

Congress Militant

Price 80c

[Solidarity price R1.50]

Paper of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC

To the mothers of South Africa

By Mnit, SARHWU member

After four people lost their lives in a squatter camp near Klipspruit in Pimville we, the mothers of Pimville, wanted to go and sympathise with those who had lost their beloved ones.

Even before they could start praying, the police were there harassing them. But before they could leave the place their leader asked a good question to the police: "What is your task, if you are unable to stop violence, while our brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers are dying like flies?" Then they were asked to disperse.

A day after that they organised a march to the nearby hostel under the leadership of Mrs N Mosunkuthu and Mrs Shope of the ANC Women's League. There they handed over their memorandum to one of the Nancefield IFP members. The Inkatha answered that we need no women here. And also the police interfered.

So I appeal to all mothers of South Africa to join the ANC Women's League in its marches against oppression, for we are the backbones of the world, and we are highly oppressed by the state. Even in our families, at work, and everywhere. We need to pressurise the state and be politically active. For united we stand, but divided we fall.

A warning to De Klerk

By a defence committee organiser in Alexandra

We are sick and tired of the bad attitude of the state and the capitalists, supporting Inkatha to kill civilians.

They must know that even if they can convince the NEC of the ANC to compromise, we, as the people on the grass roots, are aware of that. We pay great respect to the ANC leadership, and take some instructions from them. But if they ever compromise too much it is possible for us to take our own direction, according to the situation. We need democracy and freedom of speech, to control our own organisations.

De Klerk must bear in mind that he can try to convince our leaders, but not us on the ground. The time is ripe for us to forget about the Pretoria minute, because the regime has used it to hold our hands and to kill us at the very same time. I do not say this from an individual, but from different people as I have interviewed them. People support negotiations, but now it is clear that people have to buy negotiations with their blood.

ANC must lead a fight for power

People hoped negotiations would bring peace and progress. Instead we got violence and more misery. Now workers say the ANC leaders gave too much for too little. It is time to return to the struggle for power.

The government and the bosses have taken advantage of our compromises. Their power feels greater than before.

The white minority government of De Klerk still makes the decisions. After a year of the "new" South Africa, thousands of our comrades are still stranded in exile or locked in apartheid prisons.

The minister of "Justice" compares our freedom fighters with racist murderers like Barend Strydom.

There are more road blocks, searches, and even soldiers dropping out of the sky into Soweto. MK cadres, such as Tumi Padi and Faith Ncalo, are assassinated by police hit squads. Known Inkatha warlords freely organise massacres.

The ruling class refuse our demand for an Interim government and an elected Constituent Assembly. They

oppose negotiations for majority rule. Instead they are trying to trap our leaders into sitting in an unelected coalition government with De Klerk and Gatsha Buthelezi.

A few white bosses still own the wealth of the country and control the economy. They refuse to build houses and schools. They refuse to pay a living wage. Each week thousands of workers are retrenched so that the bosses can have more profits.

The ruling class is making compromise impossible. The ANC's *ultimatum* shocked the government, but it gave new strength to the masses who have seen that negotiations are being used to divide and weaken the ANC.

There should be no more negotiations until the demands in the Ultimatum are met, all political

prisoners freed, and all exiles full indemnified.

The lesson of our struggle is that nothing is given to us by the ruling class without a fight. The workers and youth are waiting for a lead from the Congress leaders of how mass action will be implemented.

If negotiations could bring majority rule, then we would be for negotiations. We want peace, but how can there be peace when the wealth of the country is owned by a few, and an unelected government, with huge armed power, still sits on the backs of the masses?

Millions of oppressed people throughout SA are looking to the coming ANC and COSATU Congresses to lead the movement out of the present bog.

The Congress has to correct the mistakes that have weakened our struggle. We believe that if the

Congress could adopt the *draft resolutions put forward by the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC* this would put the working class on the road to power.

We believe Congress should come out with a clear lead on mass action. Organise and *arm* self-defence units in the communities! Plan a campaign to *defeat* Inkatha!

Join with COSATU in a fight for a national minimum wage of R250 for a 40-hour week!

Unite all the oppressed people to fight for housing, education, and proper health care for all!

A serious program of mass action will mobilise and recruit millions of working people behind the ANC. It will give the ANC the strength to go forward to the taking of power.

With state power in the hands of the working-class majority the ANC would be able to end racial domination and capitalism, and begin to solve the problems of poverty and suffering in South Africa.

Emva kokulahlekelwa yizihlobo, abantwana nabazali endaweni ezahlukeni. Lento isenze intliziyo zethu zabuhlungu zaphelwa lithemba naluthando kubumnandi bempilo.

Udlame zange lube yinto entle. Kukho nale mpikiswano yezikhali zendabuko eziqede abantu abaningi bakithi. Loko sithi akulo siko lethu mazulu ukugebenga abanye abantu bengenala. Umese yinto esebenziswayo kakhulu ekhaya ngomama. Kodwa akutsho ukuthi umese ungaya naye entlanganisweni okanye uwuphathe endleleni ugebenge abantu ngawo. Asikho isiZulu esinjalo.

How to defeat Inkatha

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Editorial

Trade union independence

Independence from the bosses and their state is the first principle of any genuine workers' organisation. Together with this goes the principle of *democratic control* by the membership.

The modern SA trade union movement, with 1,3 million members in COSATU, was rebuilt from 1973 on the basis of complete independence from TUCSA, whose leaders openly collaborated with the bosses and the state. Our unions became known as the *independent unions*. Later, they became known as the *democratic unions*. Both labels were correct.

But now a 'new' idea has entered the scene, promoted especially by officials of SACTWU. This is that trade unions must be 'independent' of *political organisations*. Actually it is an old idea (called 'syndicalism') long discarded in the labour movement in other countries. We think the idea is confused, and needs to be cleared up.

In every country, the rise of organised labour has led or is leading to industrial unions joining together in federations, and to the *entry of the workers into the political arena*. SACTWU's own constitution states such *political* aims as the right of free, compulsory and equal education; decent housing; and the sharing of the fruits of the labour of all workers in industry.

The struggle of the workers for a better life is not limited to the factory floor. It includes the struggle for government and state power -- the power to end the system of exploitation and change society.

For that purpose the working class needs a political party of its own, which it controls, and which organises the political struggle for its class interests.

In South Africa, for historical reasons, the organised black workers have united behind the flag of the Congress movement, headed by the ANC. But the ANC is not controlled by the working class. To achieve that, it will be necessary for the mass of organised workers to build the ANC, participate actively in it, and take its leadership in their own hands.

What is the alternative? To leave the political destiny of the workers in the hands of the middle class, who are tied to the apron-strings of the capitalists? Or to organise a mass workers' party based on the trade unions? The SACTWU and other trade union leaders are *not* proposing that. Their idea of "independence" of the trade unions from all political organisations, and staying out of the ANC, therefore means *preventing the organised workers from taking over leadership of the political struggle*.

Meanwhile trade union leaders, including SACTWU's John Copelyn, are meeting with leaders of the ANC to agree joint policies of *compromise with the government* -- without referring to their members for debate and detailed mandates.

Marx and Engels long ago explained that, if the organised workers did not lead the political struggle for power, then the working class would inevitably fall under the domination of pro-*capitalist* politicians.

We think the trade unions should affiliate to the ANC. Not to sit there passively taking instructions, but to bring their mass membership into the ANC branches and conferences, to *impose a program and strategy in the interests of the workers on the ANC*.

Does that mean we want the ANC to "control the unions"? *No!* A union must be democratically controlled by *all its members* in terms of its constitution. Union delegates must take union policy *into the ANC*. There should not be a general policy against a union leader holding office in a political organisation -- rather let the members decide what is practically best in each case.

Does our approach mean excluding from the unions workers who support other parties, or no party? *No!* A trade union is for *all workers* in an industry who are *prepared to join together and fight for better wages and conditions*. There must be full rights in every union for supporters of all parties and tendencies *within the workers' movement* to put forward their policies and stand for election as leaders. A spirit of tolerance of differences must prevail.

However, no genuine workers' organisation can be open to strike-breakers, boss-boys and other active agents of the bosses and the state! Unions have been built for struggle. *Active, willing members of Inkatha should, in our opinion, not be permitted in the unions or the factories. What is Inkatha but an arm of the KwaZulu and SA state, an organisation of strike-breakers and killers, out to smash the power of COSATU?* If the SACTWU leaders were serious about the *independence of the union from the state*, they would not permit branches in Natal to be infiltrated and fall under the control of Inkatha.

NUMSA dispute

As we go to press, a wage dispute has been declared between NUMSA and SEIFSA. The bosses' offer is below inflation and means a wage cut. All unions should prepare now to mobilise solidarity if a national NUMSA strike is called. By fighting together, the workers can win!

Why we must fight

Where are we Africans? We seem to be nowhere. How long must we wonder how far shall we go?

Behold people of Africa what burden we bear. The apartheid system this side. Capitalism this side. AWB this side, and last but not least the Inkatha Fighting Party.

Yesterday the apartheid system boss FW De Klerk was praised by our honourable leaders and said to be the man of integrity. Today De Klerk is playing some delaying tactics by refusing our comrades in exile permanent indemnity.

Our comrades in prison have been forced to embark on a hunger strike to get their release. What kind of integrity are we

experiencing?

Ever since the ANC was unbanned it continued to follow a policy of non-violence, in the face of unrelenting and mounting violence against the oppressed people. The leadership's compromising stand, without consulting the working class of this country, has now proved fruitless. Instead a massacre of scores of unarmed, innocent and peaceful Congress followers was committed all over the PWV area.

It should be noted that it was a mistake to suspend the armed struggle. Now the government policy of force and repression is being met by talks after talks. The choice was not ours. It has been made by the NEC of the ANC, which has rejected

the demand of the workers to be armed and answered every such demand by promises and more promises.

But frustrated youth have volunteered on many occasions to leave their school classes to go to the forefront in fighting well-trained professional vigilante killers. But still we keep on singing that MK will liberate the nation.

The whiteman's cup of joy is overflowing. Vlok and Malan have every reason to display their joy on this colossal scale.

The white race of this country are some of the richest people in the world. But when we Africans look back over that period of many hundreds of years we see a record of sadness.

I wish to remind the whites that whatever page they turn in the history of South Africa they find it red with the blood of the fallen. They find ill-will and insecurity written plainly across the pages.

I appeal to them to consider joining the working class of this country and struggle against capitalism. We are also calling MK soldiers to join the workers in forming strong defence units, and the training of workers.

Mike Mbele
ANC and SARHWU member and a defence committee organiser in Soweto

What we need is power

There is nothing that has changed in this country. The government will not leave their power.

In hunting for a job we have often found that we would go with a white who is unqualified without any experience, yet he will get the job. Then 'Alpheus' the underpaid, exploited black worker is called to train him. Even though we may have the qualifications and experience we are not taken, because we are black.

This shows that the

system is still working everywhere. It cannot be rubbed from the book. Even if the law becomes one, with 'equal rights', apartheid will still exist. Most of the companies in South Africa are owned by a few whites.

We are paying tax to the government yet we do not earn the salary that the whites earn. We do not enjoy the things that they have in the places that they live.

