

Congress Militant

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Paper of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC

Inside: Gulf War p10-11, All-Party Congress p2, Industrial p5-8

Compromises are weakening the ANC

by Nkululeko
Nomji

The government is negotiating with the ANC because the alternative is workers' revolution. The strength of the ANC has always been the black working class, taking action under its flag.

The oppressed people want the ANC to achieve power through the negotiations. But the compromises which ANC leaders are making to reach agreement with the government are paralysing the mass movement, and so weakening the ANC.

De Klerk is scrapping all apartheid laws. This is not due to negotiations but to the mass defiance which made apartheid unworkable.

De Klerk and big business want to govern together with the ANC leaders. But they want the ANC ranks to be weak.

In the Pretoria Minutes they wanted the ANC to give up mass action. Following the recent agreement, mass action "without intimidation and violence" will be allowed.

We want an end to thuggery. But is it wrongful "violence" when slaves rise to break their chains? Is it "intimidation" when a majority uses force of numbers to gain its rights against a minority of armed oppressors?

The police gun down unarmed and peaceful demonstrations. Inkatha

marches with weapons in front of the police.

The government has not agreed to tolerate our defence structures.

Police don't defend us against Inkatha killers, yet they search and arrest us for "illegal" arms when we board our trains.

The ANC has agreed to give up the "armed struggle" and not to carry out military training inside SA. Has it given up the right of armed defence of strikes and demonstrations?

It is useless to appeal to the government and Inkatha to make the security forces "neutral". The state has been created to defend the power and property of the rich. It must be dismantled.

It is wrong for the ANC to be "working with the SAP", to cooperate with Bantustan

governments, and to accept the ZP.

The ANC has agreed not to create underground structures. But the SADF's underground killing machine, the CCB, remains. It spent millions, and sent the bomb which killed Bheki Mlangeni, after the government said it had been wound up.

Since the Soweto rent boycott was called off, local authorities have cut off water and electricity to many townships, aiming to break the people's will.

We should now go beyond the CAST campaign to force the resignation of puppet councillors. The ANC should mobilise a national rent and service-charge boycott to paralyse these authorities and to back up the demand for majority rule.

The reason this isn't

done is because our leaders have accepted capitalism -- and will not lead a struggle to overthrow it.

The retreat from the Freedom Charter, and the assurances given to the capitalists against nationalisation are a mistake.

The negotiations are becoming a trap. The full power of the working class should be mobilised to enforce our demands for a Constituent Assembly, for housing, proper education, jobs and a living wage.

The present compromises are leading to paralysis in COSATU and lack of direction in ANC branches. But the working class has not lost its capacity to fight.

The ANC was stronger before it was unbanned. Its strength was as a rallying point for the masses in action against oppression and exploitation.

By returning to this road, the ANC can gain the strength to push aside all obstacles put in our way by De Klerk and the ruling class.

Improve the unions under Marxism!

by comrade Thiza,
a SACTWU militant in Natal

In leather factories the workers are almost getting R150 per week. You can't even afford to carry your life with that wage. We get increase from the factory once a year, but the food, transport fare, etc. increase almost five times a year. So now we are working for eating and sleep.

Who is getting the profit of your production if you are only getting the money for eating? Which is not even enough for the balanced food. So the ANC/COSATU must make the government to put it as the law that if there are prices increasing then wages must increase also.

In leather factories we work 42 hours per week, excluding lunch time. The civil servants are working 40 hours including breaks and lunch. Why do we work more than 40 hours? What are that 2 more hours for? Why don't we work an 8 hour day?

We spend in total 18 hours every day on preparing for work, travelling to and from work, cooking for the next day and inside the factory. You can't think of doing your own things because you have no time. So we must take it as a point to tell our union officials to talk about in the next wage negotiations.

In all the leather factories the conditions of work is bad. The most dangerous machines produce steam and dust which affects your lungs.

The bosses only take care of their score. Of how we as the workers suffer to make up that score is not their business. They think about their bonuses, going to hotels, having a braai, going with factory cars and their leaves. Of who puts them up there they don't mind.

They even introduce the new system for making the score in the clicking room which is called the SANTRA system: the clicker is in a position so that the worker can't even get two minutes for going to the toilet.

In Pietermaritzburg we have 23 factories which should be under one union, but there are two unions which are organising those factories. And they are criticizing each other instead of forming one big and strong union under COSATU.

Now we need to unite under one union, one federation in order to achieve all our needs like a National Minimum Wage of R200 for a 40-hour week.

Everyone wants it, and we must think of those who earn R25 per week that we must help them to force the government to put the law that no one will earn less than R200 per week. And if prices increase, the wage must increase.

So we call you to join the ANC/COSATU. Make the Freedom Charter to exist without changing a point in it. So join the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC to inform the grassroots that they mustn't be observers but they must say what they want to be done in their organisations.

Not to leave their organisations but to improve them under Marxism.

Build a mass ANC for workers' power!

Editorial

The root of the problem

In an open letter to comrade Nelson Mandela a few days before his release from prison, we wrote:

"In recent weeks you have affirmed that you stand, as before, for majority rule, for nationalisation, and for the rest of the program set out in the Freedom Charter. But we believe that, if you enter into negotiations with De Klerk intended to arrive at a compromise, these vital aims will be converted into mere ideals, in practice sacrificed bit by bit at the table.

"It will be impossible to combine with these negotiations the concerted mobilisation of the Congress masses to take into their hands the solution of the problems which we all face... Sporadic and partial mobilisations intended merely to pressurise the regime will only add to the frustration, confusion and the potential division of the masses who are looking for a revolutionary lead...

"For the ANC to embrace De Klerk... would destroy the priceless asset of unity of the black working people, marching under the ANC flag." Rivals of the ANC could be expected to take advantage of this, with resulting increased bloodshed.

Sadly today these predictions are being borne out. The compromises made by the ANC leaders are leading to a hardening of the government's negotiating position. The state is intact; the ANC is largely disarmed; and old divisions have reopened among the black people.

COSATU seems paralysed. The sense of unity in action which drew the workers together as a mighty force is being allowed to weaken. In shop steward elections, it is now not uncommon for a candidate's tribal origin to become a factor.

The February 1 stayaway was weak mainly because the workers realised that only a demonstration of support for a Constituent Assembly was intended, and not concerted mass action to enforce it. Speculation was already rife that this demand is likely to be compromised by the leadership.

In the latest *Work in Progress*, comrade Ronnie Kasrils of the SACP draws attention to the failure of the ANC to lead serious mass action campaigns, and points to "A number of worrying signs... that we are losing the initiative."

But he finds the source of the problem largely in "organisational weaknesses" and the amount of "time and energy" consumed by the leadership in negotiations.

We support his call for a national program of mass action, combined with the creation of self-defence units. But we have to see that the way out of the present impasse depends on a change of strategy from negotiations designed to compromise with capitalism and the state, to a revolutionary strategy leading towards the overthrow of the state.

Negotiations has its place in demonstrating to the people the refusal of the regime to concede majority rule, and therefore the necessity for revolution. Unfortunately that is not the strategy of the ANC or SACP leadership.

When comrade Mandela makes an accord with Gatsha Buthelezi and the KwaZulu authorities, he is publicly supported in this by SACP leaders such as comrades Slovo and Hani. The readiness of the leadership to accept capitalism is most forcefully argued on TV by none other than comrade Slovo -- who nowadays "outmanoeuvres" the capitalist spokesmen "in market-place rhetoric". (*Sunday Times*, 10/2/91)

When the upstart Gqozo threatens the ANC and says that it exists in Ciskei "at my mercy", an ANC/SACP delegation including comrade Govan Mbeki rushes to patch things up with him. By lifting their little finger the Congress leaders could rouse the masses to overthrow the bantustan dictators. But this would have revolutionary consequences in the whole of SA -- and so they hold back.

In 1920 the Communist International resolved that a communist party should be "the political and organisational lever which assists the more advanced part of the working class to direct the mass of the proletariat." But the Communist Parties degenerated under Stalinism into parties standing for the reform of capitalism rather than its overthrow.

The SACP underpins the ANC's present compromise with capitalism. It prevents advanced workers from transforming the ANC into a mass working-class party for national liberation and socialism.

The capitalist class ruthlessly follows up its advantage. In his 17 February interview on *Agenda*, De Klerk said a joint government with the ANC was possible, but not with the "Communists". In their dilemma, party leaders such as Jeremy Cronin talk about dissolving the SACP.

Comrade Mandela, responding to a question on Radio Sotho last week about the Marxist tendency in the ANC, said the ANC is a democratic organisation which does not censor political ideas or affiliations. We urge all workers to join the ANC and transform it into an invincible revolutionary force under the guidance of Marxist policies.

Remember Stompie

Insist on an elected Constituent Assembly

Negotiate only for majority rule!

by John
Fredericks
and
Paul Storey

An All-Party Congress has been proposed by the ANC and accepted by the Government. It will be the start of negotiations towards a new constitution.

What are these negotiations intended to achieve?

De Klerk has made it clear that he will not negotiate his government and the ruling class out of power. At most, he intends to "share" power through a coalition with black leaders committed to maintaining capitalism.

Last week the Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development, Roelf Meyer, restated the government's rejection of "simple majoritarianism".

They will not allow power over the country to pass into the hands of the black working-class majority. To escape from the crisis of apartheid, they need to concede the vote to all black people. But they reject majority rule.

A simple "white veto" in the constitution would cause it to be rejected by blacks. So they plan a combination of devices to ensure that the wealth and power of the privileged minority cannot be ended by the people voting in elections.

Meyer gave as examples: "a bill of rights, the decentralisation of power, constitutional checks and balances, the requirement of consensus on contentious matters, proportional representation and a strong independent judiciary."

These may sound innocent enough, but what is their purpose?

While a bill protecting individual, language and cultural rights is essential, the ruling class intend to entrench as a "right" their private ownership of the country's productive wealth (capitalism). That means the continued dispossession of the majority.

While local control over local affairs is necessary, the government's "decentralisation" policy aims to secure racial and class privilege at local level. This is what De Klerk means when he speaks of "own" community life, "own" schools, etc.

Economic power is centralised -- in the hands of four or five capitalist monopolies. A constitution denying a future elected government the power to take over and run the economy, will leave the people prisoners of an undemocratic economic dictatorship.

"Checks and balances"

A two chamber parliament is envisaged, with the second chamber not elected through one-person-one-vote, yet able to block legislation.

A "requirement of consensus on contentious matters" would simply mean no vital law can be passed unless all minorities consent.

Likewise, a two-thirds majority requirement would mean that a one-third minority has a veto. What is democratic about that?

"Proportional representation" means that parties which cannot win seats by a majority of votes anywhere, can still enter parliament and engage in blocking combinations against the majority party.

By an "independent" judiciary the government means essentially the continuation of the present system of appointment of capitalist judges without any form of popular election and control.

We must insist on majority rule -- on the right of representatives chosen by a majority of people to form the government, and to legislate according to the will of those who have elected them.

It is clear that a majority-rule constitution cannot be negotiated with the present government.

That is why we demand elections by one-person-one-vote for a Constituent

Assembly with sovereign power to draw up a new constitution.

Negotiations should be solely for the purpose of securing from the government agreement to such elections and a peaceful handover of power to the Constituent Assembly.

Any other kind of negotiations is a trap -- a preparation for surrendering to less than majority rule.

In attending an All-Party Congress, the ANC should have as its aim to confront the government with the demand for an elected Constituent Assembly -- and to withdraw from the negotiations if this is refused.

An All-Party Congress will be a forum for negotiations. It is a meeting-place between leaders of the oppressed people and their enemies. It will not be elected.

New Nation reports (11/1/91) that the ANC has not ruled out "upgrading" the All-Party Congress into a "Constituent Assembly". There have been suggestions in the press that the government might agree to this, provided it was not elected.

We are opposed to this idea -- even if a referendum was to approve it.

It would deprive the people of the right to directly elect their representatives to write the new constitution. It would be a scheme for bringing about an undemocratic compromise against the interests of the working people.

Interim government?

