



SACP

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

EASTERN CAPE

PEC BULLETIN

**WOMEN'S MONTH
EDITION**

18th edition

Socialism is the future, Build it now!!!

Background

The SACP Eastern Cape PEC Bulletin is a medium of the SACP for propagating its views with the working class in an unmediated fashion.

While it is important to constantly engage and contest ideas within the bourgeoisie commercial media but SACP is alive to the reality that any commercial media is first and foremost inclined to reflect views of its masters (monopoly capital).

It also contains regular features such as letters to the editor, commentary and a variety of other exciting features on working class struggles, the economy, etc.

Guidelines for Submission of Articles Style and Length.

The length for feature articles is 1200-1800 words. Letters to the editor must not exceed 300 words and opinion pieces must not exceed 800 words. Articles must be written in plain and simple English. Articles may contain words in other South African languages, with the English meaning bracketed. Articles must be relevant to membership of our party and the working class in general, exciting and solicit debate and discussions.

Articles about recent events or contemporary issues in South Africa and the world will be given preference for publication in the SACP Eastern Cape PEC bulletin.

All SACP District Spokespersons, YCLSA Spokesperson and other Spokespersons of the MDM fraternal organisations are encouraged to submit articles about the recent activities; as they might not be covered in the mainstream media.

Due Date

The SACP Eastern Cape PEC Bulletin is published monthly (12 issues per annum). The due date for the submission of articles is the 20th of each month. Late submissions will not be considered for an edition of such month but for future editions.

Originality

The SACP EC PEC Bulletin publishes original articles. We also publish articles which have appeared elsewhere in whole or in part.

Should you feel that republishing an article would be beneficial to SACP EC PEC Bulletin readership and that the article will reach a broader readership through our medium than the medium that first published it, then you need to bring this to the attention of the Editor. All sources cited in the articles must be referenced.

Themes

Different editions/ issues of the SACP PEC Bulletin will have specific themes (Joe Slovo Month, Chris Hani Month, Youth Month, Red October, SACP anniversaries, COSATU Anniversaries, ANC anniversary, etc.) therefore some articles must be tailored to suit the specific theme. Each issue/edition of the SACP EC PEC bulletin will indicate the theme of the next edition, so articles should be submitted as such.

Processing of Articles

All articles shall be subjected to scrutiny by the SACP EC PEC bulletin editorial team.

The SACP EC Bulletin is particularly interested in fostering a culture of reading and writing amongst the leadership and membership of our party.

We will therefore give special consideration to the articles written by the general members of our party. Articles will go through a review process, after which we will inform the contributor whether the article will be published or not.

The review process largely depends on the adherence to deadlines provided by the Editor and the content of the article as submitted.

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Next Edition: Kindly forward your contributions to simdodi@gmail.com on Tuesday, 20 September 2015.

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Editorial Notes

The month of August in South Africa is celebrated as the women's month, in commemoration of the 1956 women's march. This year, 2016 marks exactly sixty (60) years since more than 20 000 South African women of all races staged a march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the proposed amendments to the Urban Areas Act of 1950, commonly referred to as the "pass laws". That was the then legislation that required African persons to carry a document with them to 'prove' that they were allowed to enter areas that were demarcated as the 'whites' only area".

We would not be doing justice if we would speak of this march without making mention of the people who led it, Mama Lillian Ngoyi, Mama Charlotte Maxeke, Mama Rahima Moosa, Mama Francis Baard, Mama Helen Joseph and many more.

No one can dare contest us when we argue that the August 9 1956 march was an inspirational display of the political strength by South African women from different backgrounds. It also showed a strong sense of female solidarity and the eager to see national liberation.

We have learned that the women who participated in that historic march were not only drawn from different races, but different backgrounds as well. They came together for a common programme as they shared the common vision of the South Africa they wanted to live in, and the South Africa which they envisaged for their children and generations to come.

They delivered the memorandum and the march was a resounding success. They played a huge role in laying foundation for the South Africa that we live in today. It is for this reason that we recognize the bravery of these women who risked arrest, detention and banning by declaring 9 August, a National Women's Day. This march amongst other things was an indication that women are not spectators in any revolution but strategic role players. Therefore it becomes important for all of us in the movement and beyond not to treat women as the subordinates but our comrades.

We should therefore in all structures of the movement build strong female leadership to enhance the gender struggles. If we are deliberate in the gender transformation, it then means we should have women



SACP Spokesperson, Siyabonga Mdodi

presence in all the key sites of power and influence, as active participants in the thought process and the decision making process.