What we need is power. Not just votes, but power to change things. The government

will never give us power because then they will lose everything. Power lies in the industry. Sharing in government is nothing. The only time that change will come about for the blacks in this country is when we own Escom, the mines, banks, land, etc.

The capitalist try to fool the blacks by talking about 'small business'. What this is, is a shame. They dump you in an area where there is no business, where no-one can buy your things, while they take the best

places for their business.

Take Alexandra, for example. There are many of the small stalls where people have to sit the whole day just to sell, maybe, one or two packets of their goods. Yet look around Alex at the factories. It is the rich whites who are making profits right at our doorstep.

By a striking
PUTCO worker
TGWU and ANC member

Simpson Thabe, NUMSA member, writes:

I think that recession leads to job retrenchments, and that the state is using privatisation in order to get rich. Whilst millions of people are suffering, and many workers are facing starvation, big companies are owned by individuals.

We must demand nationalisation, that all the big companies of the private sector be converted to the state, under workers' rule. Then the state will be able to carry out its responsibilities to the people. I think that can lead to socialism.

Editor replies:

We agree with comrade Thabe. Even when the economy is not in recession, capitalism leads to retrenchments.

The bosses say that if workers accept lower wages and let them make bigger profits, they will create more jobs. Not true! In Britain, the privatised Telecoms has announced record profits of almost R15 000 000 000. Yet it retrenched 19 000 workers at the same time! The benefit goes to the owners.

The bosses compete to keep costs down to the minimum, so as not to be overtaken by the next capitalist in the race for profits. So they reduce the number of workers they employ as much as they can. New machinery and 'rationalisation' are the ways they do this.

Today, the SA bosses are using the excuse of the recession to retrench tens of thousands more workers than they have to. They are preparing for tougher competition with overseas businesses in future. They are driven by profit, not concern for human needs.

In a socialist planned economy, run by workers, we would also strive not to waste labour. We would bring in new machinery and improve productivity as much as possible. But the benefits would go to the people. Jobs for all would be secure, and work would be shared -- with increasing pay.

By Jenny Maziya
Katlehong

VICTORY!

for SARHWU women at Milner Park

Bosses give protective clothing. Now let's go forward and win maternity benefit!

In March, Congress Militant sellers met SARHWU members from Milner Park railway depot, where carriages are cleaned. The workers complained of burns received from a cleaning chemical called CCA, and that Transnet management was deaf to their demands for adequate protection.

We helped the workers to organise a fight against CCA, and for other demands including maternity benefits.

The key was to involve other SARHWU depots, and to raise solidarity overseas.

Wits chemistry post-graduate Robert Luckay was approached to analyse CCA. He found it was "a strong form of hydrochloric acid ... extremely corrosive to the skin".

Dr. Vivien Walsh of the Institute of Science and Technology at the University of Manchester in Britain, faxed to the Milner Park women detailed advice on the toxic effects of CCA, and on prevention and treatment of burns.

The London-based

Campaign for a Socialist South Africa organised messages of solidarity, including from Swansea Trades Council, the NALGO Housing Associations branch, Reading AEU, the Labour Party Women's Conference, the Socialist Labour Students organisation, and Dave Nellist, MP. The letters were forwarded to Transnet.

Meanwhile Congress Militant produced a special edition on CCA, and supporters helped in visiting railway depots up and down the Witwatersrand to mobilise backing for the Milner Park women.

Officials at SARHWU regional office at first objected to Congress Militant meeting the workers, but a delegation to the office by union women from Park Station and Milner Park insisted on our continued involvement.

We explained that our aim was to strengthen SARHWU, and help it gain a victory which would bring BLATU members over to its side.

SARHWU regional officials at first said they

had investigated CCA and found it safe. Yet Protea Chemicals Ltd., which makes CCA, says "Persons handling it should wear goggles and gloves".

The union officials' attitude changed under pressure of the workers, and when they saw the way our comrades really worked.

We went to the Centre for Occupational Health and asked a doctor there to examine the workers' burns. We recommended that he work directly with the union officials in visiting the depots, which he did.

Suddenly the attitude of Transnet management shifted. Protective clothing which had previously been called unnecessary was suddenly provided, including gas masks to protect the workers against CCA fumes.

The Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC plus unity of the workers in SARHWU spelled victory for the Milner Park women.

By Congress Militant reporters

By Maria Thoko

I was the first to meet with the Congress Militant. We had a discussion on the condition at our work and the interview appeared in the last issue. Since then the comrades came to address our staff meeting. I stood up and asked what will Congress Militant do if we give them our demands. I was assured they will fight with us in SARHWU to win them.

Today I am reading the letters of protest to Mr Moolman (Managing director of Transnet). They come from British trade unions, Labour Students, even one from a Labour MP. This is the response of the support we asked from workers internationally.

For the first time the workers have won their demand. Workers who use CCA were given new gloves for the first time. We had complained and complained for the replacements.

While there was still shock at this kindness, we were handed new aprons. The yard superintendent tell the workers, "Come and get everything, anytime!"

Congress Militant has boosted us there and then. Visiting our depot, giving us good ideas. Look now, the workers have gas masks. Before, they gave us that little piece of cloth with a string to cover our nose. Now we have expensive rubber gas masks. Yes, it cost Transnet money to buy them.

Even BLATU workers are beginning to see that SARHWU is for them as well. Our shop steward spoke to them and they understand, but there are individuals among them that are misleading.

Transnet likes to take advantage of the workers. This shows we can beat them. We can win the Maternity benefits as well.

A worker I was speaking to is coming from three months'

maternity leave. She stayed all that time with nothing. What is her baby supposed to eat?

Now they gave her a piece of paper to go and draw only R500. She is not getting the bonus because they say she stayed home too long. For three months she is not even getting one month's wages. Women want to fight for this Maternity benefit.

Workers in Natal-spruit have downed tools. The foreman

harasses and pushes them all over. It is two weeks now they been out. In Jan Smuts airport a shop steward was fired, so workers are moving there as well.

Yesterday there was a deadlock in the talks in Natalspruit. I am smelling another national strike. Workers have got their bonuses now, we can have another go. But tell me, comrade, if we all decide to go to the bush will Congress Militant stand with us again?

We never had gas masks before. For years we had problems about CCA. Congress Militant pushed with this Campaign, now Transnet is running away.

A day before the doctor came, we were given aprons, gloves and made to look nice. After that we have rubber gas masks and you cannot work without it. Transnet wants to be seen as if they care. One worker was sent back to the change room to get her gas mask. The superintendent said, "You know CCA is

dangerous. You must always protect yourself!"

But they still have not given us goggles. We need to protect our eyes as well.

BLATU workers have gained most because they are the main ones that use CCA here. We hope they see now that SARHWU stands for all workers.

We thank Congress Militant for all this.

Miriam Shop steward

Oomame base Transnet xa bekhulelwe base-benza i 8months bengaphumuli. Ude umthole umntwana ungenamandla.

Sinikwa iinyanga ezibili okanye ezintathu kuphela. Siqala ukuya kwi leave kulenyanga yesi eight. Ezinyanga sizihlala ngaphandle kwe cent. Loku kusinika bubunzima, asikwazi ukuhla ekhaya singenamali yokubhekana nesimo esikuso.

Oomame abaninzi yiyo loko bebuyela emsebenzini phambi kwesikhathi. Oku kubangela ukuba uhlale ugula njalo ngoba umzimba ubungekalungeli ukusebenza. Umntwana umshiywe esemcane kakhulu awuwazi nokuthi impilo yakhe injani. Ngoku kufuneka uphose amasuku emsebenzini kuba kufuneka uye eCilnic.

Ke singomame be SARHWU masilwela iMaternity leave ye 6months ekhokhelwayo. Lomzabalazo ngowabasebenzi bonke obaba nabo kufuneka befumene ileave aekhokhelwayo xa abakubo bekhulelwe.

Kodwa thina bomame masime ngezinyawo ukuze lomzabalazop uphumele.

Congress Militant was very good to the Milner Park workers. You gave them the idea because not all workers know about the union. You make us be a unity.

The paper is good because it tells us what is happening now. It says what should be the role of the ANC. Congress Militant opens the eyes of the workers. You must not get tired. To work with people is very hard.

To the union leaders I say they should be very close to you. I wonder why they have problems with you. I myself couldn't see any problem.

To the workers I say all the workers must decide themselves what politics to support. I myself have decided.

Isaac Shabalala SARHWU activist, Braamfontein

A fighting fund for a workers' paper

By Siphonkosi

We workers do not hear our own voice in the big newspapers. They are all owned by the bosses, so they speak against our struggle. We need our own paper.

Congress Militant is a workers' paper through which we can share our views as workers and youth. We can write of our experiences in all departments of life, starting from the home point of view, to school, work, and politics.

Unpleasant conditions should not be treated secretive. By sharing them with other comrades, we realise the similarity of our difficulties. Hence stand together to fight until we overcome them.

Personally, I have seen the correctness of other comrades' ideas

and the need to coordinate such ideas through Congress Militant. That was the first time I learned to know that other comrades think like me.

The value of Congress Militant is more than its price. It requests from those who find it worth growing, to even reach as far as up north, to consider its financial status.

To print Congress Militant the Tendency needs a printing press, full-time workers to run an office, monthly rental payments, and stationery. Think of the functioning of a union office and you will see the need to donate fighting fund.

In our movement we have got accustomed to receiving political material free of charge. But if we ourselves are

not paying for it, then who is paying? Whoever pays will have control.

We have to pay for our own revolution. Capitalists can't fund the movement which is for their overthrow. No one really can pay for his dethronement.

Comrades, I appeal to you, donate to Congress Militant's Fighting Fund to help stabilise the financial question of the Tendency. If we want to see it expanding to other comrades thirsty for such truth and a way forward by building the ANC, we have to see it as our responsibility to fund the Tendency.

Forward with Marxism, comrades. We will pay for our freedom no matter how poor we are!

Please give your contribution to a Congress Militant seller.

What is Inkatha?

Is Inkatha a Zulu people's organisation?

According to Suzanne Vos, Inkatha's press officer: "The IFP is now a hard-line political party and not a Zulu organisation. It is racist to call the IFP a Zulu organisation..." (Star 30/3/91)

Inkatha used to claim to be a Zulu cultural organisation, but life under Inkatha and the KwaZulu authorities has taught most Zulu people that Inkatha is not fighting for their interests. Even the police now admit that the majority in Natal/KwaZulu support the ANC.

Is Inkatha a liberation organisation?

To Zulu people Buthelezi says it is a Zulu-based party; to big business he says that it is a free-enterprise party; to the whites he says that it is a 'moderate' party, that will protect them from the extreme ANC!

Inkatha is for everyone who opposes the ANC. It boasts it has recruited all the black councillors in the Transvaal; the Three Million Gang who have terrorised people in Kroonstad; and 500 white business people in Jo'burg's rich Northern suburb of Sandton.

Inkatha is openly identifying itself as a party of violent counter-revolution. Amongst blacks it is a party for boss-boys. Amongst

whites it is a party for purposes of reaction.

Is Inkatha a mass organisation?

Inkatha says it has 2,1 million members.

An independent survey (Markinor) reports: "Although Inkatha has 6% of the vote, this is based in rural areas. Support among urban blacks is 1%, rising to 3% in the Durban area." (Star 8/4/91). Inkatha is clearly not a mass organisation.