An interim government should be formed solely for the purpose of holding elections for a Constituent Assembly. This cannot be left in the hands of the present government.

We oppose any entry by the ANC into a so-called "Super-Cabinet" or any other coalition government with the NP, Inkatha, etc.

This would not give "power to the people", but compromise the ANC with

co-responsibility for police harassment, low wages, high prices, bantustans, etc.

The state

Power is not in the hands of the masses. The guns are still in the hands of the SADF, SAP and ZP. The state power is intact.

The state is not neutral, but the armed instrument of the ruling class.

If the present state is not dismantled by the revolution, and replaced by a new state resting on the armed people -- then even an elected Constituent Assembly would meet under its guns, under the threat of counter-revolution.

The working class must be armed for self-defence, under the direction of the workers' organisations and the ANC. Otherwise there can be no guarantee of a transition to genuine democracy.

United front

It is absurd to invite Inkatha to the 'Patriotic Conference' planned for 21 March. It is openly against a Constituent Assembly and majority rule. At the All-Party Congress, it should be treated as part of the government and bosses' camp.

Together with the PAC and AZAPO, however, the ANC leaders should explain the issues and mobilise relentless mass working-class pressure for majority rule.

At the All-Party Congress they should present the government with an uncompromising demand for an elected Constituent Assembly.

If this is rejected, then they should together turn and lead the movement in action towards the overthrow of the regime.

A southern Cape farmer and businessman told a comrade: "No matter what De Klerk says, there's no way we are giving up power here. All De Klerk is doing is softening up the blacks -- we're not going to hand over the country to them, no ways!"

In attending an All-Party Congress, the ANC should have as its aim to confront the government with the demand for an elected Constituent Assembly -- and to withdraw from the negotiations if this is refused.

Peter Dube writes:

I work in Bartlett Electrical, Bertrams. The bosses are French and Swiss.

One of their friends comes from Switzerland. He is a temp and he does the same work like us. He don't know the job. He did a mess all over, so we had to fix it. When he take two hours we take one hour. When things don't work he just run away.

He get paid more than us and he get a car, so he go to disco week ends. When we ask them why you pay him more they say "he work better

than you".

They take the money and they give it to their parents overseas. Their friends come here and they eat nice. One boss goes twice every year to Switzerland. They take the big flights. Last year it was R4000, but when we want to go to Durban or Cape Town we must struggle.

We don't have a union. Most workers are temporary. Every six months they chase the people. They use tactics like when you make a small mistake they chase you. Like a trap.

Me and my friend talk to the bosses to get money. They say we must work harder. The next day I didn't go to

work and my friend told them again. Then they chase him. They say "There is no job for you." But there is a lot of work. They have plenty of casuals. Most workers earn small money. About R130 per week. Sometimes they work Monday to Sunday.

De Klerk can change the things in the Parliament, but the evil will not change that way. They will never give us money. They say we can live with pap, but they say they have to live with good food because they have soft skins.

They take our tax, sometimes six hundred rand. I told the bosses, the government is shit. They just want money

from us, why? He say they build streets, houses and robots. I say we got nothing in Soweto. He say there's houses in Protea. I ask him where I must get money to buy this house? He say I must bank it like the clever people. I don't have money to buy clothes, so where must I get money for the bank?

I tell him: we got kids, they must go to school. When we buy clothes we must struggle. We live in shacks. We live bad for a long time. You come here and get lots of money.

I see the whites when we fix their lights. We are not living the same like them. They have big

houses, nice cars, too much food, and they spray their hair. They live like kings. We are still living bad.

We must look at the strategy of the government. We don't fight for a President. We don't fight for Mandela to sit in a big chair. We want money and houses.

We must crush capitalism. It made a crime in our country. The capitalists rule the country because their money is working. Even if we get more money we're still going to have a big problem.

The crime is because of capitalism. They don't rule the country the right way. They look after themselves. If capitalism

stays in this country many people will still suffer. Because everyone in the capitalist countries want to be big. They don't care if the people are dying. That is capitalism, and racism is part of capitalism.

This is what I say about De Klerk's reforms: If someone has a gun and he steals your clothes (like when they oppressed us) and you want to get it back, and you also got a gun (revolution). So that person wants to speak nice to you now, because he see you have a gun. You mustn't trust him. He says he wants to give you back your clothes, but he will give you broken clothes.

Simpson Thabe writes:

I work at Solid Hardware, Roodepoort. We manufacture locks and keys. There are about 400 workers. We joined NUMSA in 1986 and our union was powerful. The workers were united and our shop stewards active fighting for our rights.

In 1988, the year of disaster, our management cut off 99 comrades.

In the retrenchment they fired all the shop stewards and the comrades who were powerful or active. They try to suppress us in the shop floor, but workers were strong and fight back, but these boers try to demoralise our spirit of no surrender.

The following year we elected new shop stewards, but the struggle was becoming poor because these capitalists try to threaten some workers, and influence them to leave the union.

Also, they promoted some recently elected shop stewards, and our leadership began to surrender. The workforce in this plant have become divided because of this.

Coming to this racist company. They are rich. Some workers have served for more than 25 years, but their salary is still very poor. There are no facilities for us. The time at work is oppression. Our lunch break is very short, because the bosses are looking for production.

In 1987 we demanded a canteen. The management said they didn't have money!

I have joined with the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC to come to the aid of my fellow workers, to mobilise them against this racist

A "new South Africa" for the working class?



management, to educate them with political education, so that they know what's happening in this country and fight for non-racial equality and a new South Africa.

Solid Hardware is a subsidiary of Malbak, the 11th most profitable company in South Africa. In 1989 Malbak made net profits of R271m.

Four workers at International Delivery Co. spoke to Congress Militant. They say their boss, Peter Burg Halter, also owns 10 sheep farms at Magaliesburg.

We have been sacked. Our firm has a history of victimisation and bad

I am 54 years old. I have been working for this family in Somerset West for 22 years. I get R250 per month.

My madam is full of nonsense. I must be on my way 4.30 a.m. to get the train. Then it is one and a half hours walk from the station to work.

I had to fight to get her to pick me up. She

complain about petrol and money. I told her, "I am old now, my legs can't last longer. You must pick me up at the station or I stop working for you, finish and klaar."

"No..No..No!" she screamed, "You cannot do that to me, who is going to look after my kids if you leave?" Since

conditions. The boss has no way of speaking to the workers, and uses offensive language.

Apartheid is still alive and kicking. Our changing rooms are in an appalling condition, yet the whites have changing rooms equipped with TVs and sofas.

They are paid R200 more, and yet they do the easiest jobs and work shorter hours.

We transport containers for companies like BMW, AECI, Nampak etc. Our working week is like

this: we leave the depot in Jo'burg after tarping and tying up our load, maybe for BMW. Then we drive to Durban, untarp the load, fold up the sale and then collect a new load, maybe for Nampak.

Even if you are 50 you have to climb sometimes 8 or 9 feet to tarp up the load, and drive the load back to Jo'burg.

When we get back we must wash and polish the truck, even the tyres, and then immediately set off again.

If we arrive on Saturday morning we do not get paid for the night's journey, and only then do we get Saturday afternoon and Sunday off.

If we arrive on Friday afternoon, we are asked to take another load, and then only get paid R100 for working the whole weekend.

Sometimes you may have to drive to Cape Town, then to Mossel Bay, back to Cape Town, and the back to Jo'burg - all in one trip. Sometimes you drive to Durban and back three times in a week.

On these trips we have to have our own money for meals.

We feel like we are working in a concentration camp, eating in filthy conditions infested with rats.

We have no terms of employment documents, no pension fund, no medical aid. If we meet with an accident from being over-tired and over-worked the company is not accountable to us.

We are not allowed sick leave, and have to drive even if sick. On 19 January we got a letter from Head Office saying "in future, those who are late for work, or stay away for the purposes of public services or present us with doctor's certificates which have been issued for the purpose of avoiding work, will lose a week's bonus from their wages."

The letter ended: "If you cannot dedicate yourself to this company, then tell us and we will find someone who can."

On February 4 we had had enough of being treated like animals! Workers demanded an increase.

The boss got them to sign a document, then shouted, "You are given five minutes to get out of this fucking yard". The workers ran out when he threatened to shoot them!

The workers have no faith in going to the industrial council since this racist boss sits and drinks whiskey and enjoys braais with the very people on the industrial council.

We want the TGWU to help us fight this boss! The other workers are terrified of losing their jobs, and scared to complain. We want to know what to do.

Claremont once a week. The madam is better; I get R10 transport money every Friday and R19 a day. She also give me things and buys me food. Although she is not as rich as the other one.

All in all I end up with R525 per month.

It is not that bad but look at all that work I must do.

then she's been picking me up.

She is a real devil, no wonder her husband left her. She even throw away vegetables instead of giving them to me or someone else. I work for her four days a week.

I have work at two other places around Somerset as well.

Then an ironing job in



deur Richard
Pasensie

Mense sukkel om bond te betaal

Ons in Eerste-Rivier vind geweldig probleme om ons se bond te betaal. Dit is tragies om te sien hoe ons mense moet sukkel, hoe hulle kla en niemand kan hulle help nie.

Baie mense verloor hulle huise, daar is reeds baise huise wat leeg staan. Mense trek uit in die nag en so gaan dit in Eerste-Rivier.

Dit is maar 'n voorbeeld, daar is te veel om dit te noem.

Daar is 'n aantal redes vir die probleem. Sekere mense sê die tyd toe hulle die huise koop was dit 'n redelike bedrag geld wat hulle aan die Bank moet betaal. Die bedrae het

gewissel van R350 tot R400 rand 'n maand.

Die bedrae wat die mense nou betaal wissel van R600 tot los oor R1000 'n maand.

Dit is onmoontlik om kop bo water te hou. Daar is baie mense in Eerste-Rivier wat minder as R800 'n maand verdien, of nog nie R600 verdien nie.

Die probleme in Eerste-Rivier is onhanterbaar. Daar sal iets gedoen moet word anders sal die meerderheid hulle huise verloor.

Ek stel voor dat die mense na die ANC branches toe gaan en hulle klagte in vergaderings raise. En 'n

plan van aksie moet beplan word.

As 'n Marxist Workers' Tendency supporter glo ek dat boikot, strikes, en protes-marches die enigste vreedsame oplossing teen die probleme van capitalism sal wees.

Ek wil vra hoekom moet die werker altyd betaal vir die system van die base? Ons is die eerste mense wat ly onder die oorlog van die base. My appeal is aan ons mense met dié probleme om saam te staan.

Laat ons ophou stry en baklei onder mekaar. Kom laat ons verenig in ons stryd teen capitalism.

Education crisis

Our Demands!

* We demand one non-racial education system for all students.

- Scrap DET and all racist education departments.
- Every school must be open to all.
- No white parents' veto on admitting black pupils.
- No state subsidies for private schools.

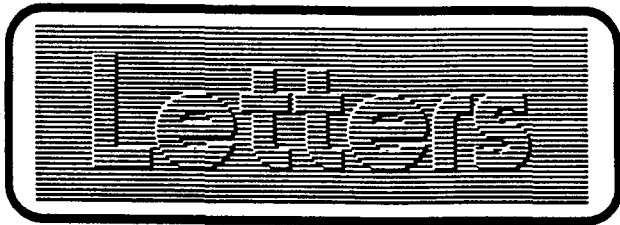
* Raise education spending to R4 000 a year for every student, black and white.

This would allow us to have:

- Free text books; no fees or 'school fund'.
- A massive program for the provision of new schools, libraries, science and sports facilities.
- Proper training and a living wage for teachers. An end to retrenchments. Enough teachers to allow small classes, and attention to every pupil.

* Away with management councils. We demand the right to elect SRCs; and PTAs locally and nationally to run education.

* A guaranteed job for every school-leaver; a national minimum wage of R200 for a 40-hour week.



Maqabane abekikileyo,

Sonke siyalufuna uxolo, kodwa uxolo alungekhe luze ngenxa kaButhelezi. Uxolo luyakubakho xa kuthe kwagecwa iingcambu zobubhovubhovu.

uGatsha nempi yakhe ngamajoni ahlawulwayo nguRhulumente omhlophe ukuzize bazisalise umva iintlanganiso zabasebenzi. Ezi ntlanganiso zabasebenzi zilwa nobandlululo olwenziwa nguRhulumente, neeNkosi, neeziBonda, zilwela namagunya abantu abamnyama.