This should be done to ensure that we are true to our resolution on building a strong female cadre within the structures of the congress movement.

Still today, we still have women subjected to subordination and exploitation amongst other realities. As we live in the difficult times of the survival of the fittest. We continue to see less women occupying positions of authority in the corporate South Africa. We see less of women occupying position of authority even in the political fraternity. The strides made in the political front but emancipation of women must equally be about the ordinary women not only elite women.

Surely, the reason cannot be the shortage of women, or the lack of skills but a deep seated challenge of patriarchy in the South African Society.

As progressive formations we should come together and defeat the persistent patriarchal relations in society. We should work very hard in transforming our society.

Is virginity testing applicable or oppressive?



Phatheka Chithelo

"Virginity testing is oppressive, everything we do goes with time, and currently it is not in anyway associated with good morals and values on the upbringing of the young girl. It only seeks to undermine the young girl's worth. It is still an oppressive patriarchal practice. It still promotes patriarchal practices in society it is only females, young girls in particular who undergo the process and therefore their self-worth being measured based on that, while their male counterparts do not undergo such"



Awethu Zumana

"It is an oppressive, backwards and patriarchal practice. It has no place in the modern day society that is striving for equality between men and women. It is important to encourage responsible sexual lifestyle amongst the youth but virginity testing is not the best way as it places the burden of being responsible on women while men are free to sleep around as they won't be tested. The practice amounts to policing women's bodies. It encourages the social stigma where men who sleep around are celebrated, while on the other side women are shamed and called derogatory names. The practice should be abolished"

Outcomes of the Local Government Elections:

This year, we celebrate the women's month under a very difficult period from the Local Government Elections. In the elections the SACP has resolved to campaign for the overwhelming victory of our long standing ally, the African National Congress (ANC).

We campaigned for the ANC because of our shared programme of the NDR as an overarching reason. We have done so because of the gains that we have been able to register as the ANC led movement since the 1994 democratic breakthrough. The ANC led government has done a lot in delivering to the people, and changing the lives of the people for the better, however we all agree that a lot more still needs to be done.

The SACP's Ncumisa Kondlo Detachment in the Eastern Cape did a good work in campaigning for the overwhelming victory of the ANC. We are grateful to the party cadres for the work done. However the ANC's electoral support has declined in the Eastern Cape. The ANC has received 65.31% (2 394 931 votes) in 2016, which is a decline from the 71.30% we got in 2011. The DA has received 19.7% (722.312) votes, which is increase from the 16.2% they got in 2011.

The ANC electoral support has declined mostly in the "urban settlements" than in the rural areas. The ANC support has declined in both of the metros, in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, the ANC led alliance has lost the municipality to the Democratic Alliance (DA). In the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM), the ANC electoral support has dropped significantly.

The urban areas in which the ANC support has declined are the areas where the ANC led government has delivered as compared to the rural areas. In both metros the ANC led government has built many quality houses, provided water and sanitation services, electrification, improved roads infrastructure. In other parts in the rural areas, they are yet to see 1994. Can we then say ANC was not voted for because of service delivery related concerns? In my view, we surely cannot.

Maybe we need to take a closer look at our conduct and see if it does not erode confidence of the people in our movement. People in the urban areas have access to

many sources of news and different opinions so they see when we tear each other apart before our conferences. They see and read when our deployed comrades gets arrested for fraud and corruption. They read and see when our political leaders get arrested for corruption. They can see us when we hide forensic reports which implicate some of our leaders. They see our inactions and political protection of corrupt people in our ranks.

We should draw many lessons for the outcomes of the 2016 Local Government Elections, and most importantly commit to self-correct as we move forward.

"The core lesson that the ANC in particular and its alliance partners in general need to take to heart is that Our core constituencies, our historical support base have sent a powerful message. The message is quite clear: "Don't take us for granted." "Don't assume that your struggle credentials will forever act as an excuse for arrogance and predatory behaviour in the present." "Don't marginalise us while being preoccupied with your own internal factional battles, your list processes, your personality and money driven rivalries." "Don't impose unpopular and discredited candidates on us, based on factional calculations about next year's elective conference" - SACP Politburo statement of the preliminary assessment of the 2016 Local Government Elections.

"Don't assume that your struggle credentials will forever act as an excuse for arrogance and predatory behaviour in the present."

