, the party correctly stated that "the

Communist Party regarded the strike as primarily a battle in the class struggle between labour and capital, but strongly condemned and distanced itself from the racist elements associated the strike". As the way forward, the party correctly pointed out that a white South Africa must be ruled out altogether and called on workers to unite on a non-racial basis and intensify the overall class struggle to win their momentary objectives and ultimate goals.

Racists already disliked the party for its non-racial posture much as some dislike the party today for its posture against a pseudo-black consciousness campaign which claims that black elites should be empowered through the state as a means of economic transformation. Seemingly history is repeating itself!

As a result of the posture of the party towards the 1922 mineworkers strike, the

party was rejected outrightly by racists in the 1924 elections. Just like all these pseudo workers' parties emerging today, racists white workers joined forces with Hertzog's National Party to fight Smuts in the racist elections of 1924 – the same National Party that legislated apartheid. The white workers did not vote for the party which made the biggest sacrifice in the strike and played the most critical role. The only sin of the CPSA was that it advocated for a non-racial South Africa on socialist principles where the economy of the country would rest in the hands of the people and not a few white racist elites.

This is just to say that we were not introduced to elections by the ANC, we contested elections a long time ago before BBGMs were even fashionable and before the ANC could even establish branches. So, this reaffirm our stance that the party is a party of power. This is historical evidence.

We cannot find comfort in the fact that the ANC has now become an organisation that disregards the importance of the Alliance to an extent that we are guests to processes of candidate selection, guidelines and so forth. The progressive government that has unleashed an onslaught on the workers and any-

**The gains of
our National
Democratic
Revolution
are under siege**

thing that is pro-working class. Young people are on the receiving-end and face high unemployment and inequalities without a proper plan from our ANC-led government on how to mitigate these challenges except through a YES (youth employment strategy) programme that we say to NO as the YCLSA.

Last year, on the 99th anniversary of the party, we said that our call for state power does not mean that the party should ignore the historic fact of an alliance built under hardships, but rather to save the working class and the congress movement, which is obsessed with fighting itself, the party must seize the moment. The resolution of the Special National Congress which took place in 2019 is very clear – we are not orphans to the ANC neither does our contestation for state power through the ANC mean that the African National Congress is a bigger sister of the SACP. We are equal!

When the party was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, the party never requested the ANC to equally ban itself, rather, the party sacrificed and neglected itself most of the time to build the African National Congress. That is a historic fact.

Revolutionary unity

Our message is very simple, if the ANC is reactionary, then we should mobilise our people to fight the ANC. If there are factions in the ANC, then we must fight all of them because they exist for disunity. We clearly state this, advised by one of China's most revered revolutionaries, Mao Zedong, when he said: "How do we tell a person is a revolutionary, if today he integrates himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice. If he is willing do so and actually does so, he is a revolutionary; if tomorrow he ceases to do so or turns round to oppress the common people, then he becomes a counter revolutionary".

As we celebrate this milestone, we are also aware of the developments taking place in the country. We want to state it outright that populist demagogues and pop-star politicians must stop using Chris Hani's death to score cheap political points or gather sympathy. If you claim that one day you will speak the truth on who killed Chris Hani, in our eyes you are a reactionary traitor because you have kept the truth from the nation for so many years, meaning that you might have also been involved in the brutal act.

July 2021



Chris Hani, seen here during the 1990 relaunch of the newly-legal SACP, was assassinated just three years later. The identity of those who ordered his death remains unknown

Liberation for Swaziland

The anniversary of the Party is taking place alongside a much-awaited revolution – the struggle for democracy in Swaziland. We would like to state outright that we support the mass actions for people's power in Swaziland.

We would also like to respond to the so-called princess who elected to lie on

international media about the situation in Swaziland. It is a pure lie and fabrication that the soldiers killing people are mere criminals dressed in police and military uniforms that they stole. Yes, they are criminals, but ones that are employed by the state as soldiers and police officers, and they exist to protect another criminal by the name of King Mswati who never stops stealing from the people of Swaziland.

All progressive forces must unite in support of the struggle in Swaziland and we hope our own government will take a firm stance on this. We remain a country that believe in diplomatic engagements, respect for human rights and therefore we cannot be silent on this because it will mean, in practice, we are on the side of the oppressor. ●

**Demagogues and
pop-star politicians must
stop using Hani's
death to score cheap
political points**

CENTENARY: LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

Lessons for intensifying class consciousness

Frans Baleni spotlights some key takeaways from the SACP's century of struggle for socialism to tackle current challenges and crises



The formation of the SACP was informed by the desire to change the economic order and replace it with a socialist agenda. The developments of 1917 in Russia gave hope to many communists that it is possible to end the capitalist system.

In 1985, members of the NUM obtained SACP's literature through Sactu comrades who were SACP members. Among the documents was a pamphlet that described how the exploitation of workers is prescribed by the capitalist system. These workers discovered that what they were paid for was actually less than the hours they spent underground.

They formed a committee that they called the Five Madoda, led by Diya Setona, and including Ntsundu, Nxele, James Smanga, and Thabiso Lenka. They mobilised workers to work only four hours a day, and if the employer wanted them to work more hours, they had to be paid more. That campaign was so popular that it led to the rapid growth of NUM membership.

This example reflects the practical impact of the SACP in its journey to a socialist order. But the SACP also had to deal with the immediate challenge of apartheid and therefore had to work closely with other organisations and trade unions.