Ingqungquthela mayiphumelele ekulweni nomkhosi ongenasidima we Inkatha ngokuthabatha amanyathetha aqatha okuphucula imeko yokuhlala. Kufuneka kubekho iintlanganiso ezixhobileyo zokusikhusela kubaphathi be Inkatha. Loo nto ingasinceda ekuqhekezeni kwamakhulu angamalungu nje e Inkatha kuba esoyika abaphathi be Inkatha.

Bantu Xaba,
eStellenbosch

Kamerade,

Twee werkers en ek het 'n lekker discussion gehad. Die een sê dat F.W. die regte man is om ons land reg te ruk. Hy sê dat die ANC moordenaars is.

Toe vra ek hoekom hy so sê, toe sê hy, kon ek nie sien hoe hulle mekaar dood maak nie? Mekaar se huise afbrand nie. Hy sê toe dat die ANC wil oorvat, maar hulle is te onnosel om die land te regeer.

Ek sê toe vir hom dat hy verkeerd is. Hoekom hulle so baklei is omdat daar 'n tekort is aan huise, en dat daar werkloosheid is. Hulle het nie werk nie en kan nie kos koop nie. As jy nie kos het nie, dan raak jy wanhopig. Dit is mense van huise en gesinne. Kinders moet gevoed word, kinders wat huil oor 'n stukkie brood.

Dit werk alles op 'n mens se humeur. Dit leer die kinders begin steel. Dit is waar daar gestry en dan baklei word. Hy stem saam met my daaroor.

Die ander een sê nee, hy stem nie saam nie. Hy sê dat die gevegte van Zoeloes en Xhosa kom al lank jare saam. Dit is geskiedenis dat hulle so baklei. Ek sê toe reg dit is geskiedenis, maar lank gelede is daar vriendskap tussen hulle gekom. Hulle het nou saam gesmoor. Dit is nou die ANC wat hulle bymekaar moet hou. Maar Buthelezi is doe groot vlieg in die self. Dit is hy wat hulle teen mekaar aanhuts.

Ek sê vir hulle toe dat die ANC van vandag is more se regering. Hulle sê ek moet weg kom van Mandela. Ek sê hulle moet weggom van FW.

Pieter Plaaitjies,
Bellville

Dear comrades,

I am worried about your criticism of my party, the ANC. And I have realised that you are not correcting my movement, instead you are finding every situation in my country to blame it on the ANC, like De Klerk.

You fail to realise that the ANC was there before I was born and it did not call me to support it.

I stand by its Charter of Freedom it managed to publish, or at least it managed to reach my bantu educationised eyes.

I went to apply for ANC membership, not as a matter of compromise, but of dedicated support for my African values which the ANC protects. Even my children, if I have one, will be exposed to the vanguard of social order as directed by the ANC.

Take note, not by the Russian Trotsky, or the American Roosevelt. Not We in the South of my continent have seen the hypocrisy of both left and right, East or West.

And all claim to be powerful because they (the Russians and the West) have created enough weapons (nuclear power) to hurt/kill, and big prisons (with people homeless) to incarcerate anyone who crosses their paths.

You see they're only powerful because they're feared, not respected, or not to mention loved.

How many more ideologies do we have to follow at the expense of human sacrifice (deaths?). How many?

In South Africa the boer cum western rule must end! Now! And the ANC will see to that!

from Alex Mashinini,
Johannesburg

Dear comrades,

I agree with the aims and objectives of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC. The struggle for National Liberation goes together with the struggle for Workers' power, democracy and socialism.

I wish to appeal to all freedom fighters, the oppressed and dispossessed people of my land to unite and advance the struggle for total emancipation.

I also wish to appeal to the leadership of my movement (ANC) not to move even an inch from our demands that are on the Freedom Charter.

Workers and youth, let us together fight for a socialist and non-racial democratic SA.

Zola Beki,
Metal worker,
Port Elizabeth

Comrades,

When De Klerk came to speak at UPE, Sayco organised a march to the police station to demand the release of our comrades in prison. We did this because De Klerk is going against the Pretoria Minute. The next week 24 prisoners were released which shows that our mass action is very important.

We must not stop our mass action. Negotiations are going to take very long and I am not sure whether it will work. De Klerk does not want to give majority power to us.

We must educate our comrades about the fact that capitalism must be smashed.

Capitalism is like a bed. The government and

the bosses are the mattress which rests on the pillars. These pillars are the SADF, SAP, prisons and the present courts.

Our freedom can only come when the main pillars are gone. Because comrades, on what will the mattress then rest?

from a Prison Warder,
(POPCRU member)
Port Elizabeth

Comrades,

When the ANC leadership announced that they had reached an agreement with the government on the return of exiles, myself and thousands others greeted this with excitement. We looked forward to ending the hard times of life in exile. But as weeks go by, it appears many of us are still a long way from returning.

To apply for a passport, exiles have to complete a form stating in detail the "political crimes" which they think they committed before leaving the country! Then on this basis, the SA government will decide whether to give indemnity. Why should we have to provide this information for the police?

I have been shocked to discover that the ANC leadership has accepted this procedure. In an article in the British Independent (16/12/90), comrade Aziz Pahad, a member of the NEC, acknowledges this: "I can understand the fears of the exiles... They want a general amnesty, but from the start of the negotiations that was never possible. On the face of it, the forms appear problematic, but one of our problems is in

briefing everyone. There was no point in explaining it until it was complete".

In the same article comrade Tom Sebina says "...There is pressure from the exiles who expect further amendment or the complete scrapping of the form". Will the leadership respond to these demands?

Are we being told the full details of the agreements our leaders are reaching with the government?

D. Sikhakhane

Dear comrades,

To our surprise, during the ANC's 79th anniversary the Deputy President announced that the ANC is calling for an All Party Congress.

I don't know who gave the NEC that mandate, because it was not discussed in our grass root structures. The ANC Conference in December was not consulted.

My fear with the All Party Congress is that another compromise will be made and our movement will come out without our demand of a Constituents Assembly.

From Marcus Dzingai,
a local SARHWU leader

You, too, can write for Congress Militant. Give your letter or article to one of our sellers. Please ask if you need help to write down what you want to say.

Workers' muscle aids sacked teachers

by Leonard Jansen

On 23 January students and parents moved into the Bellville High School premises to protest at the sacking of three teachers.

A truck full of Marley workers arrived while we were discussing with the principal, Mr Africa.

These workers were there the previous day, but the principal locked himself-in his office and called the Department, which called the police.

A Marley worker said, "You have a nice surname, Mr Africa, but don't make shit in South Africa."

He added that we in the ANC and COSATU will defend the principal if he stands with the people but if he stands with the authorities and the bosses he will get hurt.

"Today you see only 14 Marley workers but if

you refuse to reinstate these teachers there will be workers from Colnix, USA Brush and Mondi here."

Another worker asked if the principal reads the Government Gazette, because it says a worker must be made permanent after he has worked for 3 months.

"My daughter is a student at this school. If there are disruptions all these children's future could be at stake."

Mr Africa was so scared by now that he agreed to fight to bring back the retrenched teachers.

It was the workers' power that forced this hardline principal to retreat. Now we must build on this until the our teachers are back to work.

Forward to the democratic control of our school under parents, teachers and students!

SANS staking wen R176 verhoging

'n Werker verduidelik:

By SA Nylon Spinners, Bellville, is ons terug werk toe na 'n staking waardeur ons 'n verhoging van R176 per maand gewen het.

Ons eerste demand was vir 'n R300 increase. Management se offer was R147.

Daar was goed gemobiliseer op die plant van alle skofte. Protes optogte was vir 'n maand aan die gang. Ons het vergaderings gehou.

Daar was 'n goeie geses tussen die werkers. Ons het gesing en getoyi-

toyi.

Management het toe toegeslaan op die werkers deur middel van dreigemente. Werkers was ook geïntimideer deur "written warnings".

Die protes was toe suspend aan die begin van Desember. Dit was 'n bietjie nadelig want die werkers se gees is daardeur verswak.

In Januarie was daar 'n dispute verklaar. Daar was toe byna 'n 'settlement', maar die base het 'n clause in die agreement gesit wat die union [SACTWU] reject het.

Die werkers was baie

onsteld aangesien hulle gevoel het dat management hul bedrieg het. Ons het weer met management gepraat maar hulle het 'n nuwe offer van net R172 op die tafel gelê.

Dit was deur die werkers verwerp.

Toe was daar 'n strike ballot. 83% van die werkers het ten gunste van 'n strike gestem.

Die hele strike is georganiseer deur komitees. Met hulp van Congress Militant het ons ondersteuning gekry van ander fabriek en geld ingesamel.

SANS werkers moet

"Ek het 17 van my beste jare vir SANS gegee, maar vandag moet ek soebat by die base en nogal op my knieë gaan en vra vir 'n verhoging. Die rede vir die increase is om die lewe vir my kinders beter te maak. Ek wil ook my familie uitneem vir 'n ete by Mike's Kitchen."

dit onthou wanneer ander werkers ons ondersteuning benodig.

SBH workers need a militant SACTWU

by Khayo SBH worker

The bosses never give in easily to our demands, however reasonable. Even if they do give, they try to take them back again.

Bosses' interests is profits, on the other hand the workers want a living wage. This is the reason for our unstoppable struggle. The bosses are assisted by the police and the army.

In my factory the bosses are also using our SACTWU shop stewards to get rid of militant workers. When the

workers want to take action against unfair dismissals the shop stewards say, "No, don't do it, we will make an appeal." But there is no report of the appeals and the dismissed workers never come back.

The other thing is if an African worker is dismissed, he/she is replaced by a coloured worker. The bosses want to split the workforce on racial lines.

The union is doing nothing about this. The workers want to see the union officials and the organisers about the matter. We wanted elections for a new shop steward committee. We

got a negative response from the officials. We then went to see some COSATU officials - no response.

The workers began to resign from the union. I also resigned by the way.

While there was this confusion came a NACTU union. I knew this was not the alternative. This was going to split the workers even further, leading to two unions in one factory.

Congress Militant has helped me realise that it is better to stay in SACTWU and COSATU, and organise workers to bring their union under

democratic control.

The workers are still divided and disgusted with the shop steward committee and the union.

The bosses have taken full advantage of this also to weaken SACTWU. They are setting up ultimatums, otherwise they say they won't negotiate with SACTWU.

The workers want to unite to address some burning issues. A workers' committee might be formed soon to rebuild the union from below.

We want a militant SACTWU to fight for our demands!

Problems with the boss, problems with the union

by Blackman Xezu

I have been working for almost three years at Textile Printers in Cape Town. There were very few workers in the union when I started.

Then an organiser from SACTWU organised all the weekly-paid workers. When we asked him about Membership Cards he said no problem as long as the workers have filled in the SACTWU forms.

But we noticed later that there were no union deductions from our pay

slips. Today the boss says that there are only 16 workers under SACTWU - those that joined before the organiser came.

Now the workers are discussing this. We are facing problems like low wages, retrenchments, etc. It has become worse now that some of our Shop Stewards have joined with the management.

The boss promises you some benefits when you are monthly-paid. He always says, "No promotion and no increases if you join the union. But if you reject the union, Gold and Silver for you."

As far as I can see there is

no Gold and Silver for them at all, but exploitation.

Whenever there is a wage negotiation our union compromise with the bosses. The union last year promised to start this year's negotiation as early as January but up till now they have not come.

The boss offers a R15 increase and threatens to retrench two shifts if we push him. There is no work coming in. Recently he has retrenched 11 workers.

We informed the union about this and they said the boss has no right to just retrench the workers without writing a letter to them! The

union threatened to take the boss to the industrial court if he continues with this.

The boss's response is that it is not his duty to inform the union but the workers or the shop steward. We told the union about this and they threaten to sort him out through a phone call.

Meanwhile the boss is sorting us out of the factory.