Is Inkatha a peaceful organisation?

Inkatha attacks the ANC for having waged an armed struggle, and leading mass campaigns against the unelected councillors, etc. It attacks COSATU for leading strikes.

But recent research showed that Inkatha was responsible for ten times more acts of aggression than the ANC. Between February 1990 and April this year 2900 people were killed -- of these 2605 were killed by vigilantes. Since 1987 nearly 5000 people have died in Natal.

Inkatha is paid for by big business and the government. It is a counter-revolutionary killing machine, waging indiscriminate war on the black working class. Its purpose is to divide and demoralise the black majority. As Nelson Mandela said in

Kagiso, Inkatha's plan is "to rise to power on the corpses of dead people".

Can Inkatha make peace with the ANC?

Inkatha says it wants peace with a moderate ANC.

Peace? Inkatha uses terror to force people to support it. If Inkatha really made peace, and allowed freedom of political choice in Natal most of its 'members' would desert to the ANC. That is why the SAP and SADF work with the ZP and the warlords to keep control for Buthelezi.

Does Inkatha support democracy?

Inkatha claims it does.

But Inkatha opposes democratic elections for a Constituent Assembly! It wants to claim power through negotiations as an equal partner of the ANC, without its "support" first being checked by elections.

Inkatha supports, not democracy, but capitalism. Buthelezi has travelled all over the world making friends with capitalist leaders like Margaret Thatcher.

De Klerk and the bosses know the truth about Inkatha. They need it as a weapon to help protect capitalism in SA. That is why we say: *No compromise with the murderer Buthelezi! No coalition with Inkatha or De Klerk! The ANC must take power!*

I spoke to an unemployed worker from KwaZulu. He said one day a white person stopped and told a group of the workers to jump on his truck, he could give them a job. He drove to Johannesburg and left them at a police station. They were given guns and trained to use it. This worker said he ran away because they were told that they were going to be the soldiers to fight the ANC.

If we look at the killings in Kagiso we know that De Klerk is working under the table to support Inkatha. CP and the AWB are part

and parcel of it. After the attack, the police escorted Inkatha back to the hostel. If it was us we would have been killed immediately, or put in prison.

It is similar to when the Israelites wanted power from the king. So he killed all the sons. Yet Moses survived. In South Africa we are witnesses of oppression, so we must be silenced and destroyed. But Inkatha cannot kill the spirit of the working class.

Alex Ndlovu
Alexandra

The source of violence

Everybody sees the government is giving the organisations like Inkatha weapons to destroy those of us calling ourselves ANC, SACP or COSATU.

What is disgracing is that Inkatha is calling itself a "peace" organisation. IFP, ZP and UWUSA are working hand in hand with the government to weaken the ANC.

The SA government don't want to disarm the ZP and don't want to unban MK. Inkatha do have ZP who protect them, but the comrades are protecting themselves. Whereas MK should help to protect them.

Even now the government don't want to take the dangerous weapons from Inkatha when they are doing marches or rallies, because they are saying that is their culture.

The ANC do have lot of Zulus, Xhosas, etc. It is their custom also to carry these weapons, but when we go for peace meetings or rallies we don't carry these weapons.

L. Magubane
NUMSA shop
steward
Durban

Wanted



for murder

The invasion of Alexandra and Dobsonville

By Mafika Mathata

It was 8 March, when three groups of imps occupied the M-1 hostel in Alex. They came from George Goch, Denver and Soweto. They arrived at 2 a.m. and started to make their usual war chants, interwoven with loud singing. They vanished to the location at 2.30 a.m., in groups heavily armed with spears and all sorts of sharpened weapons.

M-1 residents panicked, some got out through the entrance, some through windows. Unfortunate ones were maimed to death. Some were hacked with sharp objects, stabbed with spears and pangas, struck with knobkerries, some shot to death. The victims were found in and under hostel beds, around Mekhukhung and even on top of those shacks. We only heard loud cries, and the heavy sound of metallic weapons crushing the doors and wall passages.

At 3.30 a.m. we heard a *lepapata* summoning them. They moved in silent groups to areas which had been targeted during the night. Some in Nobuhle (M-2) hostel moved along the passages gathering their deathly weapons to join their fellow invaders.

I went to play soccer on Saturday morning, but was disrupted by Inkatha men on their way to M-1 Madala hostel. Before they advanced to it more than six shots were fired, and four of their men fell down. They were attacked from the old hostel as residents from the townships, and fellow hostellers marched from the stadium.

If it had not been for Moses Mayekiso the angry comrades could either have recaptured their area of residence or had Inkatha smashed at first hand. Together with Mr Popo Molefe he went to negotiate accommodation for those intruding killers. Without consulting hostel residents they agreed to house Inkatha in an already packed hostel. They were ignorant to non-Inkatha members' safety.

Alex is not a healthy place to live in. People continue to be slaughtered at Mekhukhung around 2-6th Avenue. Residents are afraid to move next to the hostels, as they are seen as a wolf's place, which might take their life at any moment. If you talk of Inkatha, people freeze or jump up across the road without first taking a look.

Sipho Nkosi adds: The Mayor of Alex, Prince Mokwena, was sidelined by the agreement between ACO and the TPA, with resolutions like rent arrears scrapping. He resorted to Inkatha for protection. This was confirmed when Inkatha proclaimed to be in the Transvaal to defend the councillors.

During a men's hostel meeting an argument arose around rent. Inkatha members said they are bound by agreement to pay. Others say we need not pay. They felt that it was an offence to stay on somebody's property without paying. Even with blocked toilets, broken lights, filthy surroundings! They wanted to pay R35 for eight people in a room. This was a few days before the attack.

We have lived for two years in the family quarters of Siphwe hostel in Dobsonville.

Although Inkatha was in the hostel there was peace between the residents. The council had given eviction notices for May 31. All the hostel dwellers were united in opposition. Inkatha and ANC supporters formed a hostel committee to oppose evictions.

But weeks ago all changed. More Inkatha came from Dobsonville No. 2 hostel, and from Dube hostel.

One night we saw them moving to the location. Then we saw them running back, as if they were chased. They went to attack the location first. The residents didn't go to them.

After that war started. Inkatha went to all the hostel residents

and demanded that they pay R5 membership fee, and R10 for ammunition. They say they don't want Xhosa and Ponds in the hostel. If you are one of these they will kill you.

Many families have fled. We had to leave our possessions and move to this shack in Snake Park. Yesterday, when one worker went back to try to collect his clothes, he was shot by Inkatha.

Now we are being exploited by Lelekie Mohajane, a councillor. He says we must pay R61 per month for these sites. Although there is space here he is refusing sites to many families.

The ANC must take action against Inkatha. There can be no peace with it.

By Thabiso
Lekoa

How to defeat Inkatha

Because of Inkatha many people are dead. Children are suffering. Schools are not operating. We have spoken to the government about the hostels, and the violence, but the government won't listen.

We support the refusal of the Congress leaders to join De Klerk's peace conference, because the violence is coming from the government itself. Inkatha cannot abide by peace. Inkatha's violence will only stop when it is defeated by our organisations.

As comrades of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC, we call on the Congress leadership to organise a mass campaign of action on social demands, combined with armed self defence, as the way to defeat Inkatha.

ANC and COSATU lead a struggle for houses for all, and a national minimum wage!

The aim of Inkatha leaders is to smash the working class Congress movement. Many followers of Inkatha are politically unaware that the ANC is helpful to them. They are forced by warlords to disorganise people in the hostels, and threaten people in the township.

In Natal, the home of Inkatha, millions are without proper housing, a majority of families live on starvation wages. If the ANC and COSATU leaders can lead a fight for their demands then it would help Inkatha's followers to divorce themselves from Inkatha and join the ANC.

Inkatha's followers are oppressed under the bosses and the government. They are being used by the regime. If the ANC and COSATU leaders would organise a national campaign to fight for a National Minimum Wage of R250 for a 40 hour week, many followers of Inkatha would be attracted to it.

Fight for housing for all! Demolish the hostels!

The state allows the dogs of war to use the hostels as their base, and as the slaghuis. Many hostel dwellers are from Natal. They are forced to fight for Inkatha by threats to their families at home. They live in single quarters. They are cut off from the community.

When the ANC raised that the hostel system must end and workers be housed in townships, Inkatha screamed in opposition. Why? It is because warlords rely on terrorising hostel dwellers in order to turn them into their armies. Demolishing the hostels will leave Inkatha naked as they have no support in the city communities.

In Alex, people formed a relationship with the hostel. 70 per cent of hostel dwellers supported converting hostels into family units. Many hostels were organised, had committees to look after problems -- but because of Inkatha the hostel committees were facing a big problem of harassment, and of being killed.

By Ephram Ndlovu and Nkululeko Nomji

The hostels are a threat to the residents and a shelter to Inkatha. As soon as there is a threat of an attack from a hostel, our defence committees must immediately mobilise and destroy that hostel. We must warn Inkatha and the government that this will be our reply. In KwaThema and Dobsonville the hostels were destroyed after Inkatha attacked.

After the Ultimatum the government agreed that the hostels would be converted into family units or demolished. But they did not say when. If we must wait another year many more will die. We must give the government a date by when the hostels must be demolished or converted, otherwise we will demolish them ourselves.

Inkatha claims this will cause homelessness. When did Inkatha fight for houses? The ANC, COSATU and the Civics should fight for proper family housing for everyone now! Hostel dwellers must be provided with housing, where they can bring their families. This will free them from the grip of the warlords. With the hostels gone or upgraded, and workers living in the cities with their families, Inkatha has no chance in the Transvaal.

COSATU must struggle against Inkatha!

Inkatha has declared war against COSATU. But by refusing to publicly name Inkatha responsible for the violence, COSATU leaders are making it easy for Inkatha to creep into factories, and into COSATU, to destroy workers' unity. The bosses are taking advantage of this.

COSATU must ban known Inkatha members from its structures. Workers who are members of Inkatha must be made to choose between COSATU and Inkatha. If they say they are forced to be members of Inkatha then we must fight together to free them from Inkatha.

White SAP and SADF out of the townships!

The state mandates the white police to come and "protect" us, while they organise to kill us during the night. Their strategy is to use warlords to kill and harass people. If we fight back, white police come and occupy the townships killing people, calling them kaffirs, and determining their sleeping time like cattle.

70 per cent of people in the country are complaining about the police. Malan and Vlok have got roots on their position. The government is not prepared to dismiss them, because they do well in killing the civilians. Vlok said it is useless to blame the police, because that will make the police stay in their position up to the finish.

But many blacks in the SAP and SADF have seen

By a comrade in Alex

The police protect Inkatha from being smashed with strong weapons and teargas.

I saw an incident where an Inkatha member, separated from the township people by hippos, burst in front of the police or the soldiers to stab a passing person with a spear. He ripped through the chest from left to right. He struggled to pull it out for some time, but at last he succeeded. To my surprise he passed through the very police or soldiers to the Inkatha side, with police laughing.

The killing of nine people at Ramokgopa residence stands as living evidence. Police arrest people at night and throw them in the M-1 hostel to be killed, saying to Inkatha that they are ANC members.

the violence of Inkatha, and the help the whites are giving it. They live in the townships. Some have been killed by Inkatha. Some want to help us fight. But they take orders from their white masters.