SACP and trade unions

In 1922, just a year after the communist party was formed, it had to deal with the white workers' strike. The CPSA supported the strike but, as Professor Vic Allen (author of the three-volume history of the NUM) pointed out: "it did

not necessarily identify with every slogan heard during the strike." The Party felt that the miners' strike was a positive move because it was an attack on the capitalist system.

According to Allen's assessment of this strike, the Party was seen to be associated with a racially mobilised strike against the inclusion of the black workers in the skilled and semi-skilled categories. Allen wrote that the Party only gained credibility after recruiting black leaders into its ranks.

The 1924 annual Party conference resolved to tackle the problems of the working class irrespective of colour, consequently it elected Sydney Bunting and Eddie Roux who were less racist than others were.

Allen argued that this realisation also led to the election of Thomas Mbeki, Edwin Mofutsanyana, Eddie Khaile, Josie Mpama, John Gomas, James La Guma, Johannes Nkosi and then, a bit later, JB Marks, Albert Nzula and Moses Kotane.

The party also worked with the International Commercial Union (ICU) until communists were expelled the union. Thomas Mbeki, however, chose to remain in the ICU. The SACP, having worked closely with Sactu and later with Cosatu and its affiliates, contributed to the politicisation of trade unions.

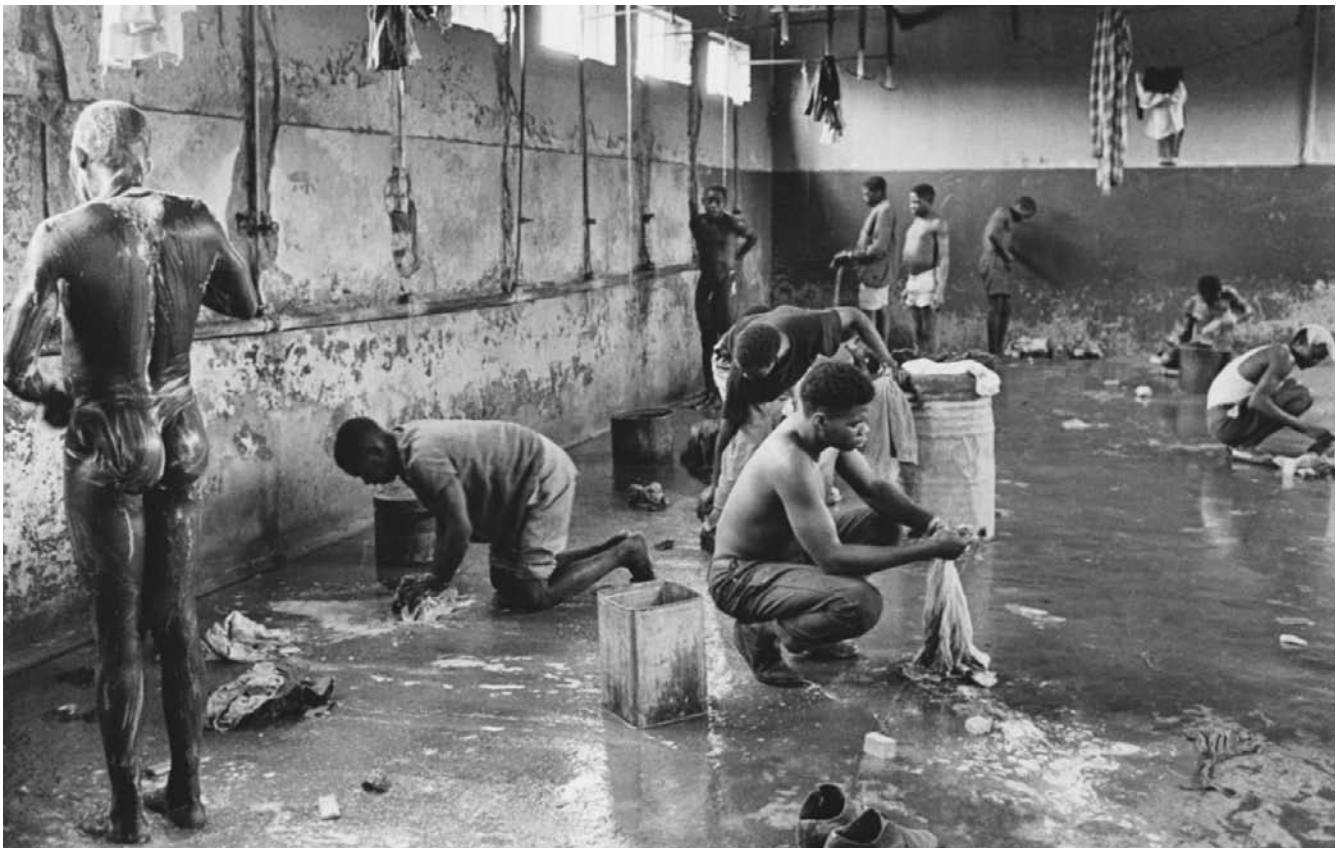
1917 gave hope to many communists that it is possible to end the capitalist system

The party committed itself to working with the ANC and Sactu/Cosatu. It took the view that it is its duty to provide revolutionary leadership, to guide them and to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the Alliance components. It is the Party which paved a way for the ANC to gain access to communist countries to get military, educational and material support. In one of the political training programmes that I have attended in the UK, the late Mzala Nxumalo said the conduct and discipline of a communist must be such that an observer would say they behave like a true communist. A party cadre must have a deep class consciousness, which cannot be altered by the environment, position and deployment.

