

Monthly journal of the SACP Eastern Cape



RED



INK

Ed 25: February 2017

**Tribute to Cde Boyce Melitafa by
Cde Xolile Nqatha**

**"The state of the revolutionary alliance
By Cde Luntu Sokutu**

"The red ink that never dries"

Background

The Red Ink is the SACP Eastern Cape monthly journal. The Red Ink 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).

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 Red Ink.

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 Red Ink 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 Red Ink 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 Red Ink 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 Red Ink 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 Red Ink 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 Red Ink editorial team. The Red Ink 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.

Editorial Team

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Next Edition: Kindly forward your contributions to simdodi@gmail.com on Monday, 20 February 2016.

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Editorial Notes

The year 2017 is an important year for the working class of the world, as we will all celebrate the Centenary of the 1917 Great October Revolution. In an attempt to bury the memory of that revolution, bourgeois writers and commentators have sought to always pour mountains of filth over it. The truth is that the world is pregnant with the revolution and the bourgeoisie fears that the lessons of October 1917 can be used by workers and youth of today to put an end to this rotten capitalism once and for all. Red October represent the greatest event of the 20th century and arguable of all human history.

On the 25 October 1917 the workers, army units, sailors of Petrograd rose in armed insurrection and captured the seat of the Russian Provisional Government. This act was a key moment in a revolutionary movement that was instrumental in shaping the whole of the 20th century and beyond. As the South African Communist Party, our establishment, our attitude to the national question and struggles were influenced to a large extent by the international communist movement and the Black republic theses of 1928 and Moses Kotane's 1934 Cradock letter amongst other key documents.

The Red October Revolution had an impact to the entire African continent and anti-colonial struggles that engulfed the continent. The one irrefutable fact: the working class, for the first time in history had captured state power and used it to overthrow the existing order and transform society and existing social relations. This excludes the brief but glorious episode of the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution of 1905 which were important but short-lived.

The October Revolution was not artificially engineered by a clandestine terrorist organization as many revisionists have attempted to claim. On the contrary, it was one of the most popular revolutions in history with the working class whole –heartedly supporting it. This is the context we need to understand our Medium Term Vision and our South African Road to Socialism. That is, in the present we seeking to build the power of the working class in all key sites of power such that not a single decision is taken without taking into consideration the interests of the working class.

That is why our agenda for building a socialist South Africa is not secrete, that is why we must intensify in propagating our views openly for an alternative South Africa and a new and a better world order. For the SACP celebrating the centenary of the Red October Revolution may not be reduced to one rally or even cake cutting function, but rather for amongst others a deeper

reflection by the working class revolution; and outlining the immediate tasks of the revolutionary working class.

As we organise activities to mark this centenary and educate our membership and the broader working class. We also need to use the SACP centenary in 2021 to understand deeper the lessons of the Red October revolution and impact to our party and contribution in the South African Revolution.

Remembering O.R Tambo:

This is an important period to remember Cde Tambo given the challenges we are facing as the movement, which are not the result of the crisis of capitalism as a system but are equally a reflection of the state of the movement.

Comrade Tambo is remembered by many for his commitment to the unity of our people and our movement, he was not a factionalist and he was not corrupt and represented the glue that was capable of holding the movement together through his exemplary leadership. He always placed the people and movement first and was the one to approach for intervention with confidence for he was not part of the problem or a problem.

Marking his centenary represents an opportunity for both collective reflection and personal reflection and also makes society to cast eyes on us and scrutinise our conduct as it relate to the OR we celebrating. Are we worthy to be associated with the man? The polarization of our country, the rise of tribalism and racism requires that we rededicate ourselves to the struggle for the building of non-racial and united country. On tribalism OR once said, *"The apartheid enemy tries to separate us into ancient tribal entities and pretend to be concerned about the preservation of our cultural heritage."*

We dedicate this 25th Edition to Cde Boyce Melitafa. May you have a revolutionary read!

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 SACP Eastern Cape

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"SACP tribute to Cde Boyce Melitafa"

By: Xolile Nqatha, SACP Provincial Secretary

our dignity as a country, there is no reason for any country to respect us.

We bring revolutionary greetings to you on Behalf of the ANC, SACP, COSATU and SANCO alliance and indeed on my behalf as Provincial Secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP).