The white police and SADF are there to terrorise us. Until we have a non-racial government elected by one-person-one-vote, we demand that no white soldiers or police should be in the townships.

Build armed self-defence committees!

We want peace. The state say they are in a campaign to stop the violence. The police are disarming people, but only the blacks. Why don't they disarm the whites, who arm the dogs of war? Then we are attacked again by the warlords, and by white vigilantes using cars without registration numbers.

The only thing left is to organise ourselves in every township, to form defence to fight the state, the vigilantes, and Inkatha. We must begin to build a trained and disciplined army of workers to defend the communities, trains and schools against attack.

Although the violence against us may slow at times, it should be clear that this cannot stop, so we must stay prepared to force any action at any time.

International support

We need help from workers in other countries. We appeal to trade unions, and workers' parties internationally to beware of De Klerk when he talks to them, because what he is talking is not the truth. The defence committees ask other countries to raise some fighting funds for them.

Build a mass ANC for workers' power!

Finally we want to inform those warlords who perpetrate the violence to stop because at the end of the day they will be the victims. The violence is nearly at their back door. The police should know that their violence is like a wheel, and it can turn at any time and face them. They will lose the battle at the end of the day.

The divisions the government is creating will lead to civil war. These capitalists believe that this violence will crush our movement. They are wrong. Our movement is right and will remain right.

The ANC leaders must fight for power. On the ground we must recruit millions to the ANC so that we can be strong enough to hold power. All workers of South Africa must unite, and march to the new South Africa.

This can be managed by overthrowing the state of apartheid, and replacing it with a non-racial democratic state of workers' power. This goes hand in hand with national liberation, just as we know there is no democracy without socialism.

Stand up and fight back!

As part of community and students I must thank to meet the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC.

At Umbumbulu we are free from this unfruitful violence, but since lots of our comrades are dying we are affectionately affected.

Inkatha leaders claim they are representing the poor unpossessive majority.

In Natal they are the same as oppressors. If you ever go to High Flats at Ixopo, the young kids are forced to join Inkatha otherwise you die. The old people who receive the pensions from govt are also forced to buy the membership card of IFP.

They are being organised by members of Cabinet of KwaZulu such as Mr RR Mbongwe; the same

person was involved at Umgababa violence.

Leave alone the illiterate mob who follow this organisation. There are those who have their filthy aims; and those who follow it just to secure their properties.

There are numerous statements from the member of Cabinet of KwaZulu stating that if you are under KwaZulu you're the Inkatha member.

Inkatha is the state sponsored organisation. What it does it does on behalf of De Klerk. So it is up to us youth to stand up and fight back. Inkatha are the killers; we must unite ourselves so to stop any attack by an Inkatha.

From S'celo
[surname withheld]
Umbumbulu

Since 1851 France had been ruled by Louis Napoleon. His regime was an increasingly corrupt and decadent capitalist dictatorship. The 1850s and 1860s were a period of rapid industrial growth. But all the benefits passed to a rich minority.

At the Anzin collieries, for example, profits increased by 300% between 1852 and 1870, but the mineworkers' wages went up only 30%. There was much unemployment. The peasant majority, and sections of the urban middle class,

ruined under the burdens of debt, heavy taxes, victimisation by the law, imposed by landlords and capitalists.

In 1870, the rival capitalist power of Germany, under Bismarck, invaded France and inflicted a heavy defeat on the French army at Sedan. The anger of the people boiled over at their rotten government. The next day the National Guard (a section of the armed forces intended for domestic repression, but conscripted from workers and peasants)

mutinied and proclaimed a Republic. Napoleon fled into exile.

Paris came under siege from the German army. A new capitalist government of "National Defence" was formed. But it feared the rising tide of militancy among the starved masses more than it feared the Germans. It was unable to organise an effective fight. In January it signed a humiliating peace with Bismarck, giving him effective control of Paris and most of France.

that the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs... to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power." "Our banner is the banner of the world republic," declared the Commune.

Its first decree was to abolish the standing (regular) army and replace it by the armed force of the whole people. All public (state) officials were to be elected, subject to recall at any time,

later put it, "appears to have replaced the smashed state machine 'only' by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this 'only' signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different type.

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Paris Commune 1871

120 years ago, in March 1871, the working class took power in Paris, the capital of France. They held power for two months before they were defeated.

From that experience, as from all great historical moments, the masses, the working class today can learn much. The Commune showed in action, if only briefly, what the working class would exercise its rule.

By Tom

Above: To the cheers of the people of Paris and the National Guard, the Commune is proclaimed from the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville, 28 March 1871. An observer called it "a festival of dazzling simplicity".

Right: Sketch made at the time of a women's club meeting in a church in Montrouge. As in previous French revolutions, women broke from their traditional subordinate role to demand their political rights.

Below: A cartoon of the time shows a capitalist financier running away from the Commune with his money-bags, while a worker strides confidently into a new era of hope and prosperity.



In turn, Bismarck "recognised" it -- as a puppet government. Thus German and French capitalism joined hands against the threat of revolution.

But this only served to provoke it.

To bring the masses to heel, the French bourgeoisie needed to disarm the rebellious National Guard. One night in February it sent regular troops to try to recover cannons in their possession. The Parisian working class mobilised against this together with the soldiers.

A regular officer wrote: "I have never been so embarrassed in my life. My orders were to disperse any assemblages [gatherings] and the streets were one vast assemblage in which my company were positively drowned." With the troops and the masses in open revolt, the government fled the city.

Out of this, within a month, arose the Commune, the first government of the working class in history. "The proletarians of Paris," declared its manifesto, "amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood

and to be paid no more than average workers' wages. The government, of ordinary working people, combined the functions of making laws (legislature) and carrying them out (executive).

Marx and Engels, then the political leaders of the First International, were following the developments with enthusiasm, trying to give them a direction. They saw these measures as the most important taken by the Commune. From its own experience, the working class was showing that to take power it "cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes," they explained.

Capitalist rule, in all its many forms, has at its core a state based on a standing army and a privileged bureaucracy. Working-class rule means abolishing this machinery and creating a new form of state. Not transferring the "bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it... is the precondition for every real people's revolution," Marx had written.

"The Commune," as the Russian Marxist, Lenin,

from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (=a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper."

The Commune also abolished capital punishment, banned gambling and prostitution, cancelled nine months arrears of rent, and started the nationalisation, under workers' control, of all factories and mills abandoned by the fleeing capitalists.

It failed, however, to take over the Bank of France, the economic organising centre of finance capital. It failed to organise war to defeat the "exiled" capitalist government in Versailles, outside Paris. It failed to proclaim a program of demands and revolutionary action which could win the support of the peasant majority. Its delays, indecisions and vacillations were to prove fatal.

The Commune came into being spontaneously. It improvised the best solutions it could find, with no conscious plan. Had the working class developed revolutionary leadership that had prepared itself for the crisis in society, and had

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In the midst of the
Russian Revolution, Lenin
re-studied the works of Marx
and Engels. In *State and
Revolution* he drew out again
all the hidden lessons of the
Commune.
To hold onto power, he
wrote, the working class
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But the Russian
Revolution remained
isolated. The revolution did
not spread successfully to
other countries in Europe. It
was isolated in a country
where the working masses

Democratic) International
buried the lessons of the
Paris Commune. But so also
have the leaders of the
Communist Parties which
follow the Russian
bureaucracy.
Joe Slovo, General
Secretary of the South
African Communist Party,
recently wrote a pamphlet
trying to explain what had
gone wrong in the Soviet
Union, called "Has
Socialism Failed?" Not once
does he mention all those
measures of the Paris
Commune which Lenin

Ethiopia: Fall of Mengistu

The flight of President Mengistu to exile in Zimbabwe, and the takeover of Addis Ababa by the US-backed Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), marks the end of a chapter in the tortured history of Africa.

Mengistu was a US-trained major in the army of Emperor Haile Selassie. He came to power as a result of the officers' coup which toppled the Emperor in 1974, and set off a social revolution.

Ethiopia was like a country where time had stopped. Its kings claimed descent from Solomon. Its ruling aristocracy, greedy, reactionary and cruel, could not modernise. The peasants, always a short step from starvation, endured a feudal tyranny covered with only a thin veneer of capitalism -- which was hated by the small working class and urban youth.

In 1935 Italy's fascist dictator, Mussolini, had conquered Ethiopia in a war of colonial enslavement. Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia were joined as 'Italian East Africa'. But as Italy was defeated by the Allied imperialist powers in World War II, Ethiopia was restored to the Emperor, now under British and US dependence.

In 1952 the USA handed Eritrea to Ethiopia, which was given a UN mandate. John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State, said: "From the point of view of justice, the opinions of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interests of the United States ... [make] it necessary that the country has to be linked with our ally, Ethiopia." In 1962 Haile Selassie annexed Eritrea. The war for its independence has continued for thirty years, with at least 350 000 dying in the fighting there.

Severe drought in 1972-3 resulted in a famine in Wollo and Tigre provinces, where the Emperor let 200 000 starve to death while other provinces continued exporting grain. This finally pushed the army officers to overthrow the old regime.

Capitalism had no more than a toe-hold in Ethiopia, had clearly impoverished the masses of the Third World, and was facing crisis in the industrialised West. Without any idea where they were heading, the Ethiopian officers' regime (the Dergue), moved under the pressure of the students, workers and peasants' discontent to take the whole economy into the hands of the state.

Mengistu found himself at the head of this development, and became, virtually overnight, a so-called 'Marxist-Leninist' -- *not the real thing, not a democratic socialist leader of the working class, but a military dictator linking his regime to the Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow.* He consolidated his power by the most brutal methods -- in 1977, e.g., leaving a Dergue meeting with his supporters while his guards entered and shot everyone who remained.

So-called 'Red Terror' was unleashed against pro-Marxist students in the EPRP, with 5 000 youth aged between 12-25 slaughtered in Addis Ababa. The All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (MEISON) was also wiped out.

A so-called 'Workers' Party', consisting largely of military men and notable for the absence of workers in the leadership, was then set up by Mengistu's Stalinist bureaucracy.

Had the revolution taken a genuine socialist direction, following the teaching of Lenin, it would have conceded immediate independence to the Eritrean people, and the autonomy demanded by the Tigreans and Oromo. Virtually every opposition party there has called itself 'Marxist', such has been the bankruptcy of capitalism. A voluntary socialist federation in the Horn of Africa could have resulted, combining productive resources for mutual benefit.

But the Mengistu regime insisted on holding Eritrea for the sake of prestige and power. Previously Moscow had supported the Eritreans and Siad Barre in Somalia, as a counter to US imperialism's backing for the Ethiopian Emperor. Now sides changed in the international power-game between Stalinism and imperialism, in which Africa has always been a mere pawn. Somalia, still calling itself 'Marxist', swung over to the US camp, and Moscow swung behind Mengistu.

17 000 Cuban troops were sent to save his regime from defeat. By the early 1980s, Mengistu had consolidated his grip. But despite an Eritrean army of only 35 000 facing 430 000 Ethiopian soldiers, every general offensive against Eritrea failed. The rebellion in Tigre also advanced. By the end of the 1980s, Stalinist regimes everywhere were facing popular revolt and economic collapse.