"Our critiques to the left have always criticised the SACP for having either prioritised the national question at the expense of the class struggle or the class struggle over the national question. We have of course always (correctly) insisted that the question in South Africa is not about which struggle is primary, the 'class' or 'national'". (*Bua Komanisi*, Vol. 1, May 2006).

The party has crafted a document on the reconfiguration of the Alliance. The time has come to fundamentally review the Alliance, especially, when the ANC is a leader of government. We have our reservations about the ANC's commitment in the reconfiguration of the Alliance. There are talks about talks of reconfiguration of the Alliance, but it remains to be seen if this matter will yield concrete results.

Many South Africans still lack basic services, despite the progress made over the past years. While there has been commitment towards discharging its man-



South African photographer Ernest Cole captured this image of migrant workers washing themselves and their clothes in a bleak mine compound in the 1950s. The picture appeared in Cole's 1967 *House of Bondage*, a photo essay on apartheid - the book was banned in South Africa.

Umsebenzi

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date in improving the conditions of the poor, a lot more still needs to be done by the ANC government. This has been complicated by acts of state capture, corruption and the collapse of many municipalities, especially those under the ANC leadership.

It is not easy for an individual nor an organisation to reach 100 years. The Party has been on a long socialist journey. It has a very rich history, it fought side by side with its Alliance partners to free South Africa from the apartheid system.

The world order, which motivated the formation of the Party, has changed. We no longer have the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic of 1917, and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) of East Germany ceased to exist with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

The way ahead

The left did not take full advantage of moments of various clear capitalist crises in some instances. Capitalists were even able to extricate themselves out of crises without any left assault, an opportunity missed.

What needs to be done is to address leadership shortcomings in govern-

ment, labour, business and in various institutions. We need to step up the class-consciousness-building agenda at all levels so party members can sustain the SACP for the next 100 years. The configuration of the Alliance is very critical so that we can focus on our programme of building socialism and building it now.

The SACP can learn from the Chinese Communist Party for our second 100-year journey.

In his book *Leadership Lessons from Books I Have Read*, Professor Tshildzi Marwala shares with us ideas from Deng Xiaoping: a leader must plan with a clear vision; build capacity to implement and execute; have technical capability, especially at leadership level; use setbacks for re-planning towards your goals.

The SACP must seize this seminal moment of its centenary to advance the revolutionary ideals and agenda that was conceived by its forebears in 1921. ●

Cde Baleni is the SACP Secretary for International Relations and former General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers

CENTENARY: 55 YEARS IN RED

A privilege to serve the SACP

Lechesa Tsenoli reflects on his long involvement in the liberation movement and the creation of democracy in SA, and stresses that reconfiguring the Alliance is critical to the survival of the ANC, and renewal in the trade union movement and the SACP



It's been a privilege to serve the objectives of the Party, informally and formally, as its member in the closing decades of its first century. Pursuing freedom, justice and equality continues to be an exhilarating journey.

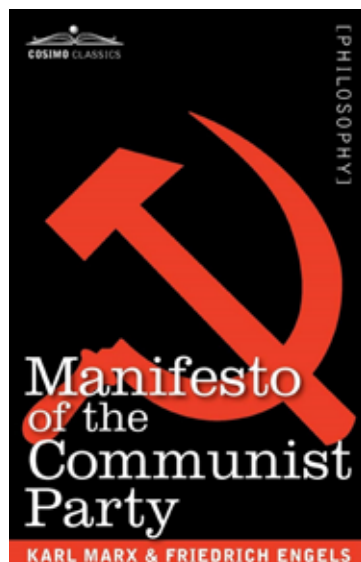
I came across the communist manifesto for the first time in 1972. I had gone to browse as usual books in a bookshop in town in Bloemfontein and I was attracted by the title *1848 Revolts* and by authors Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

The topic was familiar from the study of history at school. But the contrast between what I read there and what I studied at school was dramatic. The authors I had vaguely heard of as troublesome fellows and had never seen anything they had written.

The combative, robust debating writing style of Marx and Engels used in their book gripped me powerfully like I had never been before. I was hooked on this kind of literature although, for reasons that it was banned, I couldn't get enough of it.

The then growing influence of black consciousness that emerged in the late '60s was the dominant perspective. Protest poetry, writing, theatre and short plays flourished and became whirlwinds through which our political awareness grew.

I worked as a clerk at a hospital after matric, as a packer-dispatcher, as a temporary teacher at a secondary school in Kroonstad in the Free State, then as a freelance journalist in the late '70s. It



was during this period that I was invited to travel to Wilgespruit fellowship centre for a PEN conference.

Here I came across Mafika Pascal Gwala in debate, discussion with Nadine Gordimer. The idea of Marxist analysis was raised sharply by Mafika who gently accused Nadine that she was shy of calling her analysis Marxist openly. My dim

Recruitment excited me as I had never experienced: reading, taking action and talking about things differently

recollection of reading Marx returned while listening to the debate, including the ringing communist manifesto in my head while listening to the debate!

It was my recruitment to the underground in the early eighties into the ANC and the material we got access to that intellectually gave me a kick in the butt and excited me like I never fully experienced before: reading, taking action, reflecting and talking about things differently.

The '80s sucked me into left politics – Marxist Leninism – inside the African National Congress.

Congress in an exciting manner.

Chapter 8 of Richard Turner's *The Eye of the Needle* literally pushed me beyond what was already a thinning Black Consciousness perspective.