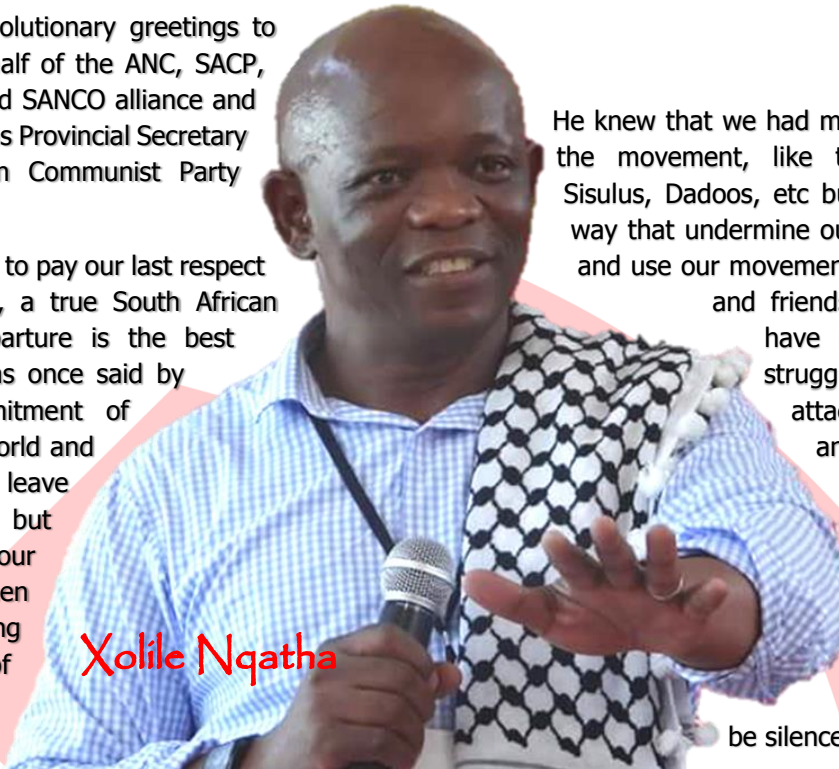
We gather here today to pay our last respect to a great humanist, a true South African Communist. His departure is the best reminder of what was once said by Fidel on the commitment of Cubans to a better world and human solidarity. We leave Africa with nothing but only body bags of our departed countrymen who have died fighting for the liberation of Africa.

Comrade Melitafa

leaves nothing for his family in material terms, he leaves the people of South Africa better through his contribution in the liberation struggles and efforts to build a better South Africa, unlike the imperialists who do that in exchange of access to mineral resources, like gold, silver, etc. In his name we must struggle for the implementation universal healthcare, the National Health Insurance, Free education, subsidised quality public transport and decent wage so that we know even if we leave the state will be able to provide for our families. That should be the primary task of genuine revolutionaries than to struggle for your family and friend's benefits at the expense of the people.

As a South African communist, he knew that communists are part of families and communities that observe various traditional and cultural practises. He observed these religiously did not consider them to be back ward. He was a communist but a thorough going nationalist who understood the relationship between national liberation and socialism, he argued that no one can be a true communist without being patriotic and defend the sovereignty our country.

He knew that we are a people who fought many battles defending our country and our dignity as the people. He knew that the landing of the Gupta family at Waterkloof Air Base during their private wedding constituted an attack on our sovereignty and that if we don't respect



He knew that we had many illustrious families as the movement, like the Tambos, Mandelas, Sisulus, Dadoos, etc but they never acted in a way that undermine our sovereignty as country and use our movement to benefit their families and friends. And yet a family, we have not heard about in the struggle comes to our country, attack our dignity as nation and use our leaders to accumulate and we are expected to keep quiet. In the name of Melitafa and many of the comrades who have suffered and died for us to be here, we refuse to be silenced.

Melitafa Knew that it is not an option for all of us, communists and none communists to surrender the ANC on a silver platter to thieves. But equally, he knew that an ANC taken over by thugs cannot be the ANC. Communists cannot be part and die for something which is not the ANC but parades itself as the ANC.

Like Fidel, he also knew that communists cannot be anti-Christians, he understood the more that 10 000 coincidences between Christianity and Socialism. That between the two there is not a tactical alliance but a strategic alliance for social justice. There are more common things between Marxism and Christianity than many differences between religion and capitalism. There is a convergence in the ethical content of both Marxism and Christianity.

In the 10 commandments it said that do not steal and yet the system of capitalism exist on the bases of a minority that robs and exploit the majority who have no property. It is a system whose motor-force is about to make profit for the few not to meet the needs of society.