"Soviet aid for the army," says *The Economist* (25/5/91) was not matched by aid for civilian development. By the end the regime was spending more than 70% of its revenue on weapons..." From the mid-80s Moscow's support waned. Agriculture and industry remained a disaster in the hands of a bankrupt, ruthlessly repressive Stalinist regime, not altered by Mengistu's recent conversion to capitalism.

Drought and famine returned, with one million starving to death in 1984-5. Mengistu began consciously to use famine as a weapon against rebels he could not beat. Today 5 million need emergency food aid to survive.

The downfall of Mengistu's regime is not evidence of any failure of socialism -- the democratic rule of the working class -- but of the failure of Stalinism. World capitalism, which crushes the peoples of the under-developed world, will gain propaganda advantages from this. But it cannot develop or bring peace to Africa.

The USA's open backing for the EPRDF shows it is asserting its power in the aftermath of the Gulf War, in the vacuum created by the retreat of Stalinism under Gorbachev. It is not clear whether the new regime will honour its promise to concede Eritrean independence. After an interval of improvement brought by a cessation of war, we may see a continued disintegration of Ethiopia.

Africa awaits the leadership of a workers' revolution for unity and progress.

By Paul Storey

Commune



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suppression, however, is
here the majority of the
population, and not a
minority, as was always the
case under slavery, serfdom,
and wage slavery
[capitalism]... Instead of the
special institutions of a
privileged minority... the
majority itself can directly
fulfil all these functions, and
the more the functions of the
state power are performed
by the people as a whole, the
less need there is for the
existence of this power."

The Bolsheviks tried to
construct the rule of the
working class in Russia on
this basis. The aim was
democratic control and
check over all workings of
government and all aspects
of production and distri-
bution, "by the armed
workers, by the whole of the
armed population", wrote
Lenin.

"The accounting and
control necessary for this
have been simplified by

became exhausted in a
three-year war against
imperialist reaction. It was
isolated in a country with
extreme backwardness in
technique, literacy, and
culture. *These were among
the conditions that allowed
the rise of a privileged
bureaucracy, headed by
Stalin, which stole power
from the working class.*

This bureaucracy
reversed every step towards
implementing the measures
of the Commune. It
established a monstrous
dictatorship over the
working people, though on
the basis of state-owned
economy and planning, not
capitalism. On this economic
basis, big advances have
been made in the Soviet
Union since then. But the
rule of this bureaucracy is
the root cause of the crisis
which faces the country
today. The working class
needs to re-establish its
democratic rule, and on that
basis move towards genuine
socialism.

The reformist leaders of
the Second (Social-

outlined as key lessons in
State and Revolution -- and
which the Bolsheviks tried to
implement in Russia after
October 1917.

These are tasks which the
working class needs to carry
out to establish its power
and to transform society.
These are tasks posed in our
struggle for majority rule
and socialism.

The revolutionary move-
ment of the working class
rising under the banner of
the ANC and COSATU is
striving for aims no differ-
ent, at root, from those of
the Paris workers in 1871. It
needs to do so in a more
conscious and organised
way.

For encouragement in
this struggle, and to carry it
forward more effectively,
every active worker and
youth can gain much from
studying the story of the
Paris Commune and the
lessons set out in Lenin's
State and Revolution -- as
well as studying the dismal
record of reformism and
Stalinism, which has tried to
bury all this.

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"This is exactly a case of 'quantity being transformed into quality': democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed

a clear grasp of the steps needed to carry the victory forward, there could have been a different outcome.

A new pride reigned in Paris into April and May. These were days of golden magic for the poor and downtrodden -- a glimpse into the possibilities of socialism. But meanwhile the government in Versailles mobilised all the forces of reaction around the country.

From April, Paris was again under siege. On May 28th the troops of capitalist reaction broke their way in. There was a

capitalist state gradually," merely by obtaining a parliamentary majority.

In the midst of the Russian Revolution, Lenin re-studied the works of Marx and Engels. In *State and Revolution* he drew out again all the hidden lessons of the Commune.

To hold onto power, he wrote, the working class needed to "suppress the bourgeoisie and crush their resistance". It needed a *state* for this. "This was particularly necessary for the Commune: and one of

capitalism to the utmost and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations -- which any literate person can perform -- of supervising and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and issuing appropriate receipts." (With computers, etc, all these are further simplified today).

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Paris Commune

1871

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By Tom Stevens



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"The Commune," as the Russian Marxist, Lenin,

from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (=a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper."

The Commune also abolished capital punishment, banned gambling and prostitution, cancelled nine months arrears of rent, and started the nationalisation, under workers' control, of all factories and mills abandoned by the fleeing capitalists.

It failed, however, to take over the Bank of France, the economic organising centre of finance capital. It failed to organise war to defeat the "exiled" capitalist government in Versailles, outside Paris. It failed to proclaim a program of demands and revolutionary action which could win the support of the peasant majority. Its delays, indecisions and vacillations were to prove fatal.

The Commune came into being spontaneously. It improvised the best solutions it could find, with no conscious plan. Had the working class developed revolutionary leadership that had prepared itself for the crisis in society, and had

final bloody battle in which tens of thousands of revolutionaries were killed.

It was forty-six years later, this time in Russia, before the working class took power again. The Russian Revolution of 1917 was the greatest event in history. In the Bolsheviks who led it, the working class had a political force with clear perspectives and aims.

Together with the peasantry, the working class abolished landlordism and capitalism in Russia, and beat off imperialist invasion.

In the years in between, the real lessons of the Paris Commune had been largely buried and forgotten. It was Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks, who rediscovered them.

The Second International was formed in 1890 as a mass organisation of workers' parties in different countries of Europe. It was founded on the basis of Marxism. But its leaders became increasingly reformist. They maintained the working class could achieve its aims by "taking over the

the reasons for its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination.

"The organ of suppression, however, is here the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom, and wage slavery [capitalism]... Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority... the majority itself can directly fulfil all these functions, and the more the functions of the state power are performed by the people as a whole, the less need there is for the existence of this power."

The Bolsheviks tried to construct the rule of the working class in Russia on this basis. The aim was democratic control and check over all workings of government and all aspects of production and distribution, "by the armed workers, by the whole of the armed population", wrote Lenin.

"The accounting and control necessary for this have been *simplified* by

became exhausted in a three-year war against imperialist reaction. It was isolated in a country with extreme backwardness in technique, literacy, and culture. *These were among the conditions that allowed the rise of a privileged bureaucracy, headed by Stalin, which stole power from the working class.*

This bureaucracy reversed every step towards implementing the measures of the Commune. It established a monstrous dictatorship over the working people, though on the basis of state-owned economy and planning, not capitalism. On this economic basis, big advances have been made in the Soviet Union since then. But the rule of this bureaucracy is the root cause of the crisis which faces the country today. The working class needs to re-establish its democratic rule, and on that basis move towards genuine socialism.

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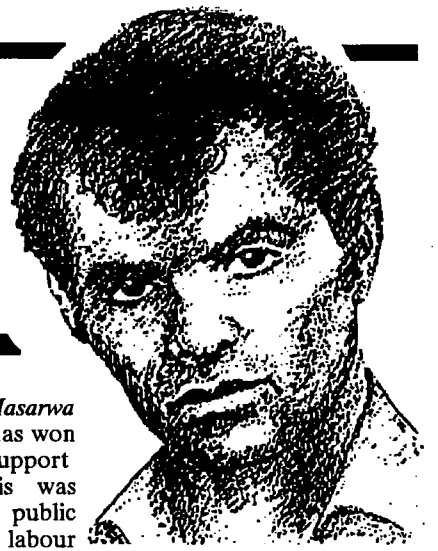
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"The revolutionary movement of the working class rising under the banner of the ANC and COSATU is striving for aims no different in root, from those of the Paris workers of 1871."

Free

Mahmoud Masarwa



Palestinian socialist Mahmoud Masarwa recently spent his 1000th day in an Israeli prison -- for a crime he never committed. His appeal will be heard soon. The *Mahmoud Masarwa Defence Campaign* is calling on trade unionists and socialists everywhere to take up his case.

Massive international pressure, particularly at a time when Israel faces renewed calls for concessions to the Palestinians, can force the authorities to release him.

Mahmoud is the victim of a judicial frame-up. He was found guilty of arson, illegal possession of a weapon and, most seriously, "spying". In October 1989 he was sentenced to ten years.

In the Zionist judges' eyes he was guilty from the moment he was brought before them. Mahmoud told the court: "I believe in unity between Arab and Jewish workers. I don't stand for violence. If I supported violence I wouldn't be afraid to say so. This judgement means I will be sent to prison

because of my political ideas."

Everything hinged on a "confession" beaten out of him by the Shin Beth (state security), which he retracted in court. This confession is a "state secret" and its contents were not revealed in open court.

The Israeli state claims that Mahmoud "spied" by sending a classified document to the British Marxist newspaper *Militant*. In fact Mahmoud found fragments of a document on a rubbish dump beside his workplace. A paper-shredding factory which handled government contracts had thrown them there. The official in charge, called as a prosecution witness, said the police handed over these

documents as *declassified* material.

The prosecution produced no evidence that Mahmoud had sent any documents to *Militant*. The *Militant* editorial board denied receiving any such material.

The fragments found by Mahmoud referred to the Bus 300 incident in 1984, a scandal over the alleged killing of hijackers who were already in Shin Beth custody. It shook the security services and implicated prime minister Shamir. The Attorney General resigned amid allegations of a cover-up. *The prosecution of Mahmoud as a "spy" was for reasons of political victimisation.*

Likewise there is no evidence for the charges of arson and possessing an illegal weapon -- a 'Molotov cocktail'. He is alleged to have burnt down trees near his workplace -- and for this

received a brutal prison sentence! In fact Mahmoud's employer testified that he knew of no such trees. A police officer testified that he had seen no signs of a fire.

Mahmoud also allegedly "confessed" to planning to blow up the Yarkon Bridge on the Tel Aviv-Haifa highway. But this was so ridiculous it was never even included on the charge-sheet. It could have been so firmly disproved by the defence that Mahmoud's whole "confession" would have had to be thrown out as a public disgrace.

This is the real reason why the "confession" is being kept secret by the Israeli state. *Its publication would completely discredit the case against Mahmoud.* Yet the judges convicted Mahmoud of "aggravated espionage" arguing that "it is incumbent upon us to convict the accused according to his confession".

The *Mahmoud Masarwa Defence Campaign* has won tremendous support internationally. This was vital in obtaining a public trial, attended by labour MPs and union leaders from a number of countries. This pressure will be needed again to prevent the appeal taking place behind closed doors. *Resolutions, telegrams and protests from the world's labour movement can right a terrible wrong and secure justice for Mahmoud Masarwa.*

Send protests to:
The Prime Minister's
Office,
3 Kaplan Street,
Jerusalem,
Israel 91919

and to:
Israeli Government,
Trade and Tourist Centre,
Nedbank Gardens,
Bath Avenue,
Rosebank,
Johannesburg

MAHMOUD Masarwa is a Palestinian worker from Baqa Al Gharbiya in Israel. He is a member of the Histadruth trade union and was involved in several disputes at the Sabrina textile factory in the early 80s.

In 1988 he helped lead a strike over union recognition involving drivers, mostly Jewish, at a Tel Aviv cement works. They won and then threatened a new strike when the bosses tried to victimise Mahmoud.