It's inadequacy to me about problems of communities, internationalism threw me forcefully into the Freedom Charter ideological positions. Clearly the influence of the Party.

The insistence of the Party that exploitation is wrong, that justice and freedom are critical to a full life, that discrimination is wrong, that states must put people first, became the meaning we give to life! The work we did contributed to the worker campaigns and to formation the Cosatu federation with militant leadership and shop stewards in the mid-1980s.

Despite the intensification of police action, we also built community civic structures. In turn, these became the backbone of the United Democratic Front (UDF) which urged people that

apartheid divides and the UDF unites.

The civic and front politics we pursued were deeply anti-apartheid and socialist in orientation; that similarly informed the cadre capacity building initiatives and attracting the best into our ranks.

The intensity of repression grew almost in proportion to the coming together more effectively of the mass struggles, underground work, and international work to isolate the apartheid regime and promote people's objectives!

We were at the centre of these struggles operating from KwaZulu Natal. My two detentions, under state of emergency and under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act, all together for six months, were exhausting but interesting.

We successfully gave the regime a middle finger and, in its fury, the regime became brutal and violent, as its legitimacy sharply eroded domestically and internationally.

Many got maimed if they survived the killing apartheid security machinery, as others skipped the country into exile to join MK and other campaigns to isolate the regime.

The defiance campaigns of the late eighties prized open apartheid jails, leading to the release of detainees and prisoners, later in the early '90s to the unbanning of ANC, SACP, PAC and others, leading to the return of those in exile.

The task of rebuilding, re-establishing branches of the formerly banned organisations became a critical task warily pursued.

In addition, preparations intensified to negotiate an end to the conflict and put in place finally a process to democratise the country.

From the vantage of the leadership of the civic movement we led and participated in those negotiations. We did so, determining the content and substance of our manifestos, the design of interim structures of governance, towards the writing of the final constitution.

We then went into parliament to represent the Alliance, which campaigned together, to legislate to effect the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP).

It's been a singular privilege to have been chosen among thousands, nay millions, of members of the ANC to represent it in the new democratic parliament of the republic of South Africa.

To serve with and be next to my heroes, men and women, on a regular basis from across the country, speaking differ-

ent languages, was just overwhelming in its inspiration and awe!

Emerging from inside the four pillars of the revolution – international, underground, mass struggles and armed struggle – were cadres of the movement, some of whom met in the ANC caucus in parliament. The debates could be fascinating as we exchanged views from our different but connected perspectives. The differences were also about the ANC, the SACP, Cosatu and Sanco - a core of cadres had all round, practical experience of these theatres, so to speak.

The differences could often lead to sparks flying in interesting ways. How to keep the ANC united, given these dynamics including of demographics and of gender, continue to be tough challenges.

The one thing that went some way to contribute to unity, has been taking members, activists through 'tools of analysis' fondly referred to as *madaedae*, a nickname for the study of dialectical materialism.

The aim is, and continues to be, to embed a strong degree of coherence in understanding what the problems are and as Lenin taught, 'what is to be done' about them.

Since we do not fight in our own terms according to Marx, both subjective and objective conditions has militated against always succeeding.

However, that the ANC reached its centenary in 2012, a significant feat by any measure, and the SACP is also reaching its centenary this weekend, is also a significant achievement. This longevity can partly be attributed to the relationship among the three key components of the alliance and their reinforcing each other.

Current attempts to reconfigure this relationship is critical to the survival of the ANC itself, the renewal efforts inside the trade union movement, and that of the SACP itself.

Our historic strengths do constitute a platform to rebuild ourselves effectively. The next century must be grasped by the neck early on.

Putting people first might be the

**Our historic strengths
do constitute a
platform to rebuild
ourselves
effectively**

SACP slogan but if the ANC itself does do and say so, the risks are higher.

Similarly, if the trade union movement does not service workers effectively and the state squanders its credibility by not putting workers first, then we are in trouble on that front as well.

Standing robustly, with integrity, fighting corruption and maladministration, are tasks for all of us inside the state and outside. Equally, fighting gender-based violence and femicide is our critical task everywhere.

We at least owe this to the people, who trusted us to govern well on their behalf, matters of the state.

Signs are that we might just defeat the Covid-19 pandemic if the state really pulls itself together effectively.

The state of the political economy is in a bad shape. The levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality are badly unsustainable.

Neoliberal and austerity measures might just push us over the cliff if we do not grasp the opportunity the crisis offers us to rebuild faster, more urgently and better.

Deploying our limited public resources in an integrated, strategic manner is a chance we have right now!

The relief measures announced by the president bodes well if they become a good foundation for introducing an economy growing universal basic income grant.

It's also been inspiring to see people 'being their own liberators', fighting against the destruction of their gains and protecting their neighbourhoods and communities.

The announced relief measures will go a long way in supporting those who lost their livelihoods in those communities and elsewhere.

We must fully support actions of communities to clean up their neighbourhoods regularly, to turn our lived environments into liveable places.

It's been a privilege to serve the two giants of the South African revolution so far as they navigate the next century with confidence.

