

Congress Militant

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Paper of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC

African National Congress

Organise

for victory!

THE TALKING is over. Now's the time for action. In five months every South African citizen will be able to vote. For the majority it will be for the first time – a historic day for the African majority and working people. After years of struggle and sacrifice, victory is in sight.

But to complete that victory, ANC activists still have to organise to make sure there is a massive ANC majority in the National and Regional Assemblies.

We must stretch every muscle to elect a government with power to end the injustices and inequalities of the past.

73% of African people, 57% of coloureds and 49% of Indians expect their lives to improve after the election. We want jobs, homes, education, health care and security.

We have waited too long already for the right to enjoy a decent life. Millions of us will be ready to move into action the day after the election. The new government must be equally ready to meet our demands.

The ANC must fight in government for the working masses who defeated apartheid.

The demands of the Freedom Charter must be implemented to transform people's lives.

Defeated parties must not be allowed to stand in the way. Nor must racists, 'home-land' leaders, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, or South Africa's own ruling class. They have had their day. Now it's our turn to rule!

If the ANC leaders in the new government give a lead, they can be sure of support in the communities and workplaces to defeat any attempts at sabotage.

But first we have to win the election. We can't take success for granted. On the doorsteps, at work, in the streets, in rural areas, the message has to be spread to make sure that every vote for the ANC is cast on the day.

Forward to victory on 27th April

Bloody alliance

CHIEF Buthelezi's IFP, who claim to represent the Zulu nation, have formed an unholy "Freedom" Alliance with the Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF).

On 16 December the racist AVF intends to hold a big rally at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria to celebrate a massacre of Zulu people at the Battle of Blood River on 16 December 1838!

On that day a commando of 470 boers, led by Andries Pretorius, used cannons and muskets to slaughter 3,000 Zulus, armed only with spears and assegais. Only three boers were wounded.

Before the battle the commando made a vow to God that if they should win they would build a new church and always celebrate the Day of the Vow.

How can Buthelezi still claim to speak for the Zulus while collaborating with people who commemorate this defeat and humiliation! There is a River of Blood between the Zulu people and the AVF.

Inkatha no more represents the Zulu people than the AVF represents the Afrikaners. All they both want is to turn the clock back to the days of apartheid and sabotage the African national democratic revolution.

The Zulus have exactly the same interests as all the other African people persecuted by the AVF's white ancestors. Now the majority are about to reclaim their country.

Phantsi ngeNkatha!

Elections and the struggle for power

Editorial

AFTER NEARLY four years, constitutional negotiations have now been completed. The latest agreements have cleared the main obstacles to the elections. For the first time the majority will be able to elect the government. We are now entering the last days of white *baasskap*.

The masses want an ANC government to end the misery of life under apartheid and capitalism. At a People's Forum near Durban local leaders told Nelson Mandela: "We have no houses, no roads, no electricity, no water, no sewerage, no creches, no clinics, no security, no good transport."

Opinion polls show that three-quarters of blacks believe a new government will make SA more prosperous. The same percentage think the government should give free housing and 90% believe in free education and welfare for the unemployed.

The bosses refer to these modest demands as a "crisis of expectations".

Restrictions

Throughout the negotiations the ruling class was determined to concede as little real power as possible. While they have been forced to give the vote, they are not prepared to hand over state and economic power to the majority.

Their tactic has been to drag out negotiations and secure maximum concessions from the ANC.

The agreements reached at the Kempton Park talks reveal many compromises made by the ANC leadership which were not necessary. The most important of these are:

- A compulsory five year coalition government.

- A Constituent Assembly that will not be sovereign. Its powers to write the constitution will be severely limited by the already agreed constitutional principles and the unchallengeable powers of the unelected

constitutional court.

The interim constitution is supposed to be in force for five years. But the regime's real aim is to make it permanent.