We calling upon the church to speak the truth and refuse to be silenced as we pay tribute to this hero. It was on the bases of broad liberation front that we won our political freedom; it can only be on the bases of the same broad front that we can defend and deepen for our freedom. The church spoke against apartheid and took the side of the poor. There is no reason why the

church cannot take the side of the poor when leaders are self-serving.

We are paying a tribute to one who was brutally frank; none would at any stage fail to hear what he was saying for he was always clear. A consistent man in a world with many inconstant comrades who flow with the wind.

The South African revolution represents a true example and signs of a revolution going wrong. Today we look at his example, a well decorated cadre of the movement but has not made it to the list during the last elections. He, together with many other genuine comrades like Dyani, Rufus Rwexu, Bikitsha, Genu, Mgezi, Hodi and many other comrades.

Dear comrades

Is it possible such servants of the people, disciplined and hard- working comrades can be rejected by the community and the people? No, they have not been rejected by the people; they have been rejected by the slates as a result of factional politics. Already the results of this are felt in the current councils.

On behalf of the SACP and all its members across the country, we are proud and grateful to have had you as a member and brought credit to the party and the broader movement always in your talk and in your actions and in death as you continue to speak given the out pouring grief and lessons we will continue to learn in your example for generations to come.

On a personal note, I am indebted to you for having known and worked with you for more than a decade and you did not betray me but know many have betrayed you. You grew through the ranks of the movement and remained regional in operation yet national in stature and in contributions in meetings. You were not like many microwave leaders who question some of us whose track record in the struggle can be traced.

Some are old enough but have no traceable track record but they act as more ANC and more comrades than many who were there. (an exaggeration of regalia-isigqezu)

But what are the tasks as we pay tribute to this leader of our people

Let us unite the movement, our communities and people by working with them in resolving their challenges

Let us fight violence against women and children reclaim our streets, our villages and townships from criminals

Let be part of the genuine struggles for the ABSA to pay back the money they got from the reserve bank and call for broader investigation as many are suspected to have taken billions out of the country. We should not neglect genuine struggles because we know others doing this to divert us from the wrongs of the Guptas. Both the Guptas and the Rupert's hate the SACP and we hate them too! The feeling is mutual.

It is not the ANC government that is responsible for job losses and unemployment. It is the rich, the banks who are in investment strike. The struggle to force them to invest by opening factories.

Let us fight against factionalism, as no faction can work for the people. All factions are self-serving, the Premier league included.

They must not tell us lies as known in the present, when they not even taken over our movement officially, our experience is of clear networks that are raiding SOE and departments and municipalities. We are not stupid.

Farewell Cde Melitafa, we shall always remember you as the genuine well rounded revolutionary, who walked the talk.

Rest in peace Cde Melitafa, Nyathi, Ngqila, Nokhonza

Speech delivered by the SACP Eastern Cape Provincial Secretary, Cde Xolile Nqatha in the funeral of the late SACP District Secretary, Cde Boyce Melitafa





South African Communist Party
Eastern Cape, 20 January 2017

Press statement:

“A revolutionary all-rounder is no more”

The South African Communist Party (SACP) in the Eastern Cape has learnt with great sense of shock and sadness the passing of Cde Boyce Melitafa, SACP Skenjana Roji District Secretary. Cde Melitafa succumbed to illness on the 19 January 2017. He was born in 12 November 1954 in Mooiplaas.

At this dark hour, the SACP with the great sense of loss and grief wishes to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Melitafa family, the entire congress movement and the people which he devoted his life in serving diligently. The SACP mourns with you in this time of sorrow, we share the deep pain you are feeling.

Cde Melitafa is a well-grounded cadre of the movement who served the movement and the people of South Africa in many areas. He started working at Dunlop Flooring in Wilsonia, East London where he worked tirelessly in the formation of Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU) which later became South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU). He worked with many comrades like Thozamile Gqwetha, Sisa Njikelana, Rufus Rwexu, Mzukisi Skweyiya, Sicelo Ndevu and many told and untold heroes of our struggle. He later became the branch secretary of SAAWU. He was one of the founder members of the South African Congress of Trade Union (SACTU) the forbearer of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). He served as the organizer of SACTU.

He was in the forefront of the establishment of the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) as one of its founder members. He later served as the organizer then he was elected as the Provincial Secretary of SAMWU, a position he served diligently.