We can never be grateful enough to the broader movement for having allowed us the opportunity to be their public representative, including in significant leadership positions throughout the last 26 years. ●

Cde Tsenoli is the Deputy Speaker in the National Assembly and a member of the Central Committee of the SACP

100 years of unbroken struggle

When socialists gathered in Cape Town to launch the Communist Party of South Africa 100 years ago, they foresaw a world where 'none shall be called master and none servant, all shall be workers in common'. But they also recognised that the struggle to win that world 'is no mere pastime; it is a fight, a grim, often a dangerous, sometimes a mortal fight'. This table charts 100 unbroken years of communist struggle in SA

1910

– **Union of South Africa:** SA now a single country under white minority rule

1912

– **ANC launched:** Response to exclusion of majority from the 1910 settlement

1913

– **Native's Land Act** designates just 10% of SA as black 'reserves'

1914

First World War: War between imperialists competing for control of colonial world

Origins of the communist party (1914 – 1921)

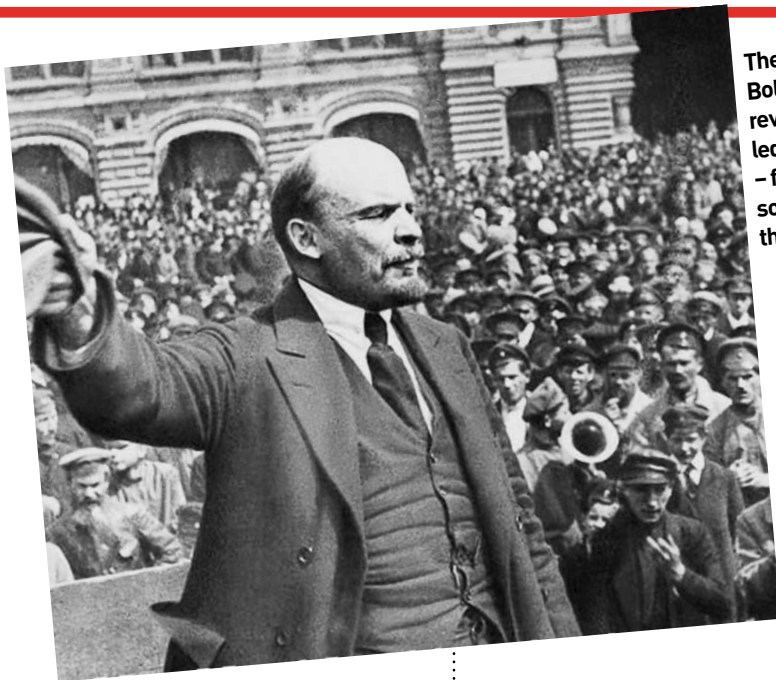
– Split in world socialist movement (those supporting, those opposing inter-imperialist war). SA socialists split from the SA Labour Party

1915

– SA socialists launch **International Socialist League**

1916

– Easter Uprising in Ireland against British rule



The Bolshevik revolution led by Lenin – for SA socialists, just the first step

1917

– **Bolshevik Revolution** creates world's first socialist state

1918

– **First World War** ends
– Secret proto-fascist **Afrikaner Broederbond** established

1919

Comintern: Communist International (CI) launched
– **ICU:** Clements Kadalie launches Industrial & Commercial Union. In a few years, it sweeps through the country

1921

CP SA launches, with ISL as its core – first Marxist Leninist party in Africa

– **Police kill 163 unarmed African land occupiers**
– **South African Indian Congress** launched

1922 – late 1920s

– **In Europe** working class insurrectionary tide rolled back with bloody suppression of communist uprisings
– **In SA** CPSA begins to root itself in local realities – the 1922 Rand Revolt, demonstrating racial divisions in the working class, forces the CPSA to reconsider the role of the white working class & leads to growing Party Africanisation.
– The *Native Republic Thesis* developed by the 6th Comintern Congress & adopted a year later by the CPSA (in part reluctantly) marks beginning of NDR strategy & work with & inside the ANC

1922

– **Rand Revolt:** The most militant white workers' strike is anti-boss – & anti-black worker

1924

– **Africanisation of the Party:** stalwarts such as JB Marks & Johannes Nkosi join



ISL: laying the foundations

1925

– Italy: Fascists take power

1926

– ICU expels communists: Its star begins to fade

1927

– JT Gumede elected ANC President: A new progressive leadership emerges

1928

– Emergence of African Party leadership: 1 600 of the CPSA's 1 750 members are black

– CI 6th Congress: Resolves that the task of South African communists is to transform the ANC into a fighting nationalist revolutionary organisation

1929

– Black Republic Thesis – CPSA adopts a strategic line: *The most direct line of advance to socialism runs through the mass struggle for majority rule* as a first stage

The 1930s

- Rise of fascism in Italy & Germany
- Left errors in the CI – characterising social democratic parties as 'social fascists'. Stalin's USSR forced marches into major industrialisation ('socialism in one country') while capitalist world in Great Depression

1930

– Factionalism: The CI also has negative effects in SA: factionalism leads to the expulsion of veterans like SP Bunting

– Party calls for **united front campaign** against pass laws, culminating in mass pass burning on 16 December

1934

– Cradock letter: Moses Kotane writes to Johannesburg District Party Committee: 'The Party is too pre-occupied with factional debates grounded in Europe; neglecting SA realities', reinforced a year later by Dimitrov at CI 7th congress: 'United fronts, not left-sectarianism, in the face of the fascist onslaught'

1935

– All African Convection: Forerunner of today's broad front politics. Mass protests throughout the country

1936

– Native Trust & Land Act entrenches land dispossession, allocating just 13%

of the country as 'reserves'; Africans removed from voters' roll

1937

– Orlando Pirates founded

1938

– Non-sectarianism – non-sectarian leadership emerges around Moses Kotane

1939

– Second World War triggered by German invasion of Poland

World war & struggles on the home front (1940-46)

- A surge in industrial growth, accelerated the demand of a world war, sees massive growth of African urbanisation & increasing incorporation into semi-skilled industrial working class (particularly with white workers away in army). CPSA builds strong branches in black townships. Communists play leading roles in building the Congress movement and trade unions (including in launch of the CNETU union federation) & more broadly, with Dora Tamana active in informal settlements, building cooperatives etc
- Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union (1941) creates favourable local "patriotic front" conditions for CPSA, which is active in fighting local fascism.