The boss's strong point against the increase is that he pays more than his competitors already.

Therefore the union must go and raise the wages of his competitors. The union has been failing to do this.

Democratic Party national chairman David Gant (below) faces court action for unfairly dismissing 420 strikers at the Lourensford Estate near Somerset West.

Now Gants food factory to close



One Nation? One Future?

David Gant's food factory in Somerset West was sold to Tollgate. Now these bosses want to close it down. 200 workers were retrenched in October; more will follow in April and June. 2 000 jobs will be lost. "I joined Gants in 1958 as a boy," a retrenched worker told us. "Now I am an old man. I received only R1 700 compensation. I can't find another job."

Gants workers are earning only R140 to R170 per week. Redundancy pay ranges from only 2 weeks' wages for those with less than 2 years' service to only 10 week' wages for those with 8 or more years' service.

The FAWU organiser responsible for the factory had promised to take the case to court, but workers complain they have heard nothing since.

"You from Congress Militant are telling us to contact the organiser," said a shop steward. "We went to his office three times, but he never contacted us. We even went to talk to the General Secretary at the head office, but nothing has happened. It is four months already after the retrenchments. We are thinking of cutting our union subscriptions." In fact 180 had already resigned from the union.

Addressing a meeting of 70 workers organised by the shop stewards, we urged workers not to take this step, but direct their anger against the bosses and the capitalist system which is destroying their jobs.

By organising themselves to fight for their rights, they would also be strong enough to correct problems in the union.

As the meeting gained confidence, one worker said: "We must fight to bring back our retrenched comrades. This factory must not close. These buildings have been built with our money."

"We must organise a mass meeting and unite coloured and African workers. We must have lunch-time placard demonstrations."

Gants bosses say they cannot sell canned food overseas any more. If SA workers were paid higher wages, they could buy the food.

Support the Gants workers! And fight for a national minimum wage of R200 for a 40-hour week!

by Congress Militant reporters

PUTCO WATCH!

by Tracy Lewis

PUTCO management are driving ahead with plans to reduce services and jobs. The drivers and passengers depending on PUTCO are of no concern to them.

* A year ago PUTCO had 16 divisions. Within months this will have been reduced to 6.

* In the last five years 2 000 workers from TGWU and TAWU have lost their jobs. At the beginning of this year PUTCO announced plans to retrench a further 805 workers.

* A year ago PUTCO had three depots on the East Rand, Springs and Alberton have been permanently closed. Now PUTCO is reducing staff at Boksburg. 400 have been reduced to 200. Now more retrenchments are expected.

* PUTCO has closed militant TGWU controlled depots, and is merging other depots to try and break TGWU strongholds.

* A year ago three depots operated around Pretoria. Now PUTCO has announced plans to close Dennilton, and to merge the Central, Sandfontein and Mamelodi divisions, giving TAWU a majority again.

* A year ago three depots operated from Soweto. These are to be

merged, and management wants nearly 200 redundancies.

The main obstacle to PUTCO's plans are the workers fighting for better conditions for themselves and passengers.

The bosses are using every tactic to divide workers. Shop stewards are being victimised, Inkatha is being used to intimidate drivers, and workers are being made to fight against each other for fewer and fewer jobs.

PUTCO has tried to weaken workers' resistance by using the division between TAWU and TGWU. The workers in these unions have the same interests, and need to join together in one transport union under COSATU.

Where pressure is put on the union leaders by the rank and file workers, they can be forced to lead a fight.

TAWU shop stewards at Dobsonville have approached their civic to protest over planned retrenchments and the closure of routes. A meeting then took place between the Civic and PUTCO, and agreement was reached that no retrenchments would take place for the time being.

It is now even more urgent that the ANC and COSATU unite PUTCO workers and passengers in a mass campaign to defend jobs and services.

A "People's Bus Company"?

By Adam Brown

PUTCO and the Alexandra Civic Organisation are negotiating a new jointly-run bus service for Alex.

PUTCO says it is prepared to resume services under a new company, known as the Alexandra People's Bus Company, if the Civic buys shares. The Civic says it is going to buy up to R250 000 of shares.

PUTCO management says that if it is a success "similar operations could be launched in other townships".

Many people in Alexandra, desperate for a bus service since the closure of PUTCO's Wynberg depot a year ago, favour the 'People's Bus Company' plan. But can workers' and passengers' needs be answered in this way?

Throughout SA bus passenger transport has become unprofitable for the capitalists. Low-paid workers cannot afford high fares, and the government refuses to subsidise an efficient and affordable transport service.

Recently TAWU-TGWU-SARHWU launched a united campaign to force greater subsidies out of the government, and calling for the nationalisation of public transport companies.

Stepping up this campaign is the way

A sacked PUTCO driver in Wynberg: "It is the state's function to ensure transport. Of course, people have started asking questions. The mere fact that each bus costs R100,000, and the majority of the people are unemployed and without wages, makes them doubt their chances of sharing this company."

A TGWU shop-steward in Selby: "The share scheme is something which has two faces. On the one hand COSATU has clearly rejected shares offered by Iscor and others to workers, on the other hand Mayekiso is a leading member of COSATU. We have to ask him why it is acceptable to him that ACO buys shares?"

"The Alex People's Bus Company was not discussed with workers. It is not COSATU's policy to buy shares."

Nati Nthako, General Secretary of TGWU, told Congress Militant:

"The Union has no position at this stage. We were not approached by the Civic. We are going to look deeper into the matter before formulating a position. If all the [Wynberg] drivers do not get their jobs back, then it would be an area the union could take up."

forward, not doing a deal with the PUTCO bosses.

Merely calling a bus company a "People's" company will not change the laws of the profit system.

The new company will have to make a profit, or close down. So it will raise its fares, and fight to keep the wages of its workers down.

Should ACO be involved in supporting a capitalist company? It will not be controlled by the people, even if ACO has a say in the management. Basically, it will be PUTCO under another name.

PUTCO states that it will lease buses to the new company, that it

expects to own a majority of shares, and that management structures will remain the same.

Together with the local capitalists that are being persuaded to invest, the company's priority will remain profit, and not the needs of the workers and passengers.

Getting ACO to invest in the company has two purposes for the PUTCO bosses. Firstly, it means the community is paying more towards its own transport.

Secondly, PUTCO will use the idea that it is a "people's" bus company to weaken the workers' struggle for

decent wages and conditions. If workers strike they will be accused of acting "against the community". This will divide passengers and workers. Where will ACO stand?

Having set up the Alexandra People's Bus Company, PUTCO is likely to threaten other communities that their services will be stopped unless they also agree to invest in subsidising PUTCO.

We demand the reopening of the Wynberg PUTCO depot, with reinstatement and back pay for all sacked workers.

The government must fully subsidise public transport services.

ACO would spend its money better in mobilising the community to take action in support of these demands.

The ANC should commit itself as a future government to:

- * nationalise the bus companies like PUTCO, under workers' and passengers' control;
- * invest massively in renewing and developing state-provided train and bus services in all regions;

- * lower fares;
- * provide subsidies for private taxis, but with proper democratic controls by passengers' organisations to ensure safe and affordable transport.

Driving for PUTCO

By Samuel Zuma

Driving for PUTCO is very hard. I start work at 4.30 a.m., and finish at 8.30 p.m. I live far away so I get up very early and go home very late. I have small children, but they never see me. One day they are going to wake up and say Mommy, who is this strange man?

When I come home from work it is almost 10.30 p.m. My food is standing on the table in the dark, and I have to eat quickly so I don't wake anyone.

I work six days a week. On the seventh day I sleep. I spend no time with my family. I get paid very little money. I have been working for PUTCO since 1983 and I can earn just over R200 per week.

It is hard work driving a bus. When we drive so many hours we make mistakes. The bosses seem not to understand this. In December I was driving a bus. The brakes weren't working. I told the bosses, but they did nothing. Then I collided with another bus, so that they made me sign a final warning. Now if I do anything wrong in the next six months they will chase me away.

PUTCO bosses don't even have to retrench drivers, they can just chase you away. We should all fight against this, like the TGWU workers at the Wynberg depot.



A PUTCO worker's vision of the company's decline

STOP PRESS!

ACO has announced that, to begin with, the APBC will operate only 50 buses, with a staff of only 150 workers. They say because APBC is a "new" company, it is not expected to employ the dismissed PUTCO workers. Many of the 400 strikers will not be taken back. We call on TGWU, COSATU, ACO and the ANC to stand by all the striking workers. Fight for their unconditional reinstatement!

Apartheid at



By Mike Mbele
a ticket collector in Johannesburg

Since joining SATS in 1982 I have been moved often because I refused to call the station masters "Baas"! Last year SATS changed its name to Transnet, but how much else has changed?

The bosses have told workers that today we must co-operate together to make the company a success. No more strikes! But I would like to explain what Transnet really is.

It is still a state monopoly. It still pays starvation wages. In spite of making millions in profit in past years, it still refuses a minimum

wage of R1500, to afford us a modest life.

All this is characteristic of an apartheid infested monopoly. It pays labourers R750 per month, whether you have worked for 38 years or five years.

Most workers are staying in loan houses. Every month after deductions you are only left with about R150, to pay electricity and maintain the family.

Children have to go to school and some instalments must be paid from that R150. How are people expected to live on such a small amount?

Transnet has entrenched racism. Take the example of the ticket collectors.

The management wanted to demote us from our grades -- to replace us with white workers who have run away from Namibia. Otherwise they would be compelled to make parity between black and white workers of the same grade.

So they introduced a new name to replace the one of ticket collector -- the "Middle Man"! We, the black workers, were no longer to be allowed to sell tickets on a train.

Where a passenger boards a train where there is no ticket office, and consults a black ticket collector, he must refer him to the white ticket collector. The worst part was that the white ticket collectors were taught their job by

the black collectors, who are now condemned to be unqualified!

The management's purpose was to form a flying squad of black ticket collectors. There a white supervisor will be in charge and get them to overcharge black passengers travelling without tickets.

Sometimes, when a black passenger has no money to pay he was stripped of his shoes or watch, and forced to stand one footed on cold cement until sympathetic people contribute for him.

White passengers were given the benefit of the doubt when found without tickets.

Ticket collectors were no longer prepared to work as a squad to exploit black brothers and sisters. SARHWU called a meeting to discuss this matter. All workers were convinced against the bosses' plan.

The system of the squad has created a gulf between workers and commuters, and the workers wanted to reconcile this.

Workers decided to forward their grievances to Transnet management. After a two-day strike, management agreed to meet our representatives.

Negotiations then led to the squad system being shelved.

This proves that when the workers join hands to fight any evil that is being practiced by

the bosses they can succeed.

Now we are struggling for equal grading and wage parity with the whites doing the same kind of work.

In my experience only after we organised in SARHWU were we able to improve our lot.

The ticket collectors must link up with the general workers.

I have also realised that SARHWU can only progress on the basis of unity and solidarity of all workers, black and white.

SARHWU must make sure that strong leaders emerge from amongst the workers. It must campaign to stop privatisation.

A life free from retrenchment, insecurity and poverty, racial hatred and oppression, a life of opportunity for all Transnet workers -- that is what we want.

CAR FOR SALE

The new Aston Martin Virage FHC will be arriving in South Africa shortly.

House of Sports Cars Managing Director Klaus Grogor says the car is "user friendly" and will be sold on a first come first served basis. Workers are invited to apply now for purchase of this car.

The cost will be only R1,3 million, and insurance a further R13 000.

A woman railway worker told Congress Militant:

"I have worked here for five years. I travel for two hours every day to get to work.

"The conditions are very bad. I help clean the coaches. It is a very difficult job. We use buckets, which are heavy when full of water, and we have to wash the coaches inside and out regardless of the weather.

"I have seen pregnant women carrying heavy benches and buckets. One woman had a stillborn baby because of carrying heavy things.

"We get pregnancy leave. But it is only for three months. This is not enough. Sometimes when a woman gets back from leave she is not paid for 2-3 months.