Cde Melitafa was also instrumental in the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) after the establishment of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983, which sought to cajole coloured and Indians as junior partners in the apartheid administration. He was in and out of the detention from 1981. He was working in the units of the armed struggle and recruited many comrades to join the ranks of Umkhonto Wesizwe.

He also worked in the underground structures of both the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the

African National Congress (ANC). He served the ANC in many portfolios, he served as the branch chairperson in Great Kei for many years. He was deployed by the ANC to serve as the Portfolio Head of Engineering in the Amathole District Municipality.

He served in the SACP Skenjana Roji District as the District Chairperson and later elected as the District Secretary. He was the SACP District Secretary at the time of his passing. He was an epitome of unity and rapid grassroots activism in the life of the SACP in the province. He was instrumental in building the second layer leadership of the party and the trade union movement, hence he was the champion of political education and ideological training. He always advised the younger generation to learn, learn and learn.

We dip our red revolutionary banner in mourning the life of the rare breed of a great revolutionary, who walked the talk. A great cadre of the party who served the movement and the people without any ulterior motives and seeking self-enrichment. This is a leader who despised corruption, factionalism, rent seeking and all the ills that we are confronted with as perpetuated by the greedy peace time revolutionaries.

He remained committed to the aims and objectives of our movement; he remained committed in building a united and non-racial society. He is a true communist to the end, a tried and tested revolutionary. He was a well-grounded working class intellectual, organiser, educator and a disciplinarian.

As the SACP, we commit ourselves to continue with the great work of humanity he committed his life to. We will continue to build an independent, agile and adaptive communist party of the working class. In his honour we shall soldier on!

Rest in peace Nyathi, Hamba kahle qhawe lamaqhawe!

The details of a memorial and funeral services will be communicated in due course.

Issued by the SACP Eastern Cape.

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“The state of the SA revolutionary alliance”

By: Luntu Sokutu, SACP & ANC member

The South African revolution is facing major setbacks in the wake of the dominant ills in the movement of rampant corruption, looting, patronage schemes, seasoned factional conduct, moral leadership decay and divisions, amongst other things.

While the above may profit (and it indeed does) some individuals and families that support and join the liberation movement with the expectation of material gain; it does more harm on the movement, but more significantly reverses the gains of our shared National Democratic Revolution (NDR).

South Africa has seen decades of resistance against the colonial and repressive capitalist order. This stems from the wars of resistance by African people against the British and Boer Colonisers.

In its brief history, the African National Congress (ANC) boldly asserts to have kept this spirit of resistance alive. It proclaims “to have fought for our land, against low wages, high rents and the dompas.” It further contends to have fought against Bantu education, and for self-determination through the right to vote for a government of the people’s choice. This it maintains, to be the story of the ANC.

This story, is however incomplete, if it does not include the role of the Revolutionary Alliance partners of Communists and workers through their organised formations. It tells you not about the contribution of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the workers progressive Federation, later known as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), in fighting against the “theory and practice of ‘apartheid’ as expounded and implemented by the Nationalist Party”. A theory and practise which the SACP in its fifth (5th) chapter on Fifty Fighting Years, explains to be the continuation of the policy of the Nationalist Party predecessors, to oppress and exploit the majority in South Africa for the benefit of the rich and privileged.

The Party further argued that it became more obvious that the only genuine forces of opposition and resistance revealed themselves outside white politics and its Parliament, in the black working class and the liberation movements of the oppressed people. It additionally explained that “these movements rose to the challenge, achieving a steadily growing measure of

inner strength and unity, of revolutionary clarity of purpose and leadership”.

Challenges have always existed for the Alliance, however as society changes, so does the challenges facing the movement, presenting new realities. The control of over democratic institutions of governing in the State, has indeed presented us with difficulties never acutely imagined.