1942

– Battle of Stalingrad: Soviet victory is turning point in the war

1945

– Passive resistance: Mass meeting of Transvaal Indian Congress sets up Transvaal Passive Resistance Council under chairmanship of Yusuf Dadoo

– Global defeat of fascism with Soviet Red Army playing the leading role. Beginning of formal decolonisation

Freedom Charter: We the people...



'48: Apartheid – formalising oppression

1946-1960 – A decade of growing militancy & mass action

1946

– 60 000 black mineworkers under JB Marks's AMWU go on strike. Strike leaders arrested, tried and fined £50. Entire Joburg Party leadership arrested & tried for sedition and treason. Case dismissed two years later

– Launch of *Inkululeko* as a Party paper

1948

– National Party (NP) gains control of whites-only parliament

1949

– ANC Programme of Action: The ANC moves towards a more militant, mass line

– Chinese Communist Party: After 22 years of civil war & resistance of Japanese invasion, CCP takes power

1950

– Party banned: NP government passes Suppression of Communism Act & bans the CPSA. The law defines communism as *any doctrine or scheme which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic change...*

1952

– Defiance Campaign – ANC leads campaign against unjust laws. 8 000 volunteers arrested and suffer harsh punishment in nearly a year of campaigning – at the time, SA's biggest passive resistance campaign. The campaign triggered local actions, including bus boycotts

1953

– SACP launched: SA communists re-launch party in the underground as SACP

– Algeria: 8-year war of independence begins

1955

- **Congress of the People** in Kliptown adopts Freedom Charter
- **Sophiatown:** 60 000 people forced out of Sophiatown (renamed 'Triomf') to what is now Soweto – among the 3,5-million people 'removed' under apartheid

1956

- **Women's march:** 20 000 women march to the Union Buildings against extension of pass laws to women
- **Treason Trial:** 156 leading activists charged with communism & high treason. Charges eventually dismissed
- **Khrushchev:** At the CPSU's 20th Congress Khrushchev denounces Stalin's 'cult of personality' & mass persecutions

1957**African de-colonisation (1957-1970s)**

- Ghana becomes 1st African country to gain independence from colonial rule – 33 more 'colonies' follow in the next decade

1958

- **Zeerust protests** – women destroy pass books at Linokana, Gopane, Witligat & Motsaedi

1959

- **PAC:** Sobukwe splits from the ANC on Africanist & anti-communist platform
- **Cuban** revolution triumphs

1960

- **Pondoland uprising:** Mpondo peasants' Hill Committee coordinates insurrectionary resistance over multiple grievances, including & government appointment of traditional leaders
- **Sharpeville Massacre:** Police slaughter 69 people protesting pass laws
- **Government bans ANC & PAC,** declares a state of emergency

Setbacks & recovery (1960-mid 1970s)

- Launch of MK, sabotage campaign. Major setback for movement by mid-1960s with mass arrests & exile of key leadership. Slow recovery initially led from exile

1961

- **Armed struggle:** On December 16, Umkhonto weSizwe announces it launch with a series of sabotage actions



Soweto '76
– start of 15
semi-insurrectionary
years

- **Regional guerilla wars:** In quick succession, liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia & Zimbabwe launch armed struggles

1962

- **Road to SA Freedom:** At an underground congress the SACP adopts a new programme, developing the concept of Colonialism of a Special Type

1963

- **Police raid Liliesleaf farm** – SACP's secret headquarters and nerve centre of MK & underground ANC

1964

- **Rivonia Trial:** Nelson Mandela & other leaders sentenced to life imprisonment
- **Mid-1960s' repression:** Thousands of activists, including hundreds of communists, jailed. Some, like Vuyisile Mini, sent to the gallows

1967

- **Wankie & Sipolilo campaigns:** With key leadership in exile, MK attempts to re-launch armed struggle via Rhodesia

1968

- **Black consciousness** movement starts to fill vacuum left by repression of 1960s
- **Global youth, student, black power & worker uprisings** in France, Italy, Germany, US, Mexico & elsewhere

1969

- **ANC Morogoro Conference:** Key moment in the strategic regrouping of ANC. *Strategy & Tactics* document commits to a radical national democratic revolution with leading role of working class

1970

- **Augmented SACP Central Committee:** The SACP reviews 9 years of armed

struggle & concludes: *Armed struggle without mass mobilisation & organisation will lead nowhere*

1971

- **Internal SACP reconstruction:** The Party rebuilds its clandestine structures. *Inkululeko* appears – a voice from the underground
- **Ahmed Timol,** SACP operative, killed, one of more than 80 political detainees murdered by apartheid police

Mass resistance stirs (1973-1979)**1973**

- **Durban strikes:** Durban workers launch a series of strikes, opening the way for the re-emergence of radical trade unions

1974

- **Carnation Revolution** – popularly supported, left-leaning military overthrow of far-right regime in Portugal