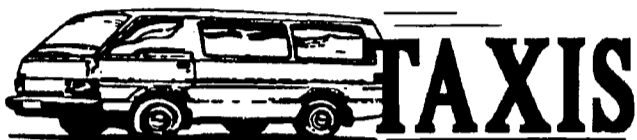
"I have five children and my husband only gets R750 per month. I made a loan through the bank to extend our house. Every month they deduct half my wages to pay the loan. Then I am left with only R300.

"We only get overalls every 3-4 years. In winter it is cold, but we don't get rain coats, or warm coats to work in.

"We don't have a canteen. Sometimes there is no hot water and we have to shower in cold water.

"There is still racism here. We are not graded equally with white workers, and they have more opportunities.

"All railway workers, especially women, must join SARHWU and fight for workers' power."



TAXIS

No easy ride!

By Jacob Sotho

After 8 months on strike at Wynberg I decided to take a job as a taxi driver.

Taxis may seem good for transportation of workers, but they are very bad for the drivers who drive them.

Drivers have to drive for 15 hours per day, from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. This is very dangerous and they have no rest time or break during working hours. Workers are so exhausted and fail to look after their child, or their home.

As taxi drivers work seven days a week without leave, they end up using working time to enjoy themselves, drinking liquor, which is very much dangerous for passengers and themselves.

The taxi owners exploit the drivers. They promise to dismiss drivers if they don't overwork. I was working 90 hours per week -- to earn R200!

Taxi owners give them a certain amount to be brought every day, and the drivers have to drive very fast to cover that amount. Some owners make drivers work for them for six days, and on the seventh day you drive for yourself. Then you have to drive fast to make money for your own benefit.

For these reasons I quit my job as a taxi driver.

Emergency! A day's work at Alexandra Health Clinic

By Roelf Adams

The Alexandra Health Clinic serves 250 000 people from Alexandra and surrounding suburbs. If it was not for the hard work of the doctors, nurses and staff, the area would be without any affordable health service.

A mother comes in with her baby. It had been born prematurely, and had to live in an incubator at Johannesburg General Hospital for three months. It had been discharged the day before. The baby was floppy, cold,

blue. The heart was only beating 40 times per minute.

We rushed to the emergency unit to resuscitate it, get the heart beating above 100, pump oxygen into the lungs and give it glucose.

Then we phoned Johannesburg General to book a bed in the intensive care unit. All their beds were full and they declined to see the baby again. Baragwanath was also full. Finally we found a place at Coronationville hospital. We had to organise a private ambulance as the government does not supply a regular ambulance service any more.

Every tenth baby born at the clinic weighs less than 2500g and faces the same dangers. Low birth weight babies are a result of bad living conditions for mothers.

One normal Saturday night in the casualty unit we saw 29 patients with stab wounds, two with gunshot wounds, one rape case, two people injured in car accidents, two with burn wounds.

One young worker was brought in drenched in blood. He had been stabbed in the lungs. His heart had nearly stopped. We had to put a plastic tube through his ribs to let out blood and trapped air. One of the people from the fire

brigade asked why we bothered to attend to him, "he will die anyway". But we succeeded in getting his blood pressure and heart rate stable.

We called an ambulance to take him to Hillbrow hospital. We did not consult them first because they would have refused, as we are supposed to refer patients to Tembisa hospital -- but Tembisa hospital is a nightmare. One hour later a doctor from Hillbrow phoned, warning me that they would see no more patients from Alex if we did not phone them first.

After you've treated the 20th person with a

stab wound you start to think "why can't they ban all knives?" But that is not the answer. If people had decent houses (most people in Alex live in shacks), and if there was cheap entertainment and recreational facilities -- not just liquor -- then people would not fight.

In casualty a woman comes in screaming. She is working at Mighty Meat wholesalers. Her hand got caught in a mince machine and was cut off. The workers who brought her showed us stitches, where she got hurt at work earlier the same week.

When she had calmed down she looked

at the stump and said, "If only it could have been the left arm". Then she pleaded with us to go and get the hand to see whether it could be put on again. But it was too crushed.

These are the daily problems faced at the Alexandra Health Clinic. They are problems that need not exist. They are caused by the conditions black people are forced to live in, and the carelessness of the bosses with workers' lives and limbs. They are made worse by the fact that the state does not give enough money for hospitals in black areas.

Threat to 50 000 Metal & Engineering jobs

Fear of retrenchments is once again a dark cloud over every factory floor.

The bosses want to cut up to 150 000 jobs in manufacturing this year. The South African Chamber of Business (Sacob) and SEIFSA say 50 000 may go in metal and engineering alone.

Last year thousands were retrenched without a serious challenge from COSATU. 30 000 metal and engineering workers, and 35 000 mine-workers lost their jobs. Alternative jobs are not available.

Prices are going up. Bread might reach R2 per loaf this year. But the bosses say they will use the threat of dismissals to resist workers' wage demands in 1991. They want to prevent a massive strike movement for better wages like last year's, when nearly four million days were lost in strike action.

Congress Militant surveyed metal and engineering factories on the West Rand. Short time is widespread, machinery is being shut down, and more and more workers laid off.

Most workers want to fight back to defend jobs and conditions. Many want to join NUMSA. But many workers also felt the leaders of NUMSA and COSATU were not doing enough to oppose the bosses, or to unite workers behind a programme of action.

Why are jobs being cut?

The economy is in a recession. A "recession" means a slowing of growth, or no growth.

Capitalism has up and down cycles. It is an unplanned system of private ownership and production for profit.

First it increases production -- then it causes recession by restricting the growth of its own market.

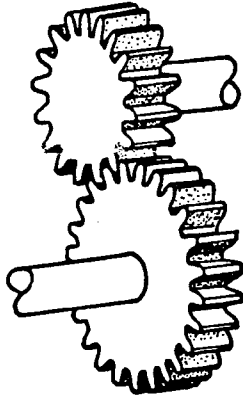
Every boss tries to

limit the buying power of the workers (by holding down wages) while increasing production to make maximum profit.

Eventually this means that the goods produced cannot be sold. If the bosses cannot sell what workers produce, they cannot make profit. So they cut production.

Cutting production means cutting jobs.

This happens in every capitalist country. Britain and the USA are also in a recession now. In Britain the bosses want to cut 30 000 jobs in the next three months. In the USA manufacturing employment has been cut by 200 000 since March 1989.



Jobs here are also affected by events overseas. The war being fought by the USA in the Gulf may lead to less demand for manufactured products worldwide, meaning less chance for SA exports.

Already some bosses have told workers "not to expect real increases in wages this year, because of the war in the Gulf". And more jobs may be cut.

The capitalist market is restricted even as people's needs grow. The majority do not own fridges, cookers, cars -- even the basic products that can be mass produced in factories owned by the capitalists.

If production was planned and expanded to meet these needs then there could be enormous growth in jobs.

What prevents that? Private ownership of

the means of production; the system of exploiting workers for private profit; and the state which maintains the capitalists' power.

Are the bosses short of cash?

Management tell workers that they have no money -- "that is why we are cutting jobs".

In fact, even in a recession most big companies still make big profits.

In 1989-90, SA's top five engineering companies made profits of more than R3 billion rand. The profits of SA's top 100 companies rose 24% in 1990.

A recent survey found R35 billion lying idle in banks and other financial institutions! The reason given is that "the economy continues on its stagnant path, offering limited opportunities" for making profit and "poor returns" on investment.

What they don't explain is that capitalism itself is the cause of the problem.

Can small companies pay decent wages?

Most small engineering companies are owned by huge monopolies such as Barlow Rands, Dorbyl, or Malbak -- which are owned by one or a few families!

For example, Pipe Couplings in Chamdor is a small factory. But it is owned by the giant engineering company Dorbyl... which is owned by Rembrant... which is ultimately owned by Anton Rupert! He is the second richest man in South Africa, personally controlling more than R500 million.

Demand that the bosses open the books! Not just of the company you work for, but also of the parent company that

owns it.

Prepare to fight now!

It is important to explain these facts to our comrades at work.

The bosses are working together to sack workers and hold down wages, so workers must fight together to defend jobs and conditions.

If there are workers in your engineering factory who have not joined NUMSA, discuss with them and persuade them to join now!

If you know of other factories where metal workers are still unorganised, go and win them to NUMSA!

That will put us all in a better position to fight for our jobs.

Workers need to ensure that NUMSA prepares now for a united fight to defend jobs and conditions. A programme of action with demands that can unite all workers is vital.

* No retrenchments!

Workers should not have to pay for the problems created by capitalism. The products of the factories are needed. Fight for every job!

* No overtime!

The bosses cut jobs and increase overtime. It is more profitable if fewer workers do more work. The fight against overtime is a fight for jobs.

* A living wage for all workers!

If NUMSA leads a united fight and wins the national wage demand, metal and engineering workers will not need to work overtime.

* No casual labour!

Casual labour allows the bosses to hire and fire workers as they want. It allows them to stop workers from joining the union, and to hold down wages. We demand permanent status, with rights to promotion, and proper training.

* An ANC government must nationalise the

big companies under workers' control and management.

Workers should join the ANC to ensure that the nationalisation promised in the Freedom Charter is carried out.

Production should be for people's needs, not profits for the rich.

Together let us transform the ANC into a mass party of the working class, with a socialist program to build a genuinely new South Africa!

A democratically planned economy could guarantee every useful job.

It would channel the surplus created by the workers' labour into socially useful investments. It would create jobs for the millions of unemployed.

BARLOW'S RANDS



Barlow Rand is a giant controlling 456 other companies. It is the 'parent' of many smaller companies in the metal and engineering industry.

It is valued at R18 billion. It employs 211 000 workers, which means that at least one million people depend on it for their living.

Last year at a bosses' function in Sandton, Barlow's chief executive Warren Clewlow disclosed what happens to the wealth created by the company's workers.

According to *Business Day* (27/11/90) he said that Barlow's total turnover was R29bn. Of this, R21bn was paid to suppliers, "leaving a balance of R8bn as the wealth created."

"Of this, R4bn went to employees in the form of salaries, wages and benefits." In other words, the workers got no more than half of the wealth which their labour created. (In fact less than half, because part of this R4bn goes to make up the high salaries of the management.)

What happened to the other R4bn? According to Clewlow, it was distributed in the following way: "R1bn to bankers and shareholders, R2bn retained to fund new investment and assets for future wealth creation, and R1bn to the state."

This is what the bosses mean when they say "Free enterprise is working!" The labour of the working class produces handsome rewards for the capitalist class.

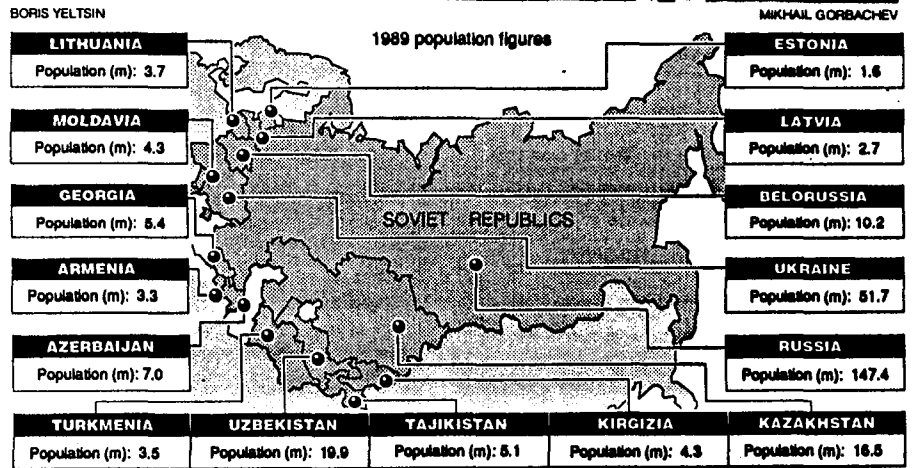
Merely by owning the means of production, the capitalists take the surplus, through interest, profits and taxes to support their state. Capitalism means exploitation. And to keep profits up, wages are kept down.

In a democratic socialist society, workers would not take home as wages the full value which their labour produces. They would agree to invest heavily in better machinery to improve productivity, as well as in hospitals, schools, dams, etc.