The SACP PB statement went further to suggest that *"If the ANC still remains the electoral choice of a majority of the South African electorate, the steady decline in support over recent elections, and now a precipitous decline indicate that, unless serious soul searching and corrective action is undertaken, the decline will continue and likely to accelerate..."*

We fundamentally agree with the SACP PB on this matter, we agree that it is important that we confront the challenges facing the ANC led movement. We should confront and defeat the challenge of factionalism and greed within the structures of the movement.

We should all keep in the spirit of the 2015 National Alliance summit declaration, which was unambiguous when dealing with these problems.

We wish you a revolutionary read.

Siyabonga Mdoti – SACP Provincial Spokesperson

'The Second Sex' revisited: woman as the subordinate other

In all corners of society, females are subjected to subordination, exploitation and oppression. Language, art, religion and other forms of modern socialisation of human beings are embedded with patriarchy within the make-up of their very DNA.

In what is described by many as a feminist classic, *'The Second Sex, Women as Other'* Simone de Beauvoir explores the idea that man 'is the Subject, he is the Absolute: she is the other.'^[i]

Through institutions of socialisation men have asserted themselves as subjects of history and women as the other only necessary to support the manly duties of supporting life of the off-springs. Language in its current form reflects the power that men have historically held in society. It reflects this social power by treating words referring or describing women as an extension of words referring or describing men. For an example: Male = Female; Man = Woman; Actor = Actress; Poet = Poetess

This trend transcends across individual languages. An example is the name *"Nonceba"* (*my own name*) is an extension of the male *"Nceba"* with the *"No"* being a prefix at the beginning which is a norm in the IsiXhosa language. Same goes for words such a *"Titshala"* to describe a male teacher and *"titshala-kazi"* to describe a female teacher.

This is but one example of how the world, in its current form is set up in such a way where the female is the second sex. The sex which comes after the absolute sex, which is man.

Beauvoir argues that "The whole of feminine history has been man-made. Just as in America there is no Negro problem, but rather a white problem; just as anti-Semitism is not a Jewish problem, it is our problem; so the woman problem has always been a man problem"(ibid).

De Beauvoir draws parallels between women and other oppressed classes of society throughout the book. However, she always includes a significant warning: "unlike blacks in America, Jews in Europe, or any other oppressed minority group, woman is not a minority.

Females constitute roughly half the human population at any given period in history" (ibid).

Another crucial difference: woman has never lived segregated from man, as Jews have been segregated from Christians and blacks from whites. Economically, woman belongs to a lower "caste"—a term de Beauvoir uses often to emphasize the institutionalized quality of female subordination. Despite her lower caste, woman has always lived alongside her "master".

This is perhaps why patriarchy is so entrenched in the female mind, to the extent that it is not even identifiable and thus results in the oppressed oppressing themselves even further. Comments such as "women hate each other" have become every day slogans thrown around by men whenever a cat fight breaks out, and in most cases, the man is the central feature of such cat fights. Generations of women have for centuries dragged each other at the amusement of the man, hence the evolution of the Sisterhood movement over the years to counter this phenomenon.

Bell Hooks defines patriarchy as "a political system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule of the weak and to maintain that domination through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence."^[ii]

There is a deep seated believe that men have a birth right to the female body as well as sexuality. The idea of ownership of the female body is played out in every day conversations. We encounter daily instructions from a capitalist and patriarchal society of what a good woman is and how she ought to act. If she dares to deviate from the prescriptions society places on her behaviour, we have all sorts of names for her.

Because we live in a capitalist, patriarchal society; the female body is for sale. The very system that socialise men and women alike that women are naturally the object of males which could be put on sale anytime of the day. Men in South Africa, and elsewhere in the world believe that they can buy the female body. I can buy her a few drinks in the club and thereafter have an unspoken, unquestionable right to take her home. This is not to argue that sexual relations are not

transactional, however, more often than not, the transactional component is assumed as a result of having "invested" material/monetary value hence the prevalence and persistence of rape and rape culture in our society.

The female body is under constant scrutiny, from both male and female. There seems to be a universal unwritten code of conduct for the female. She must dress in a particular way, if she does not; she invites whatever violence patriarchy confronts her with. It is for this reason that when a woman is raped, the first question that is asked is "What was she wearing? What was she doing there? Because whatever she wears which deviates from what patriarchy tells us a good and respectable woman must wear means she has opened herself up to abuse.



The idea of being the second sex, 'the subordinate other' has become so naturalised that the main defenders of it, are women. Patriarchy, like slavery has created a defence force for male privilege whom are women themselves. The typical house nigger mentality is where the 'good nigger' is employed by the master to guard his privilege through the policing and further oppression of the slaves. History showed us how house niggers ended up being far more brutal than the masters themselves. This is informed by the dire need to prove to be worthy of approval and acceptance by the master.