1975

- **Independence:** Mozambique & Angola gain independence from Portugal – opening possibilities for MK closer to home
- **Vietnam:** Vietnamese forces defeat USA
- **Angola:** Soviet Union airlifts Cuban forces to halt South African invasion
- **Joe Slovo** publishes *South Africa: no middle road*

1976

- **Uprisings:** The 'Soweto uprising' signals start of 15 years of semi-insurrectionary struggles

1977

- **Biko:** Security police murder of Steve Biko



Cuban anti-aircraft gunners celebrate the withdrawal of SADF troops from Cuito Cuanavale

On the path to power (late 1970s-1990)

- Sustained rolling waves of semi-insurrectionary struggle – all 4 pillars of struggle (underground, mass movement, armed struggle, international solidarity) now in place
- While SU-socialist bloc enters period of stagnation, in our region the tide begins to turn

1978

- **PW Botha:** Botha becomes Prime Minister

1979

- **Solomon Mahlangu** executed after capture in Johannesburg
- **ANC's Green Book** seeks to re-orient armed struggle & fuse it with popular, mass-based struggles

1980

- **Zimbabwe independence:** Britain grants 'Rhodesia' independence, ending white rule. SA reacts by implementing a 'total strategy' – intensified military subversion of the rest of Southern Africa, that leaves 1-million dead
- **Sasol attacks:** MK special operations units infiltrate and badly damage Sasol refineries. The smoke plume over Sasolburg visible in Joburg

1981

- **Ronald Reagan** becomes US president, entrenching political endorsement of neoliberalism, and its hegemony in capitalist world

1983

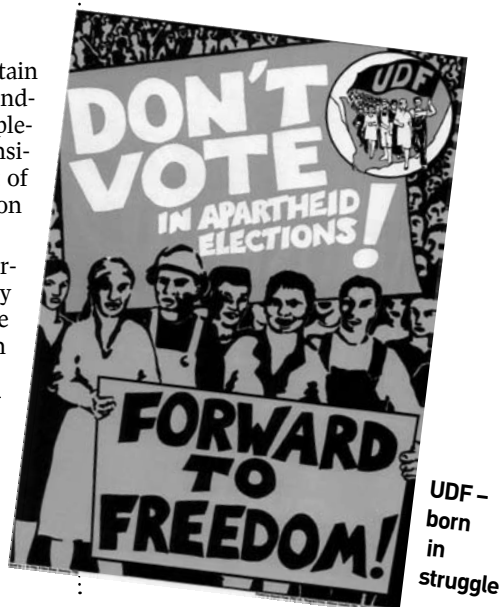
- **Reform' & resistance** – PW Botha proposes 2 racial (coloured and Indian) parliamentary chambers and new 'black local authorities'. UDF launched and successfully mobilises massive boycott of these 'reforms'.

1984

- **Vaal uprising:** Mass protests in Vaal townships, spreading rapidly through SA, giving fresh impetus to semi-insurrectionary resistance

1985

- **State of emergency:** Regional states of emergency in Gauteng, the eastern Cape &, soon, the western Cape. Cosas banned & thousands of UDF activists detained
- **Cosatu:** 33 trade unions launch what was (and remains) SA's biggest worker organisation



UDF – born in struggle

- At its 6th congress, the SACP asserts more strongly an independent & socialist perspective, publicly characterising its role as 'neither workerism, nor populism'

- *Umsebenzi* relaunched

1986

- **65th Party anniversary:** Inspired by the growth of a powerful union movement, the SACP reasserts a more independent profile
- **State of emergency:** Facing semi-insurrection & a surge in MK guerilla activity, Botha regime imposes a national state of emergency; 26 000 detained
- **Soviet Union:** Gorbachev launches glasnost (openness) & perestroika (restructuring) programme to counter economic, political & social stagnation

1987

- **NUM strike:** 250 000 mineworkers strike
- **Cuito Cuanavale:** 9-month battle is a turning point in SA's regional military dominance. SA troops withdraw south. Within months, SA agrees to withdraw entirely & grant independence to Namibia, formally ending SA's 'total strategy'
- **MK:** MK actions reach a peak – averaging of one every 16 hours, four times as many as in '85

1989

- **7th Party Congress:** In Cuba SACP adopts a new Party programme, *Path to Power*
- **FW de Klerk** becomes last apartheid president after PW Botha suffers a stroke
- **Soviet Union** & socialist states in Eastern Europe begin unravelling

1990

Towards the breakthrough (1990-1994)

- **Unbanned:** Formal unbanning ANC & SACP – already popularly unbanned – and other outlawed organisations
- Half of CC elected at 7th Congress (including Mbeki & Zuma) leave Party, but SACP's popularity higher than ever before. 40 000 attend relaunch rally in Soweto
- Alliance debates negotiations strategy – elite pacting vs mass-driven, while regime intensifies its 'low intensity conflict strategy' ('black on black' violence, trains IFP units) as integral part of its negotiations strategy covert



'94 - the democratic breakthrough

1991

– 8th SACP congress: First congress in SA since the early 1960s. Membership increases five-fold to 25 000

1993

– **Chris Hani assassinated:** Widespread outrage at Hani's assassination triggers mass protest – forcing regime to agree to election date

– **Ready to govern** policy debates within the Alliance, amid intense pressure to adopt neoliberal economic policies

Democratic breakthrough (1994-2007)

- ANC-led alliance dominates first democratic parliament
- SACP consolidates a new strategic positioning: *Socialism is the future* – build it now, against stage-ism, & against simplistic 'reform or revolution' perspective – our struggle is for transformation/revolutionary reforms.