But then the working people would themselves, together, own the wealth, and decide what to do with it for the common good. *Forward to socialism!*

NUMSA, COSATU must mobilise fight-back!

Gorbachev heads back towards dictatorship



In January, the bureaucracy under Gorbachev sent Red Army troops into Lithuania to re-enforce Moscow's dominance. Like the other 14 republics that make up the Soviet Union, Lithuania had declared itself independent.

In all these republics the working masses have demonstrated their determination to be free of the Stalinist bureaucracy that has brought disaster to the country.

In Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, youth bravely tried to defend important buildings with barricades but almost no weapons. They could not stop the Red Army tanks and 14 were killed and 164 injured. At the mass funeral for those killed, 500 000 people filled the streets.

Gorbachev claimed that he was not responsible for the brutality and that he would launch an inquiry into the events. The truth is that suppression of the Soviet people has now become the main policy of Gorbachev's regime.

His reformist rule gave the opportunity for enormous movements by the oppressed peoples demanding economic and political freedom.

Perestroika

Gorbachev came to power in 1985 with the intention of reforming the Stalinist system. His policy was reform from the top to prevent revolution from below. In fact it unleashed huge mass movements, leading to the collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe.

In the Soviet Union itself the further development of the planned economy had become incompatible with the continued rule of the bureaucratic elite.

Their mismanagement, corruption and waste clogged up the economy and the state.

The aspirations of the working population for freedom and better standards of living could only be satisfied if a genuine workers' democracy was established, as envisaged by Lenin,

Trotsky and the Bolsheviks when they took power in 1917.

But power in the hands of the mighty Soviet working class was precisely what Gorbachev's reform of the bureaucracy was designed to prevent.

Limited democratic concessions were made, such as elections to the soviets (local councils) and the Congress of Deputies (national 'parliament'). Yet the bureaucratic system remained intact.

A pro-capitalist wing of the bureaucracy began to use the points of support which they had established in the soviets, at national level and in the republics, to press for the abandonment of the planned economy.

At the same time the long-suppressed national question, enormously aggravated by the crimes of Stalinism, reappeared with a vengeance. The Soviet Union in the last three years has been scarred by national and ethnic violence which has left 700 000 internal refugees.

A "war of laws" has ensued between the central power and the republics, the latter declaring the primacy of their laws over those of the Kremlin.

In this impasse, and with the illusion that capitalism in the West had a bright future to offer, Gorbachev swung over to support the wing of the bureaucracy favouring a return to the market and private ownership of production.

But this only served to make a bad situation into a catastrophic one

-- "from *perestroika* to *catastroika*", as Soviet jokers commented.

With the promise of Western European living standards, not just the bureaucracy but wide sections of the Soviet population initially supported a return to capitalism. But their first taste of it was gangsters and profiteers exploiting them through the black market and the private 'co-operatives', while shortages worsened.

A huge recoil has set in among the Soviet population. *Soviet Weekly* commented recently: "Only 6% of 33 000 people polled believed that living standards will rise under a market economy; 72% said they would be worse off."

"8 out of 10 factory workers were pessimistic about their prospects under the new system and one-third of the sample -- ranging right across the workforce and the state sector to co-operatives -- are worried they will lose their jobs."

Discontent at the chaos, food shortages and disintegration of central planning have created a basis of support in the population for a return to dictatorship. However, 60% of those interviewed did not want a "return to Stalinism or a similar system".

Dictatorship

Gorbachev is now manoeuvring back in the direction of dictatorial rule from the centre -- but cautiously still in case this provokes a new wave of mass resistance and the overthrow of the bureaucracy.

The leaders of the so-called Communist Party, the military and the KGB are urging Gorbachev to harsh, repressive rule in order to safeguard their power and privileges.

On the other hand Yeltsin, the pro-capitalist leader of the Russian Federation, is now calling openly for the resignation of Gorbachev.

Independence

In the oppressed republics the masses have been looking for escape from the economic and social hardships of the Soviet Union through self-rule.

In Lithuania the people gave mass support to *Sajudis*, the main nationalist organisation calling for independence from the Kremlin. However, the bourgeois leaders of *Sajudis* quickly revealed that their first aim was their own enrichment.

Landsbergis, the head of *Sajudis* and the Lithuanian government gave himself a monthly salary of 2000 roubles (R9500 at official rate). 10% of basic resources were transferred from the state into the hands of former Communist Party officials and the Landsbergis clique.

The Lithuanian Supreme Soviet was more a copy of the bureaucracy in Moscow than a democratic government protecting national freedom.

These "democrats" did not further the struggle of the working class for control over their own lives.

The independent

Workers' Union of Lithuania, with 300 000 members which used to be a firm supporter of *Sajudis*, withdrew support for Landsbergis. Although the military intervention by the Kremlin would cause new support for Landsbergis, he and the *Sajudis* leaders are incapable of leading the Lithuanians to freedom and prosperity.

We support the right of the nationalities which make up the Soviet Union to self-determination. We support their right to declare and implement their independence and even to separate from the Soviet Union if they so wish.

Lenin and Trotsky had consistently defended the right of self-determination of the oppressed nations dominated by Russia.

At the same time, a capitalist republic of Lithuania or any of the other states would be economically unviable. They would have to subject themselves to the world imperialist forces which would squeeze the country and the working class dry.

Best hope

A socialist federation offers the best hope for satisfying the political, economic and social demands of the peoples of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev attacked Lithuania under pretext that it was fostering the bourgeois system. But Gorbachev is not the defender of socialism. He defends the power

and privileges of the ruling bureaucracy and therefore cannot afford to allow a republic to have real independence.

Gorbachev's aim, like that of all Stalinist regimes, is to keep the working class from getting their hands on power.

In the Soviet Union today a republic like Lithuania can only achieve genuine independence through the solidarity of the working class of the Soviet Union as a whole.

To win this, not a nationalist but an internationalist program is necessary. It would need to implement workers' democracy to serve as example and inspiration to the rest of the workers.

Under a democratic socialist plan of production, the vast Soviet Union with its great natural resources, highly educated proletariat and continental division of labour could raise the living standards of all its peoples and satisfy their needs.

At present the future for the Soviet Union appears dark. The military and KGB are flexing their muscles: Lithuania was but a dress rehearsal. New attacks on the working class loom in the future as the bureaucracy try to firm up their rule.

Already they are having headaches with conscripts refusing to serve in the Red Army.

Only a powerful Marxist force, with a clear socialist outlook, and based on the working class is capable of providing a way forward.

"These events are clear proof that genuine socialism has not existed in the Soviet Union. However, the Stalinists claim the system there was socialism, and this claim hampers the struggle for socialism in other countries."

-- Esme Jacobs, UWC student

Imperialism

by Richard
Venton

What it is, and why it's waged war on Iraq

The Middle East exemplifies the way imperialism has exploited the world to protect and extend its domination. British and French imperialism were the first to carve up the Middle East between them. Britain wanted to hold naval supremacy, to maintain the best trade route to its empire in India, through Suez and the Gulf.

The region's vast oil wealth was discovered and conquered by imperialism. The workers and peasants are still paying with their lives for this legacy, in wars, national conflicts and indescribable poverty amidst fabulous (oil) wealth.

The region was part of Turkey's Ottoman empire for 300 years until World War One. As Turkey sided with the Germans, British and French imperialists cynically encouraged and exploited Arab nationalist revolts against the Ottoman empire, with promises of nationhood after the war.

By 1917 their hopes were dashed. British imperialism had grown justifiably afraid of the impact of the Russian revolution on the Arab masses and of losing their grip on the strategic waterways. So they dredged up their much-practiced tactic of divide-and-rule.

In collusion with the USA, Britain declared in favour of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Its imperialist arrogance was epitomised by Balfour's 1919 declaration:

"In Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants. Zionism is of far greater import than the desires and prejudices of the 700 000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land."

Britain and France carved up the body of the Arab nation between them, installing stooge monarchs, seizing land, raw materials, cheap labour, markets and strategic waterways.

In 1920 France got Syria and Lebanon while Britain was handed Palestine, Jordan and Iraq, where they imposed a client king. They deliberately kept Kuwait as a separate state from Iraq to ensure control of the Gulf. They had cultivated the ruling Al-Sabah family and in 1934 Sheik Al-Sabah granted a nationwide oil concession to the (misnamed) Kuwaiti Oil Company, a consortium of Gulf Oil and BP.

The Al-Sabahs were well rewarded for being the local clients of imperialism. By 1990 they had about \$100 billion salted away in overseas investments. These are the royal dictators whom the allied Western imperialists

wish to restore in the current war.

In Iraq in the 1920s and 1930s the British crushed revolts by Kurds. 9 000 died when the RAF bombed villages whose people refused to pay British taxes.

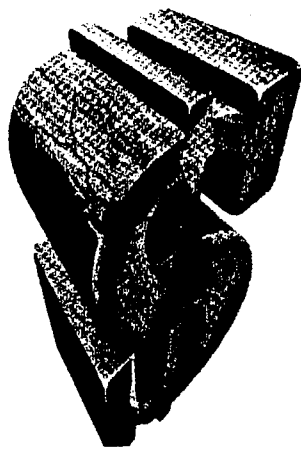
They used bombs with delayed-action fuses (despite warnings that it would result in blowing a lot of children to pieces when they played with them) to prevent peasants tending their crops.

Revolts by Palestinian Arabs against Jewish settlement were also bloodily crushed. Then on the eve of the 1939-45 war, just when Jews were fleeing Nazi atrocities, they imposed quotas on Jewish migration, fearing alienating even their stooge Arab rulers. They even mined boatloads of Jews en route to Palestine.

Britain tried to hold back the movement for an Israeli state but by 1948 the Zionist ruling class had seized 78% of Palestine's land in a war which produced a million Palestinian refugees. The state of Israel was declared.

The imperialists had created an outpost for their strategic interests, especially oil, throughout the region. Through five major wars in 43 years, Israel has established itself as the imperialists' policeman in the Middle East.

Imperialism has created the bloody cauldron that is the Middle East today. Only in a socialist federation of the region can the artificial borders it laid down be overcome, allowing the voluntary union of the Arab peoples and guaranteeing the national rights of the Jews and Kurds.



US imperialism

President Bush has told Americans to "prepare for the next American century". "American leadership is indispensable in the rapidly changing world," he said in his State of the Union message. "We have a unique responsibility to do the hard work of freedom..."

"We are the nation that can shape the future. If

anyone tells you America's best days are behind her, they are looking the wrong way... We are the only nation on this earth that could assemble the forces of peace. This is the burden of leadership and the strength that has made America the beacon of freedom in a searching world."

Wars, like peace-time politics, must be judged by the class interests being pursued by the protagonists. Bush is not fighting in the Gulf to 'liberate' Kuwait but to maintain a world order in which US big business reigns supreme. They are sacrificing young soldiers on the altar of oil profits, cheap energy for the multinational monopolies and capitalist supremacy over the Arab people.

Just as workers would oppose their own bosses at home, so they must be implacably opposed to the plunder and profiteering of the Western capitalist coalition abroad.

What is imperialism?

Empires long predate the rise of capitalism. The mighty slave empires of Greece and Rome conquered land, colonised and enslaved foreign peoples and amassed wealth for the slave-owning class. What is now Iraq and Kuwait was once ruled by Greece, then Rome, 2 000 years ago.

Likewise feudal societies involved the seizure of new territories, with wars of conquest aplenty, like the 'Crusades' against the Arabs of the Middle East.

But modern imperialism is a new stage of economic and social development, with an entirely different class content. Its economic essence is monopoly capitalism, in which industrialists and bankers are tied together by 1 000 threads of investment, credit and joint directorships.

The growth of huge concentrations of capital in the hands of tiny numbers of capitalists accelerated in the advanced countries from the 1870s. A world depression in that decade drove smaller businesses to the wall. This trend was intensified by the formation of trusts and cartels, designed to crush competition, control output and prices and divide up the markets between the giants of industry.

America's first trust, the Standard Oil Company, controlled 86% of refined oil in the USA by 1904.