In the face of daily slut shaming and cyber bullying, as women, we are at the forefront of our own destruction. The defined norm of womanhood (as defined by the oppressor) has become institutionalised and any deviation deserves to be confronted with violence, with corrective rape and gender violence being the leading and most prevalent examples of such violence.

It must however be put on record that women have (despite popular beliefs that they are the not-so-significant other) been in the forefront of the struggle for better living conditions of human world-over.

In our country, it was Queen Manthasi who brave and led the Basotho Militia from the front upon the death of King Moshoehe. The 1958 August 09 revolt is among the leadership provided by women to society in general. Through arts and culture; in politics and at work; in academic and science, various women did and are doing their best to provide much needed leadership to society.

The current rate of females graduating in sciences and commerce also undermines the century's old notion that those were fields of study reserved for males.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa recognises equal rights but clearly a more focused, structural approach is needed if we're going to unlearn our naturalised position of subordination as women and the naturalised position of domination as men. Gender quotas



are not dealing with patriarchy and could in fact be argued to be further entrenching it in some quarters of society.

The introduction of Gender Studies through sociological studies in the school's curriculum is an important step towards structurally putting in place measures to dismantle the ideas of domination vs subordination. Perhaps it is also time we consider legislation prohibiting sexism and treating it with the contempt it deserves.

For revolutionaries, the task is also to re-socialise society, to create in existing institutions the more equal environment for all sexes. If the existing ones are failing to live up to that revolutionary task of re-socialising society should inevitable be replaced with new ones.

We must learn that 'The Second Sex' does not exist. Women are not the subordinate other but rather the significant equal.

[i] De Beauvoir, S. (1949). 'The Second Sex, Women as Other'

[ii] Hooks, B. (2004). Understanding Patriarchy'

Nonceba Mhlauli is a member of the ANC in Gaby Shapiro Branch, Dullah Omar Region, Western Cape

Gender Relations requires much more than academic equality

It is now a common cause that the month of August is dedicated into celebrating the foresight and bravery of women within and beyond borders of South Africa. This year is particular in that we are commemorating 60 years since brave women from all walks of life confronted the oppressive regime of Apartheid by marching to the union buildings against the pass laws. It is worth mentioning that the protest against passes, was in essence against systematic and institutional marginalisation and exclusion of African majority from active participation and control of ownership of the economy.

As it was 60 years ago, women understood that oppression towards women was further an over – burden on the basis that they were black, working class and women.

Two incidents which are worth noting as they happened within this women month, first one was at the moment when EFF was announcing its coalition with DA in that their proto fascist salad demagogic ideology had driven them in the hands of right-wing agenda, Mr Malema on tirade went on to state that Cde Gigaba cannot be trusted with South Africa as he could not control small issue of two women. Strangely this made some burst into laughter and no media house saw it worth reporting on this incident and somehow it escaped even the critics of social media. What for me was of concern is that once again women were regarded as entities to be controlled by men. In that if the man is strong enough his entities (women) must be reined in, it was convenient to brand women as not having independent minds of their own which informs their action but as entities at pleasure of men.

The second and the most recent is the fierce attack on the body of Caster Semenya by sections of white media. Apparently she should not be competing with other female athlete as she does not fit the imposed criteria by the western culture on how a women must look, talk, run and carry herself, despite no shred of evidence produced before the Court of Arbitration for Sport of what could be regarded as unfair advantage and it concluded that it was “unable to conclude that hyper androgenic female athletes may benefit from such a significant performance advantage that it is necessary to exclude them from competing in the female category.”

The sin of Semenya whom was not even a subject of ventilation before Arbitration for Sport is simply that she was too black and too fast but still not dared not to confine with set confines of what constitute a woman.

There could be no doubt on how treatment of Semenya was sexist and racist and one could not help but ask if the same treatment could have been dished if it was a white and even more a male athlete. As probably all top athlete has some characteristic or another which make them exceptional and heads above the rest and to torment Caster Semenya in the manner it has been done, with no scientific evidence that which is natural generating is outrageously scandalous.