1994

– **Electoral victory** – ANC achieves overwhelming electoral victory, based on RDP manifesto

1996

- Parliament approves **democratic constitution**
- **Important redistributive gains:** constricted by neoliberal turn in government. Average 4,5% growth is largely jobless – triple crisis (poverty, unemployment & inequality) persists
- **ANC government** unilaterally announced *Gear* macro-economic policy, dis-

placing RDP – marking turn to neo-liberalism (the 1996 class project) & deepening tensions with Alliance

1997

– **Narrow BEE policies** advocated by 1996 class project

1999

– **Mbeki presidency** leads offensive against SACP characterised as 'ultra-left'

2000

- **SACP Red October** campaign for transformation of financial sector
- **Cosatu & SACP** lead anti-privatisation demonstrations

2002

– **African Union** founded

Polokwane & aftermath (2007-2018)

– SACP-Cosatu left axis defeats Mbeki-led neoliberal 1996 class project bloc at ANC's 2007 Polokwane national conference – but in unstable temporary alliance with ANC right populists

2007

- Capitalist Great Recession – global economic crisis originating in US financial sector
- SA trade unions, under sustained

assault from retrenchments, casualisation, labour brokering and the global crisis, face their own crisis

2008

– Mbeki forced to step down as national president, immediate gains include reversal of AIDS denialism

2009

– Zuma elected President

2014

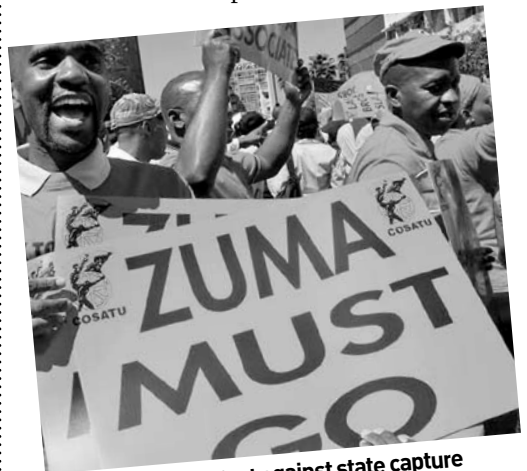
- **Second Zuma presidential term:** State capture corruption assumes large-scale
- **Internally,** the SACP debates modes of electoral participation, left popular fronts and the need for broader anti-corruption, defence-of-democracy patriotic fronts

2016

– **SACP active in anti-corruption struggle.** Party first to call for judicial commission of inquiry to state capture

2018

– **Zuma** forced to step down



SACP-Cosatu protest against state capture

2019

– **Covid-19** pandemic starts in China, spreads globally

Ramaphosa & the struggle on two fronts (2019 ff)

- **SACP programmatic perspective identifies** as in struggle on two fronts: against corruption/factionalism; & against neoliberal austerity.
- Global pandemic triggers worst capitalist crisis since 1930s, while the climate crisis deepens sharply.
- Socialism *has to be the future.* Without it there is no future

A century of GSs

South African communist party general secretaries from the creation of the CPSA, though its first turbulent decades, years of clandestine organisation underground and relaunch as the SACP, to the building of a mass party and key role in the NDR in the political overground after the victory over apartheid. The history of the ideological and organisational contributions of the Party's general secretaries down the decades reflects the struggles and triumphs of the Party as a whole



William H Andrews
1921-1925

Active unionist after emigrating from Britain. Left SA Labour Party (he'd been an MP) to join the ISL. Founding GS



Jimmy Shields
1925-1929

Journalist & CPGB militant emigrated briefly in 1925. Became GS just months after joining CPSA. Represented CPGB at CI

No Photo Available

Douglas Wolton
1829-1933

After election as GS, he stood down to attend CI. Jailed twice as GS – for articles in *Umsebenzi* & organising a bus strike



Albert Nzula
1929-1932

First South African GS, a brilliant speaker propagandist, he died of pneumonia while studying in Moscow in '34



JB Marks
1932-1933

Joined CPSA in '28 after hearing SDP Bunting address mineworkers. Lost position during CI-initiated purges, but later chaired SACP



Moses Kotane
1933-1936

Active in both Party and ANC (serving as ANC treasurer in exile) and a Lenin School graduate, longest-serving SG



Edwin Thabo Mofutsanyana
1936-1938

Former mineworker, joined the ANC (as an organiser) in '21 and, later, the CPSA. Studied with Nzula in Moscow.



Moses Kotane
1938-1978

(See previous entry)



Moses Mabhida
1979-1984

Recruited by Harry Gwala, joined CPSA in '42, unionist and underground SACP member, until going into exile in '61, served on ANC NEC



Joe Slovo
1984-1991

Renowned Marxist theorist, joined Party in his teens. Key figure in MK in SA and later in exile. Party chair from '91-'95. Died of cancer (1995)



Chris Hani
1991-1993

Joined ANCYL at 15 & SACP in his 20s. Active in MK from formation as operative and leader. Assassinated 18 months into his term as SG



Charles Nqakula
1993-1998

Journalist & underground activist in both ANC and SACP, and in the UDF. In exile from '84, returned secretly for Operation Vula



Blade Nzimande
1998-present

An industrial sociologist, Nzimande became active in UDF structures & underground SACP and ANC networks