Together with the growth of large-scale, monopolised industry came the growth of credit and thus the

domination of the economy by the banking monopolies.

By 1900 the age of free competition had been transformed into monopoly capitalism; the rule of capitalism in general had become the rule of finance-capital in particular.

Governments were generally dominated or controlled by this class -- "governments of money in a democracy". Undreamt-of levels of production thus became possible.

But precisely because they produce for profit, made from the unpaid labour of the working class, industrialists had the power to produce more goods than their domestic population could afford to consume.

So to create outlets for their 'surplus' commodities a handful of advanced nations colonised the majority of the world. Whilst millions in the advanced countries suffered malnutrition, squalor and illiteracy, their capitalist masters mobilised armies (and missionaries!) to conquer foreign peoples and markets for goods and the export of capital, i.e. loans and investments.

Stanley, who found "Dr Livingstone, I presume" in Africa, spelt out the intentions behind colonisation in an address to English industrialists:

"There are 40 million people beyond the gateway of the Congo and the cotton spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them. Birmingham foundries are glowing with the red metal that will presently be made into ironwork for them and the trinkets that shall adorn those dusky bosoms. And the ministers of Christ are zealous to bring them, the poor benighted heathens, into the Christian fold!"

An essential aim in building these modern empires was to seize, monopolise and ruthlessly exploit the raw materials, in order to fuel the fabulous wealth of the capitalists of the imperialist powers.

British imperialism was the first to rise, dripping with the blood of millions, conquering 11.6 million square miles of colonies by 1889, enslaving 345 million inhabitants to serve the class needs of its financiers and industrialists.

Land was stolen, sometimes in exchange for a few gifts of trinkets or alcohol to tribal chiefs, otherwise by slaughter. Native industries (as in India and Ireland) were consciously destroyed to prevent 'free' competition with the industries of the 'mother country'.

Taxes were levied to drive

people off their land into the mines, plantations and factories of the conquering imperialist power, thus enslaving millions as cheap labour.

Imperialism leads to war

By the 1900s Britain, France and Germany had conquered 8% of the colonial world. Expanding capitalism previously found new outlets for its goods, capital investment and exploitation of mineral wealth in 'virgin' territories, such as Canada, Australia and the Western USA.

Of course the conquering capitalists indulged in the minor detail of genocide against the native peoples, such as the red Indians who were almost exterminated between 1869 and 1890 in wars, disease and mass demoralisation in the face of an imposed alien system.

But by 1900 very little of the globe remained to be colonised. So rival gangs of imperialist plunderers combined to re-partition the world. This struggle to redivide the world led inevitably to wars, including World War One.

The blood and bones of eight million dead were spread out in the trenches because the old, under-invested industry of British imperialism was being challenged by the rising, more modern industry of German imperialism. It took the revolutions in Russia in 1917 and Germany in 1918 to halt this slaughter.

After 1918 the victorious imperialist powers wreaked revenge on the defeated German imperialists by carving up her industry and imposing war reparations at the Versailles treaty.

With the missed opportunities for socialist revolution in Germany in 1918-23 and the subsequent victory of Nazism, war again became inevitable. Nazism was a particularly bloody political form of capitalist rule but in essence remained German imperialism.

Its interests, and those of Japan, clashed head-on with those of Britain, France and the USA. The fight for markets once again led to mass slaughter of workers.

In the words of the American socialist, Daniel de Leon: "Carnage is a spectre that dogs the heels of capitalism."

Independence

In the past 40 years imperialism has been forced to beat a tactical retreat in its form of rule, in order to

maintain the essence of its stranglehold over the world economy. From the 1940s a series of colonial revolutions challenged the might of imperialism. Frequently, direct colonial rule had to be relinquished by granting formal independence.

Such concessions are welcome as at least a half-step forward. But the harsh fact is that imperialism continues to subjugate the ex-colonial and semi-colonial world by other means than direct colonial occupation.

Imperialism remains intact as monopoly capitalism. Wealth today is concentrated on a scale that make the trusts and cartels of 1900 look like corner shops. The world's top 200 transnational corporations had (in 1986) an annual turnover of over \$3 trillion -- almost 30% of world production. Amongst these are the "six ugly sisters" which control the world's oil industry.

These multinational super-giants, intertwining banking with industry, grip the entire globe in their grisly embrace, squeezing the life out of millions of people. The two-thirds of the globe's population who live in the Third World on average live 24 years less than people in the industrialised nations.

The modern form of imperialist domination creates conditions in which 800 million people live "beneath any reasonable definition of human decency," according to the World Bank. A simple illness like diarrhoea kills 5-10 million every year; one person dies every second of hunger and related diseases.

Imperialism continues to dictate the economic output of the under-developed nations. Previously conquered lands are still forcibly tied to the production of one or two crops or minerals for export to the imperialist economies, regardless of the mass starvation and economic distortion that follows.

60% of the under-developed nations' export earnings derive from just 18 raw materials.

Imperialism still dictates the terms of trade. This means that the prices paid by the West for raw materials in no way match the prices for manufactured goods sold by the West.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) measures a basket of 30 primary products -- excluding oil and gold -- against the manufactured goods they could buy. Starting with an index of 100 in 1957, it only exceeded 100 once since (in



1973) and fell to 66 in 1985!

Oil prices would need to reach about \$80 a barrel just to match 1950 levels.

To imperialism this means super-profits, one of the factors producing the eight-year boom of the 1980s. To millions in the colonial world it means starvation.

The underdeveloped majority of nations saw their share of world trade plummet from 28 per cent in 1980 to 19 per cent by 1986.

Debt

The world's debt crisis is a modern form of imperialist plunder. The IMF and World Bank were established in 1944 to oil the wheels of imperialist profiteering in the rest of the world. They protect the interests of private Western banks and their state guarantors. They organise new loans to enable debtor nations to repay the interest on the old loans.

The IMF compels debtor nations savagely to cut food subsidies, health care, education and domestic production of cash crops for export, in order to repay interest on loans. Starvation -- and frequently bread riots -- follow in the wake of IMF austerity programmes.

Oxfam says that for every \$1 collected in charity for the developing countries, \$9 is taken out of them by the banks and finance companies. Land previously used to feed people is used to fund the bankers by cash-crop production. And just five monopolies control the West's grain trade.

A new twist to imperialism is the net export of capital from the underdeveloped to the imperialist nations. From 1982 to 1985 Latin America received \$38 billion in aid and investment but paid out \$144 in debt service repayments, a net export of \$106 billion.

Added to this is the unofficial 'flight' of capital as corrupt elites in the debtor

nations salt away their cash back into Western banks. So the banks get two sets of profits, in interest payments and in deposits from foreigners.

In 1986 the estimated flight of capital from the ten biggest Latin American debtor countries was equal to 70% of their new loans from 1983 to 1985. In Mexico, between 1983 and 1985, the flight of capital was about \$16 billion, almost double the \$9 billion of borrowing.

The dominant monopolies dictate the policies of imperialist governments. For instance BP had their Iranian assets nationalised by the radical Mosadeq government in 1951. By 1953 the USA and Britain, with CIA involvement, had Mossadeq removed, the Shah's dictatorship re-enthroned and BP's profits restored by de-nationalisation.

The same class interests underpin the present imperialist onslaught on Iraq.

Modern-day imperialism does not only unleash economic terror against the millions of the colonial countries. With it goes political and frequently military terror, with all the old devices of deceit and divide-and-rule thrown in.

Imperialist world domination undermines even limited capitalist democracy in the vast majority of ex-colonial nations. Indeed the democratic rights conceded to workers in the imperialist nations were possible largely at the expense of the rights and conditions of the colonial peoples.

In ancient Greece, for every free man there were four slaves. In the modern imperialist states, for every citizen with democratic rights there are numerous hungry, oppressed people in nations dominated by imperialism.

The Western imperialists crush democratic rights, prop up stooge dictators and then blame these clients of theirs for being undemocratic when

they cut their puppet-strings, as with Noriega in Panama and Saddam in Iraq.

On the other hand revolts by the colonial masses have forced concessions to the working people of the imperialist nations. Extensions of the vote in Britain coincided with threats to British rule in Ireland and India, as well as agitation at home.

So the workers of the advanced imperialist nations stand to gain from the struggle of workers and peasants of Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism. Defeats for these struggles undermine the rights and conditions of British, American or French workers.

In the aftermath of their defeat in Vietnam, US imperialism had to tread more softly when considering wars of intervention against colonial revolutions. They were powerless to invade Iran after their puppet Shah was toppled in the 1979 revolution.

But when their class interests are challenged head-on, imperialism is prepared to risk all, as in the bloody confrontation with Iraq.

Imperialist rule requires strategic power and prestige if the subject people are to be held in their chains. Saddam's invasion of Kuwait challenged that power and prestige, as well as trampling on their oil lifeline. They were compelled to launch the biggest world conflict since 1945.

Imperialism means war and only the victory of workers internationally can permanently guarantee peace. It is as futile to pray for peace under world capitalism as it is to plead for celibacy in a brothel.

Hiding behind the justified outrage of the Western working class at the monstrous Saddam dictatorship, imperialism is engaged in a war of colonial enslavement against the Arab workers and peasants. Victory for imperialism in the Gulf would tighten its death-grip on the lives and livelihoods of workers and peasants world-wide.

It would be a victory for the oil companies, the industrialists seeking cheap energy, the bankers who strangle the debtor nations, the arms manufacturers who profit from war and compel debtor nations to increase arms purchases whilst slashing social expenditure to meet IMF demands.

It would prolong the ability of imperialism to rule the world, including its ability to rule and exploit its 'own' workers at home.

It is the duty of the international labour movement steadfastly to oppose Bush and Major's imperialist war and struggle for the only peaceful, humane alternative -- a socialist Britain, a socialist USA, a socialist Middle East and a socialist world.

[Shortened and reprinted from the British Marxist weekly, *Militant*.]

Gulf slaughter

As we go to press, the US and allied ground war against Iraqi forces has begun.

In the relentless bombing and destruction of Iraqi cities since the war began, German Intelligence estimates that 300 000 may have been killed and at least 100 000 injured.

Bush rejected Gorbachev's peace plan because he wants to smash the Iraqi army, to ensure that Iraq will not pose a threat to US interests in the Middle East.

The Western powers have launched the biggest ground war since World War II. One million troops, mainly working class youth, are killing each other for the oil profits of imperialism.

Bush has said that the US will be at the head of a new world order. With the crisis in the Soviet Union, US imperialism intends to be the undisputed policeman of the world. It wants to teach the under-developed countries not to challenge the grip of imperialism.

The lives of ordinary people is of little concern when compared to the capitalists' profits.

Billions are being spent on this war of destruction while millions of poor people starve. Just the 23 Patriot missiles fired by January 22 cost \$11.5 million -- enough to buy one year's supply of food and clothes for two million people in Mozambique.

The war will not "liberate" Kuwait. The reactionary Emir's regime will be reimposed on the people. The Saudi monarchy will temporarily be strengthened by the victory of their master.

It is not yet clear whether the US will be able to get rid of Saddam and replace him with a more compliant dictator.

In South Africa, black workers discussing with *Congress Militant* have generally come out firmly against US imperialism. While opposing Saddam Hussein's brutal regime, they see that the US is not in the Middle East to protect democracy but its control of the world's oil.

Congress Militant opposed the invasion of Kuwait. Kuwait is an enclave of Western imperialism. However, in invading, Saddam was not 'unifying the Arabs' but furthering the imperialist interest of the Iraqi ruling class and trying to escape from the internal crisis facing his dictatorship.

His regime is responsible for numerous atrocities against the Iraqi people, including repression of workers' organisations.

To overthrow the Saddam dictatorship is the task of the Iraqi masses, not of US imperialism which

armed and supported Saddam until he came into conflict with them.

Only when the working people of the Middle East take power into their own hands will there be genuine peace and democracy.

De Klerk's claim that the people of SA supports the US is false. The great majority support Iraq against the US intervention.

De Klerk and the SA bosses share the interests of world imperialism.

Pik Botha is a liar and hypocrite when he claims this war is for democracy. The NP government helped arm the Iraqi dictatorship in its war against Iran.