We would have never imagined for example, that ANC members ‘in good-standing’, would openly vote with the opposition in council to appoint the opposition’s

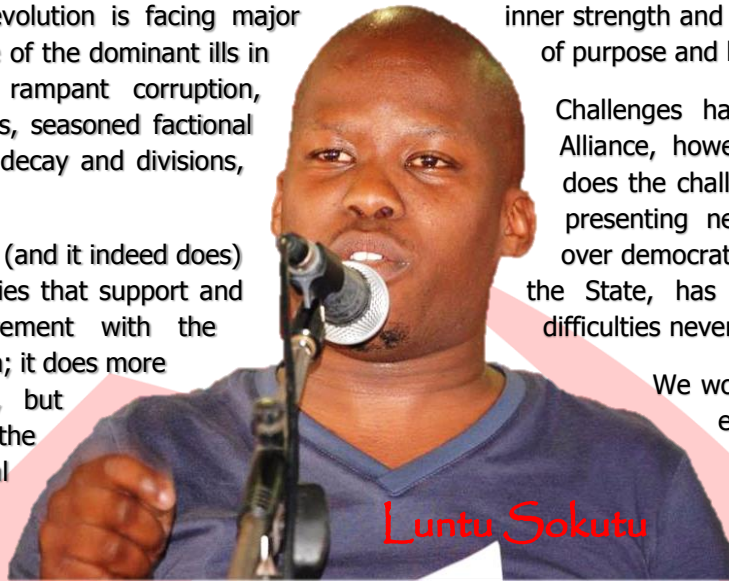
preferred candidate in a crucial and strategic administrative position.

Never would we have foreknown that a Regional Secretary could intentionally fail to submit names of eight (8) ANC candidates to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) purely because it was not his personally desired candidates, aiding the ANC’s electoral massive decline in the Western Cape.

Who would have predicted comrades, that an individual found guilty of being captured by the destructive parasitic smash and grab bourgeoisie, may possibly be rewarded by the leadership of the ANC through a deployment to our National Parliament?

The above, and the present moment in South Africa, is best described by the words of Charles Dickens in the first chapter of his famous novel, *The Tale of Two Cities*, which states: “it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity...we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way”, describing a period of radical opposites during the French Revolution.

Indeed in the age of South Africa’s National Democratic Transformation, we are presented with the best times (the gains of post 1994 dispensation), and the worst times. We are all going towards the direction of the National Democratic Revolution, as a direct route to Socialism, and at the same time we are all going in the direct opposite.



What went wrong?

The recent acts of ill conduct and morally compromised, senseless decisions taken by some within the leadership ranks of the ANC got compounded when allowing the tendencies once fought and defeated in the era of the class project, resurface. The isolation of the Alliance and the movement in decision making and implementation characterised the leadership of the ANC in the period preceding the 2007 watershed Polokwane Conference.

The *Together we campaign, alone we deploy phenomenon*, is worsening the situation that led to the ANC losing significant support in the last local government elections. Had the Communist Party, Cosatu, and Sanco been involved in the replacement of Abram Mudau, the unthinkable, irrational possible deployment of Mr. Molefe would have not even been considered.

But yet again, what more can one expect from a Mr. Supra Mahumapelo who deliberately convened a Provincial General Council (PGC) of the ANC at exactly

of finding out from the media about critical decisions such as the possible deployment of Mr. Molefe.

What do we do?

The membership of the ANC seriously needs to use this moment to make radical changes in the life of the organisation. The conferences set to take place this year must be utilised not only to ask difficult questions, but more importantly to take difficult decisions. The ANC membership I emphasise, based on the lack of confidence on the ability of the current leadership (dominated by captured individuals and leagues) to overcome the present challenges.

The Alliance must productively engage on the discussion about our approach to contesting the State, in pursuit of advancing our shared revolutionary program. We must rule out the strategic possibility of maintaining the existing status quo, and meaningfully consider the two remaining possibilities of independent electoral participation in democratic contestation of the State; or a reconfigured Alliance.



the same time the Party was having its Provincial Congress, and argued this to illustrate the independence of the Alliance components. What better way to demonstrate seasoned factional and divisive conduct, and just plain absurdity.

ANC leadership across all areas in the country will convene Alliance meetings to discuss strong campaigns towards decisive electoral victory. They will without shame ask the Alliance, particularly the Party, to intervene in 'hot spot areas' and 'no-go-zone parts' for the ANC. Without a doubt, the Party constantly dispatches its Red Brigades to honour this request, Cosatu and Sanco doing the same with its volunteers.

When deploying however, such cooperation rarely exists. This is worse when dealing with Gupta-inspired deployments to State institutions, and other decisions motivated by business interests, patronage and looting. The Alliance wisdom is no longer required, to the extent

The white and newly emerged bourgeoisie (parasitic and comprador) have the land, the minerals, the finance capital, the entirety of the wealth of this country. The working class and the toiling masses on the other hand, have nothing but their labour, along with their popular organs of mass power.