Mahmoud, a lifelong socialist and internationalist, became a supporter of *Militant's* and *Congress Militant's* ideas during the 1980s.

Letters

Give your letter to a *Congress Militant* seller. Ask if you need help to write it down.

Dear comrades,

The paper is quite correct. I say so because it is shaming the devil. The first time I read the paper, Ray Phiri's image was reflected into my brain playing "Don't whisper in the deep." Now it is the time to read *Congress Militant*. Due to reason that not all of us can read English, article like the one issued on 15 May 1991 [*Leaflet opposing the visit to SA by Margaret Thatcher*] need to be rewritten in Zulu if possible.

I am concerned about muti. When I was a scholar I disbelieved that muti works, but things changed when I was a footballer for Real Cosmos. We invited an inyanga to give us muti because the match we were going to play was tough. There was a guy who was not in the camp with us, and a whistle was blown over his head but it did not give sound. When it was blown over the head of someone who was in the camp, the whistle did give sound. That was a proof that the guy was enjoying the night with his girlfriend. The inyanga chased the guy out from the house where we were.

I am worried why there is no inyanga

organisation, where all those who know how to make muti will fight against apartheid. If they can come together and fight apartheid we can win. Most of the people who know how to make muti are components of Inkatha.

To support my statement, I read this in a local newspaper: "S.B.Jamile who is in custody, is an Inyanga and Inkatha official." "A peace officer fainted before the eyes of the magistrate" and the peace officer was a state witness in Mandla Shabalala's charge, therefore there was no evidence to prove that Mandla was guilty and he was discharged. Therefore it works.

From Bongani Ngwenya
Security guard and
TGWU member,
Isipingo.

Editor: We invite other comrades to respond on this subject of muti -- for or against. After that we will write a reply.

Dear comrades,
Greetings. I am sorry to write this letter to your Congress. I have got problem about my company. I am working at Boksburg. The name of the company is

Uquip-Spares. I am a welder.

My company was having a union before. But the whites conclude that the union should be abolished. So we got no union any more. So the company start to play with us. Another problem is that we are two groups in the company, ANC and Inkatha, so we don't go together.

Now if you complain about something, or the foreman, you get suspended or fired. Like now, I complain about another white foreman. He took the notice to the office, and they promise me two weeks suspended. I will be happy if you can answer this letter.

From Methus
Shabangu

Dear comrades,

We here in AEG fought against retrenchment, and won by standing in one point of united we stand and divided we fall. In NUMSA we say an injury to one is an injury to all comrades everywhere.

We see what is happening in all industries. Please comrades avoid retrenchment by fighting the capitalist.

Violence in the townships is also a part of the capitalists' plan to

weaken our union. In the factories and in the townships let's arm ourselves against the so-called rooi doeke and the police. We must form defence units everywhere to fight the enemy. But comrades, before we fight let's try and organise the unorganised people showing them the way forward and what are the ANC's aims and perspectives.

From Abel Mkhize

Comrades,

Historically tribalism has caused a misery in every society, and was used by the imperialists and capitalist ruling class to divide and rule.

This capitalist regime has tried to divide the black working class on tribal lines, when they put up their puppet chiefs and called them people's leaders. But they failed to break the struggle. We refused to accept their stooges.

I think the ANC leadership should disband Contralesa, because it brings confusion among the oppressed and exploited masses. Buthelezi has taken advantage of this, saying that the Zulus must not join the ANC because the ANC is Xhosa.

The tribal chiefs represent the old tribal

customs, and suck the blood of the working class by selling them to the capitalists, and they get rich. The only solution is to unite the working class with a clear revolutionary scientific Marxist ideas to overthrow the capitalist regime, and make a way to a democratic socialism under workers' control.

From Khulu Khumalo

Comrades,

We are calling upon our leaders to arm the masses. We need the arms in the country not outside the country. The state's killing machine and the warlords are here.

De Klerk wants to disarm the masses. He wants us to defend and trust the police, the same people that have been killing the comrades.

From what has happened in the past we can't trust them. We are calling upon our leaders to arm the workers, youth, so that the people can defend themselves and their homes, in the trains, as well as at the workplaces. The enemy will come back and we must be prepared.

Forward with the armed people! Forward!

From Simon Zulu

Dear comrades,

The bosses will merely negotiate for the sake of their profit. They are having no interest to meet the demands of the workers. Same as the state is prepared to negotiate but not prepared to meet the Harare Declaration. Instead it wanted the ANC to meet the Pretoria Minutes -- the suspension of arm struggle.

As a NUMSA member I fully support *Congress Militant* that the state had taken the direction to weaken the ANC. As the worker of South Africa I found it much important that workers had to stand up and build ANC so to be a strong organisation.

It is undisputable that the workers had unbanned the ANC. And now onwards we have to build the ANC so that the state will follow the demand of the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Govt.

In turn the ANC leaders will understand vast power had been exerted by the workers so this will bring about the effect of being the workers' ANC gov't. That will bring the workers' interest on the top of the agenda.

The country should be socialist whereby everyone shares equal status, and no racial group will dominate other groups.

Viva worker power.

R. Mfingela
NUMSA shop
steward, Durban

PUTCO gets you there?

In April, PUTCO announced it is to be sold or closed "within months". The bosses say strike action, falling passenger levels and reduced government subsidies make it impossible to operate at a profit. Closure would mean retrenching over 6 000 workers. It would strand millions of passengers.

Public transport is in crisis. Millions of workers, forced to live far from work, depend on buses, trains and taxis. Low wages mean workers cannot afford fare increases.

In every big city in the world, public transport has to be subsidised. The SA government used to grant huge subsidies to transport companies. Now they are cutting subsidies. They say they want public transport to be efficient. In fact they want it to make profits at the passengers' and workers' expense. That's why Transnet is up for privatisation. That's why fares have gone up!

They say this is a necessity in the "new" South Africa. But the bosses are not paying "new" wages!

Business Day (24/4/90) commented: "PUTCO made its fortune from apartheid -- using state subsidies to ferry millions of commuters between their work and the remote residential areas forced on them by the Group Areas Act."

Now PUTCO and other privately-owned bus companies say they can't afford to run any longer. KwaZulu Transport, Bophutatswana Transport Holdings, Port Elizabeth Tramways, and CTC in the Eastern Cape have all announced that they must cut services, raise fares, and retrench workers.

They blame workers and the community! They blame strike action, wage demands, boycotts and violence. But we blame the capitalists, their government, and their profit system.

Millions stolen by PUTCO bosses

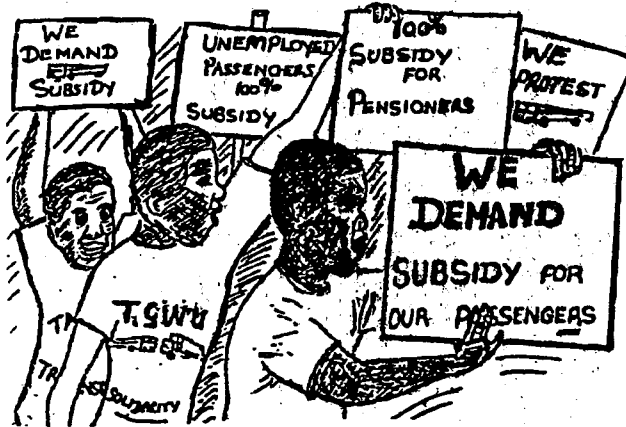
For many years PUTCO had a monopoly to many townships. Workers had no alternative, so PUTCO treated its passengers with contempt. They changed routes and raised fares without consulting passengers. They over-packed their buses, and left them dirty and unserved. Passengers switched to taxis, because they were driven away from PUTCO! But many would still prefer to travel in buses, if

services were cheap, efficient, and safe.

Between 1984 and 1990 PUTCO was given nearly one billion rand in subsidies. This year they received R140 million. Where has this money gone?

Each year they took millions of rand from fares and subsidies and put it into a special account which they said was for replacing buses. But for the last five years they haven't replaced any buses! Then last year PUTCO announced a special pay-out for its shareholders of R89 million! They admitted this was money they had previously set aside for replacing buses. The owners of PUTCO, the Carleo family, got over R40 million of this.

After that PUTCO had the cheek to announce that it made a 'loss' of R14 million in 1990!



Closing PUTCO will be very profitable. It still owns 2 600 buses -- each bus is worth at least R100 000. Not to mention the R24 million value of its properties. Within days of announcing closure PUTCO's value on the stock exchange trebled! It will raise another R100 million at least for the Carleos. The capitalist vultures are hovering hungrily over the remains of PUTCO!

For the past few years PUTCO has been concerned only with preparing for a profitable closure! They have been closing depots, reducing staff, and selling buses -- but still collecting millions of rand in subsidies.

PUTCO workers have been driven harder than ever. Between 1989-1990 the number of kms driven by each driver increased from 16 838 per year to

18 347 per year. No wonder accidents increased. Last year 20% of PUTCO's staff resigned -- many out of desperation.

Program of action

We must fight to save PUTCO worker's jobs. We must fight for cheap, safe and efficient public transport!

A massive campaign must be led by COSATU and the ANC, to mobilise PUTCO workers and passengers.

Committees of PUTCO workers and passengers should be formed. Organise protests. No job must be lost! No service closed! No commuter stranded!

Demand an end to cuts in subsidies. Demand a huge increase in government investment and spending on transport.

Oppose selling off PUTCO's divisions to other private companies. This will lead to redundancies, and reduced services.

Demand PUTCO and all major bus services be nationalised and run under workers' control and management. Bosses, and bureaucrats in the Department of Transport, can't organise transport services to meet our needs.

The merger of TGWU and SARIWU will unite transport workers as never before. It will give workers power to defend jobs and services. A campaign involving all transport workers could be the first test.

PUTCO workers' unions, TGWU and TAWU, must form a united front in a campaign of action.

A mass campaign can save PUTCO from closure. It can warn the bosses and government against privatisation and closures in other industries.

For as long as capitalism survives workers will suffer from inefficient and expensive transport. We must fight for an ANC government with a socialist programme to nationalise the monopolies, and organise public transport, health care, education, and industry to serve the needs of the people and not the profits of a few.

By Adam Brown

Treated like Baboons

We work for QD Electronics. We are paid R150 a week. A family cannot live on that. We are treated like baboons in zoo lake. The wages is like a baboon being given peanuts to eat.

We manufacture radios and electronics equipment. There are 18 assemblers of radios. Each produces six radios a day which cost R2918,89 each! But still the rate is only R6,80 per hour. Every time we ask for an increase the boss asks what "shit" am I trying to say?

Our lives are shortened because of the conditions. The use of a soldering iron gives us asthma, and results in constant coughing. Four workers have been diagnosed with this sickness. Out of our miserable salary we must also pay doctors' fees.

The bosses make decisions behind closed doors, using underhand methods. We are instructed to work

according to a chart, designed by them. They want to use us like robots. We rejected this, but their response was the factory belongs to them and not to anyone of us.

Now the mood of the workers is high. They are tired of being used as slaves. This year no worker is prepared to accept less than R2 increase across the board. For two weeks in May we demonstrated every lunch time.