Such was the confidence of the ruling class at one stage that the capitalist mouthpiece, *Business Day*, boasted: "Yes, an Assembly will come into existence after the elections. But it will be so constrained by a comprehensive list of principles that it will be able to do little more than improve the grammar of the interim constitution..."

Vote for change

Yet what appears to be a major victory for the regime and the bosses rests on very shaky ground. Their optimism over the negotiated agreements is based entirely on the retreats of the ANC leadership. Constitutional restrictions on paper are one thing, implementing them will be another.

For the capitalists, democracy and the right to vote is acceptable only if it does not threaten their economic power. They are prepared to live with it so long as it does not enter the heads of the working class that this right entitles them to do more than change the government.

For the working class on the other hand, the vote is seen as a political instrument for their social emancipation. They will be compelled to mobilise against any constitutional restrictions designed to frustrate this aim.

No matter how sophisticated the constitutional agreements, they will be evaluated by the simple test as to whether they will make possible the transformation of the lives of the masses. This is why the

ruling class is so nervous.

Weaknesses

Their traditional instruments of political power have emerged further weakened at the end of the negotiations. This is a reflection of the shift in the balance of forces in favour of the working class.

While there has been a "toenadering" between the ANC and the NP in the negotiations, the class forces on which they rest have become more polarised.

Whilst the forces of counter-revolution have been weakened, the forces of revolution remain intact.

Support for the National Party is falling. There are splits in the Afrikaner right wing; each splinter is denouncing the other as a traitor to the Afrikaner cause. Splits are also opening in the IFP.

The emergence of Popcru is a graphic indicator of the growing fissures within a part of the state machine.

As *Sunday Times* editor Ken Owen points out: "The white oligarchy has been steadily weakened by its follies, by international pressure, by local resistance, and ultimately by the process of negotiation, to the point where it is now too weak to fight. It is, as the mere threat of Cosatu to strike has lately shown, too weak even to resist minor pressures." (14/11/93).

Freedom Alliance

The FA is a marriage of inconvenience between Afrikaner racists and black tribalists. It cannot survive for long. They are united only in their hatred for the ANC and democracy.

Buthelezi in particular has been weakened. He is faced with two alternative paths to ruin. If he continues to oppose the elections he will be totally

isolated. If he participates, his lack of support will be thoroughly exposed.

Despite their present weaknesses the forces of reaction will continue to place obstacles in the way of the working class. The ANC should demand that the TEC dissolve these reactionary structures immediately and mobilise mass action in those bantustans which refuse to allow free political activity before the elections.

We must take advantage of our growing power to grind homeland leaders and the right wing into dust. The ANC and Cosatu have the power to mobilise millions for this.

Election campaign

For the past four years the masses have allowed the leadership to negotiate without much intervention. This is changing now.

Already there is a sense that power is shifting away from the white minority. With the elections only five months away, there is the beginning of a change in mass psychology. With the end of white minority rule in sight new members are flooding into the ANC to ensure a massive majority in the elections.

The first step towards the fulfilment of their aspirations is to win a massive majority for the ANC. We must organise a far reaching voter education campaign to realise this.

The campaign must however not be confined to this. The bosses and the regime have not suspended their war against the masses in the workplace and the townships.

Retrenchments, attacks on wages, inflation, evictions for rent arrears, jailings for electricity debts, violence - all of these continue in the run-up to the election.

Struggling on these issues should remain a central part of mobilising for the elections. Every victory, no matter how small, will give confidence

to the working masses, strengthening the power behind the ANC once it is in government.

People's Forums

People's Forums provide an excellent opportunity to gather demands and draw up an election manifesto. They are a public demonstration that the transformation of society enjoys overwhelming support. People's demands must be reflected in the Reconstruction and Development Programme and form the key components of the ANC election manifesto.

Economy

The weak capitalist economy of SA will make it impossible to address the needs of the people. Under these conditions the pressure of the masses for lasting improvements could force the ANC leadership to the left. The constitutional restrictions are intended to prevent this.