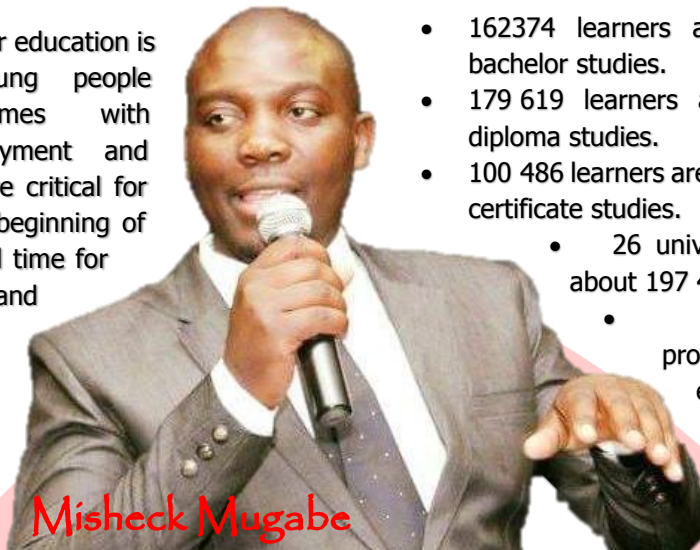
Without these we are nothing comrades; we must thereby wedge a stubborn fight against those hell-bent on capturing the Mass Democratic Movement, and the ANC in particular, restore the Alliance as the strategic centre of all decision making, from theory to practise.

Luntu Sokutu is a member of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. He writes in his personal capacity.

“The struggle for access to higher learning...”

By: Misheck Mugabe, SAUST Treasurer General

The provision of higher education is important for young people because it comes with opportunities for employment and acquisition of skills that are critical for human development. The beginning of every year is a very crucial time for students both continuing and prospective students because it is a period when admissions and registration process unfolds.



Misheck Mugabe

It is that time of the year when those determined to fight against illiteracy show up their passion and dedication. Literacy itself has been described by many as a bridge from misery to hope, but one of the profound description of the importance of education was provided by Dr Kofi Atta Annan during his tenure as the seventh Secretary General of the United Nations, he said

"Knowledge is power, information is liberating and education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family. That education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development".

It is from the above premise that one would like to engage on the right to learn campaign as a fundamental struggle in society and a struggle that we dare not betray as a generation.

The demand for higher education continues to grow despite a recorded growth of the sector over the years. Perhaps it is necessary to deal with the latest realities showing that demand for education exceeds supply. The department of basic education announced the 2016 matric results on the 04 of January 2017 which showed that 610 178 grade 12 learners wrote their university entry examination. The following weeks after the announcement of these results, the department of higher education and training indicated the following interesting facts from these results;

- That more than 442 000 learners are eligible for admission to universities and colleges.

- 162374 learners are eligible for admission to bachelor studies.
- 179 619 learners are eligible for admission to diploma studies.
- 100 486 learners are eligible for admission to higher certificate studies.
 - 26 universities will provide access to about 197 400 new entrants only.
 - The 50 TVET colleges will provide access to 207 510 new entrants.

The above statistics clearly indicates that not all matriculates who are eligible to study in universities and colleges will be accepted because of limited spaces available. Whilst others are celebrating being admitted, others are hopeless, they are crying for a miracle to happen, some of us as student activists knows the pain that students go through during this time of the year and surely many have read about a student committing suicide after being rejected at one institution of higher learning some time ago, not to mention a parent who lost life at a stampede for university enrolment of her child in 2012.

The situation is traumatising but all is not lost, maybe the services of psychologists ,counsellors ,activists and educators is critical at this point in time for support and to give some of the options to be followed by those whom are at the verge of thinking otherwise.

The most terrible and sad news to hear about is that out of the 90 000 applications that University of Kwazulu Natal received ,only 8700 places are available for new students, that out of 135 500 applicants that showed interest at university of Johannesburg only 10500 will be admitted and, that out of more than 30 000 applications received by University of Fort Hare, only less than 4000 new students will be enrolled in 2017,Walter Sisulu University received more than 22 000 applications and will only take less than 8000 new students, Nelson Mandela metropolitan University will only take 7554 new students and Rhodes university will take the lowest number of less than 2000 new students.