Every time we enter negotiations, the bosses bring up retrenchments to frighten us. They threatened that half of the staff are going to be retrenched. There is a list of workers selected for retrenchment. But they refuse to say who. They say if we came late, or if we spoke rudely to them, or did not do our job properly we would be dismissed.

They say they have no profits. But they buy new machines that

costs millions of rands. They want to replace us with machines because machines will not stay-away. We need these machines to employ more workers, and to be able to spend more time with our children through working shorter hours.

If we can come together then we can win the battle and be treated as human beings, not as robots. We need to build NUMSA strong and use our organisations to challenge the bosses.

By James Mikwakwa, Petros Madala, John Zuma, Lilel Romokoakwa, Mandla Mbatha, Zodwa Zwane
N Johannesburg NUMSA

Bosses shift goalposts

Two years ago the company gave us an increase. All the workers felt unsatisfied. We decided to strike. After we stopped working the bosses came and introduce to us a production bonus. Because half bread is better than nothing we decided to take that and go back to work.

In our factory we've got chambers that are like a pot to cook tyres. In one chamber we put 22 tyres. We are expected to make 3 chambers a day, but usually we made one extra chamber every day.

They said that extra chamber is going to be our bonus. They will pay us R2 for each extra chamber. That leaves us with R16 bonus every week!

We carried on that way up to last year. Then a new manager came saying that

the production bonus is going to be changed to a Production Attendance Bonus! If you don't work 45 hours you don't qualify, even if you make 20 or more chambers a week.

If you've been sick just one day, OK you bring your doctor's certificate, but you won't get a bonus. If you come a few minutes late, that is taken from the 45 hours and you don't get the bonus!

We reported it to NUMSA. The workers now feel strongly to take a stoppage and see how it can go. Our shop steward had tried many times with the manager to solve this problem, but there is nothing better. Workers feel we should only make the 3 chambers a day.

By Bheki Duma
Isipingo NUMSA

Life on the factory floor

ABC strikers join ANC

We work at ABC in Newclare. In April we went on strike to demand an increase.

During our strike comrades from *Congress Militant* came to fight with us. By reading *Congress Militant* we felt stronger. Unfortunately there are workers who can't read. Maybe that's why they don't feel so strong. The ideas are very good. We feel encouraged that we are not the only ones struggling against the bosses.

We have all joined the ANC. Some of us before the strike, but most joined after we met *Congress Militant*. We believe it is important to build the ANC, and workers must join.

But we must also build our unions. When workers don't know what is happening in the unions they will leave. Our unions must only take the side of the workers.

By workers at
ABC

Living in Khayelitsha

By Ndoda Ntsimbi

Khayelitsha has become the biggest township in the Western Cape.

It is just tiny core houses. They are uncemented, not painted, no ceilings, only one room and a kitchen with not even a sink. Luckily there is a toilet but no electricity.

You walk around Khayelitsha today, you will find that most people live in shacks. The working people who build houses have no houses. This place is highly full of unemployed. The worst thing is that doctors come only twice a

week, for two hours.

Travelling to town is another problem because you pay high prices for transport.

Every intersection in main roads is full of people hoping to be picked up for casual jobs of R20.00. This is just enough for bread. Clothing is a secondary thing to them, they will stay in hundreds from sunrise to sunset.

House breakings, rape and gangsterism is an everyday activity in this area. This shows that capitalism is unfit for people to live under.

Community beats taxi war

Again this year as in previous years a fight broke out between taxi associations in Khayelitsha. This time the dispute was over the use of a newly built depot in site C. It was the question of how it was to be used, because it was going to affect other depots -- the fare would be cheaper than at the old ones.

This fight affected the community. The taxi drivers would attack each other while there are passengers inside the taxi. On one incidence a taxi carrying handicapped children was stoned and they all got hurt. Passengers would be pulled out of taxis and beaten. The police would stand and look while people were killing each other.

The community had to intervene. It was brought to ANC branches to be discussed and find a solution. A committee was set up to look at the matter. A mass meeting was held where a call was made by the community to boycott the taxis for the period of six months. Also that there should be one association. I think 99% of the community welcomed

the boycott. The taxis were even stopped from driving around.

Certain demands were set for associations to meet before they could operate.

1. They should stop fighting.

2. Taxi drivers should have white jackets while driving.

3. The drivers should well behave when speaking to passengers.

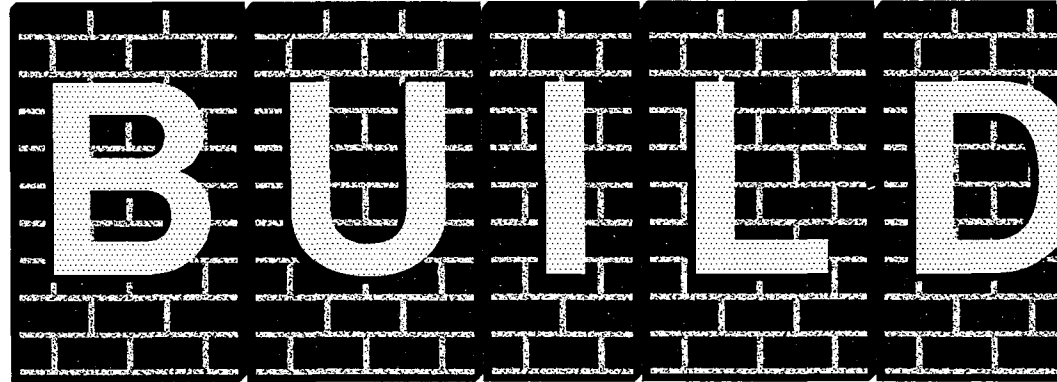
4. The increase of fares should be negotiated between the community and the taxi owners.

People were stranded during the boycott. Buses and trains were no solution because they are not running according to the will of the people. They transport people for gains or profit not for the necessity of transportation.

This shows the need of the whole transport system to be under the control of the people in order to function properly.

In these mass meeting people would carry ANC flags showing the need of the ANC to organise the people under its banner and

lead them for the struggle to solve their problems, in factory and at home.



Bellville residents oppose council housing policy

The demand for houses has shown a drastic increase over the last few years, yet the municipal council has been unable to meet it. There is no indication that they will do so in future.

What they want to do, however, is to build more houses on the ground of existing tenants. This has caused great concern amongst tenants and all residents. So much that it has led to a meeting being called by the Bellville Residents Association (BRA).

Due to the lack of housing, overcrowding is a major problem in Bellville South. Especially in the 'USA', 'Sementdam' and 'Tupperware' areas.

I was stunned when I discovered that in one four-roomed house live 26 people. The house is so overcrowded that

some children sleep on the kitchen floor. I also find that 5 to 6 families live in one four-roomed house.

These overcrowding conditions can be, and have been, the cause of many family problems like broken marriages, child abuse, etc.

The high drop-out rate at school can also be linked to the overcrowding. Students find it hard to study and to do their homework. Most of these students turn to gangsterism as a means to forget their problems at home.

The houses in the 'USA' area were built with cement blocks, which means that during the winter it is extremely cold because most of the houses are also without ceiling. This leads to all kinds of illness. During winter the walls grow musty

and the houses have an uneasy smell. These conditions have also been the cause of the high TB cases in Bellville South.

It is also noticeable that there has been no health inspector visiting homes and yards for over five years now. Children playing in the backyards can easily contract diseases.

Who gets houses is being determined by a waiting list. During the last years the list does not seem to get any shorter. One woman told me that she is waiting for more than 7 years for a house.

The council has sold its plots in the 'USA' area to private owners. The houses being built there are sold for over R60 000, for prospective home buyers. One resident said: "Die boxes is so klein dat jy

nie eens jou draai in die huis behoorlik kan doen nie."

The council is also going to buy more plots at the "Bosbou" area. Their aim is to build houses for those who can afford it and not for those who need shelter desperately.

The council can create more jobs if they hire some of the unemployed in Bellville South to build houses on these plots.

The housing shortage problem in Bellville South is a golden opportunity for the local ANC branch to rally the people around this and demand houses for all as set out in the Freedom Charter.

By Esme Jacobs
(UWC Student)

Promotion of chiefs, and sjambokking system, must be stopped

Report on situation facing squatters in Khayelitsha

We have a good experience of the role of chiefs from the homelands. They live by extracting money from poor people. They cooperate with the state.

It is very dangerous for the ANC leadership to recognise the chiefs.

There is no such thing as a progressive chief. They must first be tested on the ground and elected as leaders, to be recognised as progressive.

The chiefs use the organisations for their own benefit and they are prepared to kill or be killed for the posts they are given because it is

their living. They ask money from people and say it is for the organisation, but we never see where the money was used. If you ask too many questions you appear on their hit-list.

A gap has been created between the masses and the leadership. People do

not see what the ANC leadership is doing to uplift their social and political standards. Instead things are becoming worse with the intimidation of people by the chiefs. These chiefs are recognised by our leadership and promoted to take the lead in our organisations. That must end.

The sjambokking system, too, must be stopped because it does not organise the masses but sets them against each other. If anyone is guilty he should be brought to the attention of the community.

Disciplined defence units must be used instead of the present patrol. And the units

must be under the control of the community, and not operate as a chief's separate force.

The chief system should be done away with. Local leaders must be elected by the people themselves and not be appointed by the leadership as is now the case.

Capitalism leads to squatting

Escaping from the poverty-stricken rural areas, thousands of black people are still flocking to the cities, in search of employment and better living conditions. But because of the shortage of houses, the homeless people are forced into a nomadic existence and squatting.

According to some estimates, up to 1,5 million shack dwellers live in Cape Town and the number is growing

daily. About one million squatters have settled in the veld around Johannesburg and more than two million in the bush around Durban.

There are squatters on the outskirts of every 'white' town in South Africa, in the parks, rubbish dumps and in the black townships.

The vast majority of people in the squatter areas have no jobs, no access to schools or clinics. Some do not even have water. Many

adults have TB, and their children suffer from nutritional disease. This is a serious problem and needs to be addressed thoroughly.

Every kind of inhuman life is existing in the squatter areas, things like unhygienic conditions, crime, warlords and chiefs battling for power. All these problems prove the incapability of the capitalist economy to serve the society.

The government has rejected a policy of offering houses for all at an affordable rent. Their policy is to build "serviced sites" for shack dwellers -- each family would get a site, possibly with water, flushing toilet and concrete slab as the foundation for a house.

The task of building houses has been given to the private sector. But the private developers do not cater for the poor people. They only

manage to provide formal housing to those who can afford housing for R35 000 and up.

There was big publicity a few months ago when the banks and building societies promised to provide loans for cheap housing. But now the capitalists are saying that the risk is too great.

According to the Managing Director of PermProp: "Financial institutions are in the money lending and risk

assessment business" [he means the *profit-making business*] "and I can understand a reluctance on their part to get involved when risk does not relate to reward. Threats of bond boycotts and such-like tend to work against the very communities they were designed to serve."

Having created the squatting crisis -- and the threat of revolution -- the capitalists now declare their inability to solve it. The system only works in the interests of the rich minority, and they just line their pockets and live in glorious luxury while millions are squatting and starving.

By Temba Tansi
and Arthur
Drake

HOUSES!

There are at present 6-7 million homeless people in SA, and this number increases daily. If one takes the average household size to be 6 members, we need at least one million houses to house the backlog immediately and more for the growing population.