Under pressure of the bosses at home and internationally, the leadership has sacrificed the most important demand of the Freedom Charter - for the transfer of the wealth of the monopolies to the people. This is a serious mistake. It means agreeing in advance to leave intact the economic dictatorship of the capitalist class.

Yet support for nationalisation remains strong among the black majority. This was reflected in the ANC PWV's regional conference's adoption of a resolution reconfirming support for the nationalisation clause in the Freedom Charter.

ANC majority

The bosses will attempt to use the constitutional restrictions to resist the

peoples' demands. This will draw attention to their undemocratic nature, compelling the working class to struggle against them. If constitutional means fail, in the end the ruling class will fall back on their control of the armed forces to try and defeat the challenge of the working class.

With every possible constitutional trick in place, the ruling class, conscious of their weakening position, are hoping for the best - a slim ANC majority. Nelson Mandela correctly warned the 1993 PWV ANC regional conference that there is no room for complacency.

We are being bombarded with predictions of a big ANC victory. The danger is this could make us complacent, waiting over confidently for an ANC majority.

A crushing majority for the ANC would make it impossible for the next government to justify denying the working class majority the right to thoroughly reorganise society. It will weaken the ability of the rightwing and the bosses to frustrate attempts to implement the demands of the people.

Those powers which the ANC do have should be used to the full to achieve this. At the same time there will have to be a struggle against restrictions on the ANC's power in government.

The formal end of white-minority rule means the form of capitalist rule has changed. This will lay bare more sharply its class content. The antagonism between the classes will begin to come to the fore in the next period.

A massive victory for the ANC in the elections will be an important step in the struggle to bring about a fundamental transformation of society along socialist lines.

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Election
Campaign
Guide



Prepare for power

Build active ANC branches!

Support for the ANC is growing nationally. Opinion polls already indicate that the ANC could get at least 60% of the votes. But as comrade Mandela warned at the ANC PWV Regional Conference, "to assume victory because of predictions is a fatal delusion ... we have to do hard work." We must aim for an overwhelming ANC majority.

Congress activists across the country are faced with an enormous task.

The Alexandra branch secretary has summarised the challenge: "We are used to work up strategies and campaigns against repression, but we have never been confronted with work of organising and campaigning for elections.

"We have never voted before and we hope that next year will be a historic year in our lives. The question is how do we make sure that we win convincingly."

Strengthen

The first step of the election campaign is to revive and strengthen our ANC branches.

We need to

prepare ourselves politically with arguments that will convince ordinary people to vote ANC.

The majority of our people need houses, jobs, decent wages, education and real pensions.

With fighting campaigns around social issues we will rally millions to vote for the ANC.

This will also help win over coloured and Indian people.

In this way we can also inspire thousands more to be fully involved in the building of the ANC.

Voters' Cards

Millions of our people could be prevented from using their right to vote.

We must make sure that everybody has IDs or Voters' Cards.

An important part of the election campaign

must be voter education.

Resources for effective campaigning must be made available.

We need pamphlets, posters, T-shirts, all in the language of the people.

Money can be raised in our own areas together with appeals to the regional and the national office for help.

Intimidation

Intimidation is a serious problem from our employers, the chiefs and the reactionary parties.

East Rand comrades most affected by violence have been marching with Soweto ANC branches participating.

Our leadership should build on this example of solidarity nationally. The election must be our greatest mass action campaign.



Now is the time! Let all comrades of the youth, ANC, Cosatu, Civics and SACP mobilise.

All congress structures in every area now need to unite to implement election strategy.

The outcome of the election will be a sign

of the strength of the working class.

The ANC victory must be so big that it sends a clear message to all opponents of majority rule. Already in door to door canvassing in Meadowlands, 95% of people said they will vote ANC.

But elections are only the first stage. With the ANC victorious, people will find new ways to improve their lives and struggle for socialism.

L. Alfred,
ANC
Youth League