Surely many of the students are resorting to look for employment to avoid staying at home, but one of the options is to try other universities and pursue some studies at TVET colleges ,failure which means one will

have to try luck again next year. It is important to try other universities because many students, because of no guarantee for acceptance, apply in six universities at the same time and may be accepted in all of them; it means such a student can only register in one institution thereby forfeiting and creating space for those that are rejected elsewhere.



The struggle for access to universities and colleges is therefore at the pinnacle of priorities of the student revolution and some of us who are from SASCO we call it the right to learn campaign. It is a struggle that yielded results over the years with the following notable strides, that the university enrolment has almost doubled in size, increasing from 495 356 in 1994 in universities, including technikons and teacher training colleges to 938 201 in 2011 ,to about 983 698 in public universities and universities of technology and to more than 1 million students in the south African public higher education institutions in 2016,(Council on higher education ,2017).In addition to that development, the additional three universities ,Sefako Makgatho

University ,Sol Plaatje University and the University of Mpumalanga will assist to provide more spaces for students who wish to further their studies.

The question of access cannot be responded to accurately without accepting that access is correlated to success. The dynamics within institutions are important because they affect the success of students either positively or negatively ,and amongst these are demographic indications such as the ones provided in the white paper 3 for post schooling and training that, "more than 54% of students higher education are females and 78% are black Africans. But Black and female students are under-represented in science, engineering and technology as well as in business and commerce programmes. While postgraduate studies are dominated by white males."

These are the realities that we are confronted with which calls for radical higher education transformation. It is not well that whilst many blacks can access higher learning, but majority of students enrolled at best institutions such University of Pretoria and Stellenbosch are whites. Hence student organizations as they embark on the struggle for access to universities must be able to monitor demographic dynamics of the selection process of applications.

One of the mistakes that are often committed by stakeholders in institutions of higher learning is to think that the struggle for access is about being admitted and register only. This is a revolutionary struggle that goes beyond just getting a place at a university. The struggle for access is a combination of a number of key factors such as the following;



- Access to residences especially for students whose homes are very far from the university.
- Provision of learning materials for those that are lucky to be admitted in these limited university spaces.
- The quick supply of meals and meal allowances to students so that they do not starve whilst pursuing a qualification.
- Mobilization of registration fees often regarded as minimum initial payment demanded by universities and colleges.
- Access to transportation through shuttles from residences to campus.
- Confronting all barriers to access such as financial and academic exclusion.

The above are ingredients that will enable students to access and to study well without much hindrance. Assisting students to get access to funding for their studies is important to avoid them dropping out on the way. This is surely outlined in the National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act, 1999 (Act No. 56 of 1999) (NSFAS Act) which provides for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students attending public higher education and training. The good news that we must share with new entrants is that NSFAS will be funding more than 200 000 first-time and continuing students at TVET colleges in 2017 and financial aid offices in campuses are ready with information on various bursaries available in universities.



It is very clear that students face a number of challenges in their endeavours to access universities and colleges, others are turned away, others drop-out in the process whilst others soldier on in the midst of such pains. In order to avoid this horrendous phenomenon, all stakeholders such as communities, private sector, students' organisations, students, university management, academic and non-academic staff, and parents must join hands and play a role to address the challenges that lead to barriers of access. Part of what the private sector can do is to provide

funding for construction and expansion of institutions of higher learning to create more space for teaching and learning.

Amongst measures to rectify the problem is to introduce online registration to avoid stampedes during registration process. Online studies and distance learning can assist to avoid congestion in campuses, but students must as well study hard to pass so that they can have access to bursaries and scholarships.

A combination of full time and part-time program offering will ensure that more students are enrolled by universities and colleges and such can be complemented by using senior students or post-graduate students to teach junior students so as to address the challenge of understaffing. Institutions of higher learning must be, as part of the solution, be ambitious and introduce new faculties that are not in existence in their campuses thereby creating more space for the needy students who are yearning for post school learning and training.

In conclusion, one must be able to appreciate the efforts being done both within institutions and outside to ensure access and success for our students. Whilst such is happening, challenges remain showing such that some potential students resort to crime because they could not get a place to study, others fear being unemployed graduates whilst some end up dropping out because of either systematic exclusion or socio-economic reasons. We must all not lose hope, they is always light at the end of a tunnel.

Student organizations must continue to fight against academic and financial exclusion in universities and T-VET colleges so that both the future of new students and returning students is guaranteed. When all that is done successfully then it cannot be disputed that the struggle for access to institutions of higher learning is a fundamental pillar of our revolution.

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