Cape Town architects, Michael Morton and Shirley Horne, explain what will be necessary to solve the housing crisis:

If 2 persons per room is reasonable occupancy, an average household would need a three-bedroom house. Today that can't be built for less than R40 000, including buying the land.

A million houses at this price will cost R40 billion. The government has allocated only R2 billion this year. At that rate the current backlog would only be accommodated in 20 years. *In the meantime there will be millions more people on the waiting list.*

The ANC's Economic Department has worked out an alternative budget to this year's government budget. They found it possible even within the present capitalist system to allocate R4 billion to housing.

This money could easily be obtained by slashing the bantustan and other bureaucracies and reducing spending on the SADF.

R4 billion a year could provide enough housing for the present backlog within 10 years. *But 10 years is too long to house the homeless. And far more would have to be allocated to deal with future housing needs.*

The assumption behind the ANC housing

plan is that the capitalist financial institutions will in future lend homeless people most of the funds to build or buy their own houses.

But even if money is made available with government backing, most people will not be able to repay loans at current wages. This is the legacy of apartheid and capitalism.

Unemployment at present is 40%, and a large number of the homeless are also unemployed. 80% of the SA population have been denied any share in the wealth and growth of the country. This is also shown in the skills training imbalance.

Within the capitalist system, the cost of housing has risen faster than the increases in wages of the majority of the employed. Under all these circumstances it is unreasonable to expect working-class people to be able to afford or build their own housing.

At present 75% of the cost of houses is in materials, e.g., bricks, cement, roofing, timber, and glass. These materials are produced by capitalist monopolies. For example, cement is produced by

only one company, Pretoria Portland Cement. Last year it retained over R450 million in cash after giving out dividends to the shareholders.

Corobrik produce 80% of bricks. Steel, roof sheeting and windows are all produced by ISCOR. And so on. All these big companies enjoy high annual profits.

Building materials costs have risen by at least 15% a year in the last five years. This has led to a doubling in the cost of houses in the last five years.

If the monopolies producing building materials are nationalised, the major cost of houses could be substantially reduced.

At present, large private developers build housing for profits. They try to minimise labour costs by using lower-skilled labour because they can pay lower wages. This results in a workforce of poorly skilled artisans and an environment defined by poor quality houses.

The developers try to get the maximum returns in terms of the numbers of houses on the land developed.

The houses are thus laid out with little attempt to create interesting, varied and quality environments. The poor and unfriendly environment of dormitory townships are seen as the cheapest solution by capitalism for housing the poor.

Functionally and socially integrated, well

serviced and varied living environments are a right for all people.

People must be consulted and involved in the planning of their housing.

A progressive national housing policy can generate jobs which are badly needed. A housing policy must not only improve the apartheid ghettos that were created but must also ensure that these terrible environments are not re-created.

Housing cannot be left in the hands of the capitalist developers.

Under capitalism, land is bought and sold. As a result it costs more to live in the city suburbs near to facilities, jobs and services.

This causes poorer working-class people to be pushed to the distant outskirts of the city, or into decaying inner-city slums. This affects the quality of life and productivity of the majority.

Workers also have to pay high transport costs as a result. They have poor access to basic facilities, services and recreation. All this will reinforce apartheid and working-class ghettos.

To solve the housing crisis requires expropriation of land, financial institutions and industries from the rich, and a 5-year socialist house-building plan.

A successful housing policy must also pay attention to the training of skilled artisans and the creation of jobs for the people.

TB kan beveg word!

Tuberculosis (TB) het sy opdraging gemaak in die vroeë 1800, gedurende die Industriële Revolusie in Europa. Die werkers was geforseer om baie ure sonder rus, in ongesonde omstandighede te werk. Hulle het ook te min kos gekry.

Baie het verskriklik begin hoës, en het vinnig begin gewig verloor. Dis waar die TB-kiekm ontdek was.

Toe goud in SA ontdek was, het baie Europese werkers na SA geïmmigreer om ook in die myne te kom werk. Dit was baie maklik om die TB-kiekm onder in die myne te versprei. En dus hoe veral die mynwerkers TB-kiekm opgedoen het.

Vandag kan TB genees word, en baie mense herstel weer na ses maande behandeling by TB-klinieke. Maar vir die ontvang vir behandeling kos dit baie geld. Omdat TB wel bekend is onder arme mense, kan hierdie mense nie altyd die behandeling bekostig nie. Dus hoekom daar dan 7 tot 10 mense per dag sterf.

Hoekom juis onder die arme gemeenskap?

Dis die mense wat onder depressie lewe, wat nie 'n living wage verdien nie. Dis die mense wat in oorvol huise of as 'plakkers' woon, wat nie genoegsame en gesonde voedsel vir hul gesinne kan bekostig nie. Maar tog! Dit is die gemeenskap wat die hardste werk vir die base.

Elke mens het 'n reg tot 'n huis, 'n living wage en 'n gesonde fisiese en geestelike lewe. Dit is belangrik vir elke werker om saam te staan en veg vir wat hulle eie is.

Dan kan ons ook die government dwing om vir ons goeie en ruim huise te gee.

Die TB-gevalle is so groot, maar tog wil die government nog altyd miljoene fondse weg sny vir hospitaal uitgawes.

Ons moet veg vir 'n FREE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE want elkeen het 'n reg om te lewe en vir gesondheid. Elkeen het die reg om 'n dokter te sien in tye van siektes.

Deur Teresa Adams
gesondheidswerker, Bellville

Campaign for a militant

SACTWU

SACTWU members from a number of factories met in Cape Town on 26 May to form a steering committee for a Campaign for a militant SACTWU.

John Fredericks reports on the background to the campaign, and what happened at the meeting.

It was clear to many workers that the policies of the union leadership were weakening SACTWU. Their opposition to a National Minimum Wage and their inability to fight the attacks of the bosses was leading to workers leaving the union.

During last year's wage negotiations workers said that the union leaders were not prepared to lead a struggle. Rather, they were echoing the argument of the bosses, urging workers to settle for much less than they demanded.

Workers supporting a Campaign for a militant SACTWU have been discussing with others about the program for it. Meetings have been held with shop-steward committees and workers in the factories. It has been greeted with enthusiasm.

Steering committee

On Sunday, May 26, a meeting was called in the Cape Peninsula to form a campaign steering committee. There were workers from Epping, Lansdowne, Bellville and Atlantis.

National and Regional Executive members of SACTWU also attended. Comrades Ebrahim Patel, Connie September and Lionel October were present. They came to stop the Campaign for a militant SACTWU. They busied

in workers who said after the meeting that the leaders told them to "come and vote".

At the start, the leadership group had more workers at the meeting and took control of the chair. They then declared that the meeting an official SACTWU meeting.

Workers backing the Campaign explained why they called the meeting. A supporter of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC said, "In the last few weeks we have been fighting against unfair dismissals at Nettex. At SBH and Nettex we have been in the forefront of a campaign to convince workers not to leave the union. In fact at SBH, workers have rejoined the union because of our intervention."

"We have discussed and campaigned among workers for SACTWU to take up the struggle for a National Minimum Wage of R250 for a 40 hour week, to fight against retrenchment and short time, and for Cosatu to build the ANC into a mass workers' party for majority rule and socialism."

Comrade Patel replied that the union leadership does not support the idea of a National Minimum Wage. The Campaign was "undermining the structures of the union".

He added that the union also does not allow intervention of political organisations such as the ANC and

SACP in the union.

A worker from Nettex responded: "The leadership says that the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC must not campaign in the union. When our workers were under attack the union officials were nowhere. Since the beginning of the year, 8 workers have been unfairly dismissed by the bosses. What have the union leaders done to stop this? It was only these comrades who fought with us to defend the union. When the SANS workers were on strike, these comrades organised support from other factories."

Leaders not seen

Another worker got up and said, "This is the first time in a long time that I see the leadership. When there are problems in the factories they are nowhere to be found. Now they are coming to disrupt our meeting."

At this point workers from other factories said that unfair dismissals by the bosses is widespread, but the union has not fought against it. They wanted to know what the leadership was going to do to stop this attack on the union.

"We want action not promises. How many more workers must be dismissed before you do anything?"

The leadership conceded that very little had been done to fight for comrades' reinstatement.

Other supporters of the Campaign explained that they do not undermine union structures. "We campaign to

strengthen these structures on a militant programme."

"The Campaign for a militant SACTWU is not a new union. We are workers in SACTWU who want to change the wrong policies of the leadership. We want to build SACTWU to be a strong union under workers' control." This was the answer given by a worker who said that the leaders have told other workers that we want to form another union. "It is a lie. Viva SACTWU!"

A comrade from Nettex said, "I am a bit unsure when comrade Patel says that he is against politics in the union. SACTWU and COSATU supports the ANC in the fight for the release of the hunger strikers. Is that not political? How can the comrades say that the union can't be political?"

After the meeting a worker told me: "We found that the leadership told workers to chase away comrades from the factories. One worker from Lansdowne said that she was told by SACTWU organisers not to support the Campaign because we are from the ANC!"

"At the SACTWU Regional Congress, held on 25 May, comrade Karel Swart, senior shop-steward at TBS, was taken into a room and threatened with disciplinary action if he continued to campaign for SACTWU to become a militant union."

Constitution

During the meeting, workers supporting the Campaign arrived from Khayelitsha. They also

started asking about the unfair dismissals.

A worker from SBH said, "Comrade EP says that we must abide to the constitution. That is OK. But I have been a member for long now and have not yet seen the constitution. When we were in ACTWUSA I asked the comrade to give us constitutions. Now we are in SACTWU and I still don't have one."

Majority

Workers supporting the Campaign now numbered about 30, a majority in the meeting. They said they were not prepared to abandon the ideas of the Campaign and would continue fighting for them in SACTWU.

Seeing the determination of the workers, comrade Patel accepted that comrades had the right to campaign for militant ideas in SACTWU.

After a long discussion, the following agreement was reached between the leadership and the Campaign for a militant SACTWU:

* That the union would immediately take up the fight for the reinstatement of comrades Bert Pitts, Peter Presence and all the other workers unfairly dismissed by the bosses.

* That the union will give the Campaign for a militant SACTWU and the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC the opportunity to explain their view on the National Minimum Wage to workers. This will first happen in the Bellville local and then throughout the union.

* That a meeting between the SACTWU leadership and supporters of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC and the Campaign for a militant SACTWU will be arranged in the next two weeks.

At the end supporters of the Campaign toy-toyed.

A worker from SBH said, "This is a victory for us militants. The union leaders came here to prevent our meeting. But now they accept that we can campaign for a militant program in the union. Tomorrow I am going out to tell all the workers in my factory about this."

The comrades spoke to some of the workers who came with the leaders. Two of them asked, "What is this Marxist Tendency? We were told to come and vote here. Now we see that something else went on here today."

Another said, "I am not sure what happened here. I would like to find out a bit more about this. Please invite me to your next meeting."

Delegation

After this meeting supporters of the Campaign for a militant SACTWU met to elect their delegation to meet the leadership.

The following comrades were unanimously elected:

Karel Swart, Peter Presence, Sitness, George, Johanna, Tina, Gerard Meyer, and Ferguson.

Four supporters of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC were also elected to form part of this delegation.

We will never split the union. Our aim is to bring it under workers' control