Within the past few months, they have continued to sell G-5 and G-6 artillery and shells to Iraq (as well as to its enemies) for the profits of the SA arms industry.

A US military victory over Iraq will cost imperialism dear. The war has aroused a tremendous anti-imperialist mood among the masses in the region. The Arab masses will not tolerate for long the domination of the US and the reactionary regimes of its client states.

The defeat of Iraq will only be a temporary setback which will prepare the way for bigger storms in the future. The reactionary regimes of the sheiks and princes will be unstable and dependent on the US for their survival.

A "new order" under imperialist domination will consist of wars, poverty, counter-revolutions, dictatorships -- a new order of barbarism.

The struggle for national liberation of the ex-colonial peoples from the grip of imperialism needs to be linked with the tasks of workers' revolution against capitalism internationally.

Only when imperialism has been replaced by a World Federation of Socialist States will there be a new order of peace, freedom and prosperity.

Marxists internationally have been in the forefront of strikes and demonstrations against the imperialist war.

* **Spain:** The School Students' Union, under Marxist leadership organised a stayaway supported by three million students.

140 demos attended by about 600 000 were organised. Our sister paper, *El Militante* organised a demo of 150 000 in Barcelona on January 15.

* **Germany:** In Cologne a committee started by comrades of the Marxist paper, *Voran*, organised a demo of 20 000.

A further 360 000 joined demos in 120 cities. Strikes against the war by police in Nordrhein-Westphalia and by Bosch workers in Stuttgart occurred on the first day of the war.

* **Japan:** A demo of 100 000 in Tokyo went unreported.

* **USA:** Hundreds of thousands have demonstrated; e.g. 59 000 in Seattle.

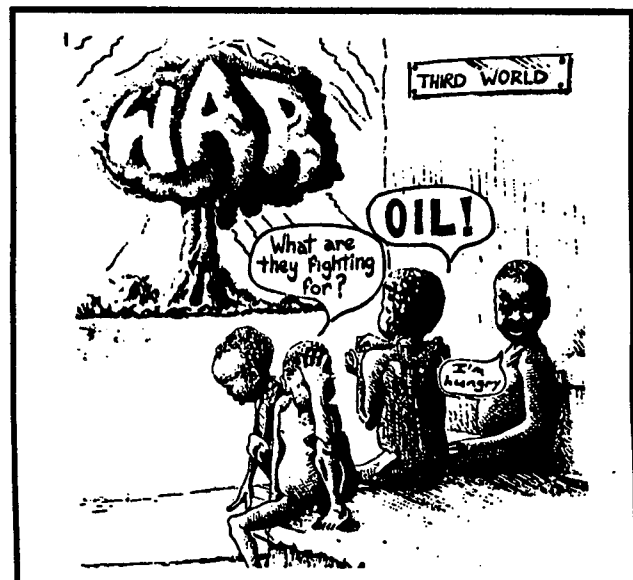
* **Britain:** The Marxist-led Youth Rights Campaign set up Youth Against War Committees to collect one million signatures.

Marxist Labour MP, Dave Nellist, has been in the forefront of a campaign by left MPs to oppose the war.

* **South Africa:** In three weeks more than 2000 copies of the *Congress Militant Gulf Special* were sold.

On the first day of the war *Congress Militant* supporters addressed more than 1000 industrial workers at workplaces in Johannesburg alone, receiving strong support for our standpoint.

Congress Militant's public meeting in Bellville on January 29 was attended mainly by workers with lively discussion.



Will deal with Inkatha bring peace?

by the Editor

When Nelson Mandela embraced Gatsha Buthelezi in front of the TV cameras on 29 January, and an agreement between the ANC and Inkatha was signed, it seemed to many that the 'black-on-black' violence which has claimed an estimated 8 000 lives in Natal and Transvaal might finally end.

But will this agreement lead to peace? Or will it complicate the freedom struggle and lead to deeper divisions among the oppressed people?

If it was a question of ending factional fighting between rival liberation organisations -- then we could only support peace talks and a united front.

But Inkatha is no such thing. It is an organisation founded on tribalism and apartheid, and funded by the bosses to keep the black working class divided and oppressed.

If it was simply a question of ending thuggery and intimidation, so that the struggle could advance peacefully by political argu-

ment and mass mobilisation -- then a truce for tactical purposes even with an enemy could not be ruled out.

We have always opposed revenge killings which set the Inkatha and Congress ranks against each other in an endless, senseless feud.

We have stood for organised, armed self-defence, while urging the Congress leadership to launch vigorous campaigns of mass action against the bosses and state authorities in KwaZulu/ Natal and throughout South Africa --

campaigns on wages, housing, transport, education and for political rights in which ordinary Inkatha supporters would be encouraged to join.

Such a struggle would turn the Inkatha membership against their own 'leaders' -- the chiefs and warlords, the shack-lords and rent racketeers, the low-wage exploiters and corrupt bureaucrats who run the KwaZulu bantustan.

But the Congress leadership has not mounted such a struggle.

An agreement with the Inkatha leadership may lead to a temporary halt in the killings -- so long as that suits Buthelezi and company. But it cannot lead to lasting peace.

The KwaZulu Investment Corporation estimates that, within ten years, half the population of Natal/ KwaZulu will be living in the area round Durban. 84% will be Africans, and 42% of these will be squatters and the 'very poor'.

The masses in KwaZulu are compelled to revolt against their intolerable poverty and exploitation -- and therefore against the system of authority ruling over them.

The agreement with the Inkatha leadership means an agreement by the ANC not to lead such a struggle.

Pietermaritzburg ANC member Paulus Mkhize told *Congress Militant*: "The bad thing about this agreement is that Inkatha gained public recognition from ANC leaders, and this will strengthen it among the grassroots."

He added: "We must highlight that Buthelezi is a director of factories, among the rich people in the country. He firmly supports capitalism and opposes a Constituent Assembly, because he and his class stand to lose a lot."

A NUMSA and ANC member in Sweetwaters said: "People won't live in peace while the warlords are not detained, as they are the cause of the conflict."

A SACTWU and ANC member in Sobantu agreed: "Only once the warlords are arrested and ZP is disbanded,

then people will live in peace."

But these necessary steps are not even mentioned in the 'peace' agreement!

There is no mention of the right of the people to organise armed self-defence. Instead the existing "security forces" (including Gatsha's ZP) are expected to play an unbiased and "effective peace-keeping role".

This is like solemnly agreeing that a hyena will henceforth no longer eat meat.

In his address at the meeting, comrade Mandela described Inkatha as an "organisation of the oppressed".

He spoke of returning to the "close relationship" that the ANC enjoyed with Inkatha in the past.

The agreement declares that the two organisations have the common aim of "establishing a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa."

Yet Inkatha openly promotes tribalism and opposes an elected Constituent Assembly and majority rule!

It is not an accident that Inkatha has maintained a one-party totalitarian dictatorship in KwaZulu.

As soon as there is a renewed movement of the masses against their dictatorship, they will return to violent suppression of strikes and protests.

With the aid of the state, they will continue their offensive into the Transvaal.

The agreement strengthens Inkatha politically against the struggle of the working class. It will not lead to lasting peace because the underlying class conflict is not altered by it.

Three CWIU members at Sasol, Pietermaritzburg write: "The agreement between Mandela and Gatsha means nothing to the masses. We must take the lead to build area committees defended by the workers.

"If the ANC leaders will not give a mandate for this then we must give them the mandate from the ground. We must push our leaders to take our demands!"

Anticrime Campaign

- ★ Free, equal and non-racial education for all
- ★ A job for every school leaver. Jobs not jail!
- ★ A national minimum wage of R200 for a 40-hour week
- ★ Unemployment benefit equal to the minimum wage
- ★ Recreational facilities for all
- ★ Lighting in every street
- ★ Armed self-defence by communities
- ★ Workers' defence teams on public transport
- ★ Away with SAP and SADF
- ★ No ZP, kitskops, greenflies or vigilantes
- ★ Local policing under democratic community control

T.D. Mkhumbé, a chemical worker from Edendale, writes: I am very much concerned about people in Inhlazatshe who have lived in fear after their houses were looted by the "Sharpeville" gang.

Many residents have left to Edendale. These elements are said to be chasing anyone in the evening with guns and rifles, stabbing and shooting innocent residents.

They are calling themselves ANC members but are known to be criminals. They are stealing, burglarising, raping, killing and all sorts of corruptions. They are not mindful about the struggle, and never contributed to the community.

It is my fervent hope that the leadership take drastic measures. The Inhlazatshe people should rebuild the movement and choose their real representatives.

Dino Daniels of Bellville writes: The organisations have got to do something about the problems faced by the youth. The police is doing absolutely nothing about this. They like it when the gangsters fight each other.

Only way to take them out of the gang is to engage them in our activities. Youth want action not long meetings.

Sipho Nkosi writes: It has become a common practice for non-schooling youth to interrupt during lessons with guns at senior schools of Alexandra and take girls with force. This is done with the intention of rape.

One school girl said, "They come into the class room wielding guns and the mistress can hardly oppose them. Sometimes they are known, sometimes they are not, but they take you to a mokhukhu for rape."

Over the weekend one girl was raped by three com-tsotsis. They left her bleeding. Yet they had the nerve, after learning that the parents of the girl were taking it further, to go to the school with guns to persuade the girl to say they were lovers.

What is it that should be done to ensure the safety of our kids?

Ephram Ndlovu of Johannesburg writes: Since the government of apartheid has taken all that we have and kept us in horrible places, the criminology is ringing in our mind, more especially the new generation. This is caused by a lack of jobs and the misuse of the South African economy by the government and the capitalists.

The government spends more than 60% of our product supporting the standing army for the safety and the privileges of the capitalists.

The increase of police cannot stop crime, cannot bring jobs and normalise the schooling conditions.

The government should know that we are aware that the cause of crime is the very system of capitalism purposely protected by the government.

Fight for the transfer of power to the majority!
Forward to workers' power and socialism!

Impoqo yeNkatha kubantu

by Zikayifani Ngubane

Safikelwa ngamakhozi amabili abiza umhlangano okuzophoqa abantu ukujoyina Inkatha. Kodwa lowumhlangano kawubanga nampumelelo ngoba abantu bacela ukuba uhlehle ngenxa yokungabikho kwenkosi yabo.

Lokho kwaholela ekubeni ukujoyine abanini bezitolo kuphela. Ababe sebeveza iphuzu lesikolo asasinenkinga. Abe esithi lamakhozi makubekho umhlangano wesikolo lapho kwaba nokuphoqwa kwabafundi ukuthi bajoyine ngenkani. Kulomhlangano abafundi abaningi abazange baye, bayohlala ezinkundleni zesikole khona ukuzekuhambhe lamakhozi.

Kwathi khona manjalo kwabe sekubizwa omunye owayefake i-T shirt ebhalwe VIVA MANDELA. Owathi ma efika phambi kwenye yamakhozi yaba seyiyasidabula isikhapha leso lisho ithi "uyeka ukulandela ubukhozi bakini ulandela amaXhosa angazilutho."

Kwaba sekuphuma imphumela emibi ngoba kwaba notitsha abayisithupha abashiya sikolo ngoba bephoqwa ukujoyina Inkatha. Kwakethwa abazosala beba izihloli zabagqoke ama T-shirt ekungesiwo eNkatha, bababhale phantsi baba thumele kuwolamakhozi.

Kumunye umhlangano kwabizwa Inkosi eyalandwa ngesibhamu kwathiwa mayingasho lutho. Ngoba iyimemba yeANC. Ngako ke kumele iphathe u R11,00 wokujoyina kungenjalo lyozibonela kunye nabantu bayo bayi ANC. Ngakho ke kukhomba ukuthi IANC akusiyo eyesizwe esithize nje kuphela kodwa abantu bonke.

"The workers need to come together to control the ANC. Not like now where the masses are like observers. The leaders are on the top floor and are dividing the people like when Gatsha and Mandela shook hands while the people are struggling to defend themselves against Inkatha on the ground floor."

— Alpheus Bhengu and Michael Sibisi,
ANC members, Pietermaritzburg