Therefore, this intervention seeks to outline the context that give rise to this kind of treatment towards women on the age and age to which we are supposed to have progressed past this kind of prejudice

These two incidents for me at least are founded on the patriarchal relations which society had designed and enforced. The place for a woman is in the kitchen whilst “real” work must be done by men. It is in this context that it must be appreciated that patriarchy is cruel and deceitful, and affects all of us at times unwittingly when is presented as if that is how things are designed to be and they will always be like that. Patriarchy is interwoven within and intersects with other oppressive systems such as racism and capitalism.

Our approaches therefore must be grounded in the manner in which male and females relate to each other and must not be treated as god ordained but as constructed by society (meaning it can be reconstructed). For a long time females were subjected into being objects used by man for sexual gratification in order to satisfy their physical wants. Such degrading acts are continually reinforced and founded on economic dominance and further reinforced by cultures, religion, education, workplaces etc.

The hardship that confronts women needs to be understood in the context of the evolution of society and the emergence of forces of production which is correctly seen as the greatest discovery of men. It has however brought along the division of labour and surplus, as men now could produce more than what was



Cde Mawethu Rune – SACP PWC Member

required. The surplus instead of resolving the plight of mankind brought new challenges. It divided the society into two conflicting camps standing opposite to each other. It resulted in the expropriation of surplus (which was the labour fruit of others) for themselves as society needed to defend their labour power (the wealthy of the society).

This emergence had far reaching consequences for women, in that it created a new economic phenomenon: such as monopoly industries, big machines, and wage labour. It concentrated property in the hands of the few and required the labour of both the mother and the child on its quest in order to maximize profit.

This meant that women were now required to do "housework i.e. washing dishes, laundry, cooking, sweeping, and making up beds, giving birth and raise children, whilst at the same time, they are required to sell their labour power. Over time, this economic set – up only waged and recognized the work that was performed at factory point and not the domestic chores performed. This is regardless of the fact that "housework consumes three to four thousand hours of the housewife`s hours in a year as noted by Angela Davis as back as in 1981.

This point is well captured by Mama Thejiwe Mtinsto when she writes *"Patriarchy, the ideology and system underpinning the organisation of society based on the "superiority" of men and "inferiority" of women that result in unequal power relations between them, is so deeply embedded in all spheres of our lives, beginning in the private sphere - the family and spreading out to and through the whole public sphere including the state and all its institutions, education, work, religion, media, etc"*.

While it will not only be naïve but foolish to suggest that since the dawn of democracy, in South Africa no progress has been made in affirming women. As we continue to record steady progress in the representation of women across all sectors, this work must be further consolidated going forward. Another reality is that women`s economic empowerment remains elusive.

The reality that confronts us today is that many women are forced into low paying, insecure and unskilled jobs and are often paid less than their male co-workers. They are often sexually harassed by their male co- workers and bosses. They are also not given full maternity rights and are sometimes fired if they become pregnant.

We need to ensure that when workplace agreements or policies are drafted, they seek to protect the rights of women at work to a maximum. This is to ensure that there is no gender based discrimination, no violence in the workplace and that female workers are free from sexual harassment or demands for sexual favours in exchange for jobs or promotions.

Working women face a double shift of house work. When they come home, after a long day at work they have to cook, clean, and take care of children, often with little help from male family members. Poor services – electricity, hot water and sanitation and the lack of child care facilities for working mothers - intensify this double exploitation of poor working class women.

There has been growth in non-standard forms of employment for women, such as casual, temporary, part-time, subcontracted work, as well as home-working and informal employment. Further, that women`s vulnerability to HIV infection is particularly heightened by their economic dependence on men, lack of access to education, poverty, sexual exploitation, coercion, rape, as well as by their engagement in informal and commercial sex work. We know that poor women in rural areas are humiliated daily due to the fact that they do not have sanitary towels.

In more instances than not, women emancipation has narrowly been measured against women deployed to Parliament, Cabinet and CEOs etc. While this is paramount, but it turns pay blind eye to plight of women in the townships and rural areas whom are underemployed or unemployed. Frequently, this large segment is solely dependent on grants, piece jobs and their male counterparts. Many times, they are victims of rape that is not even reported at times. These women are certain instances are beaten and emotionally abused. It is estimated that every 6 days, a women is killed by her husband or boyfriend. This then gives insight to the argument that rape is not a crime of lust, but a crime of power, where the rapist acts against his own sense of disempowerment by using violence against the vulnerable rape victim.

The month of August should be used by all South Africans to ponder on the state of women in our country and ask the difficult questions: Where are now? And what must be done?

"Wathinta abafazi wantinta imbokotho" Sithi Wuntshu embokothweni "

Mawethu Rune – SACP Eastern Cape PWC Member

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