



African Communist

First Quarter 2010

Issue Number 180

SPECIAL NATIONAL CONGRESS
POLITICAL REPORT

**DEFEND THE
UNITY OF THE
ALLIANCE!**

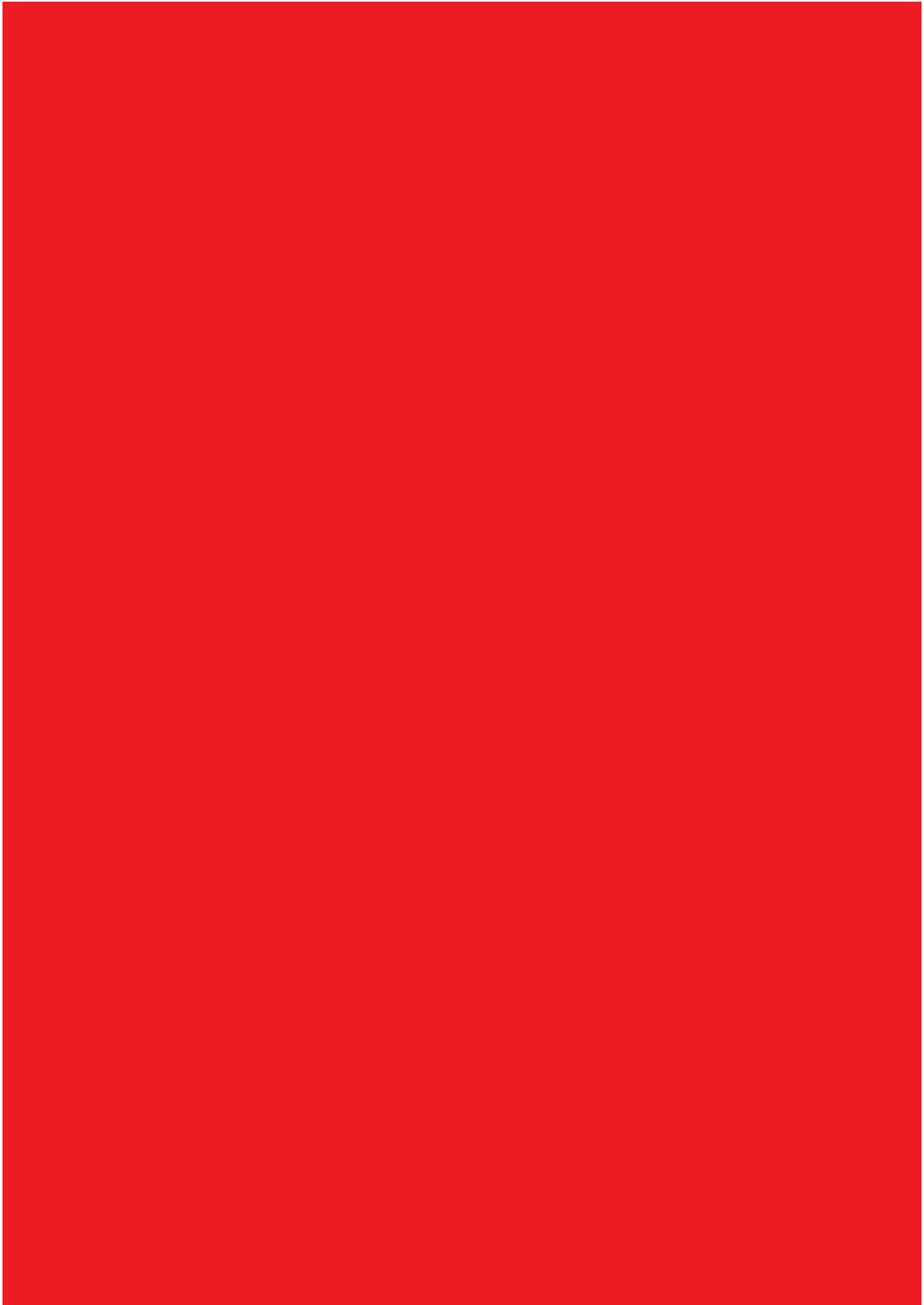
DEFEND OUR

SHARED

ALLIANCE

PROGRAMME!







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The African Communist is published quarterly by the South African
Communist Party as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought
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African Communist, PO Box 1027, Johannesburg 2000

EDITORIAL NOTES

Defend the unity of the Alliance! Defend our shared programme!

Congress must answer the questions thrown up by the global economic crisis, by the state of SA 15 years into democracy, and by developments in our democratic movement

In his closing address to the ANC's critical 1969 Morogoro Conference, ANC President, OR Tambo said to a standing ovation: "wage a relentless war against disrupters and defend the ANC... Be vigilant, comrades... Beware of the wedge-driver, the man who creeps from ear to ear, carrying a bag full of wedges, driving them in between you and the next man, between a group and another, a man who goes round creating splits and divisions. Beware of the wedge-driver, comrades. Watch his poisonous tongue."

Six years later, the ANC's NEC issued the following statement on the expulsion of the so-called "Gang of 8": "The mature silence of the organisation in public about the activities of the clique apparently made them shout their slanders louder and louder, and publish and distribute documents which challenge the very basis of the policies and decisions of our organisation... Let it be made abundantly clear that the policies of racialism and anti-communism have been and still are diametrically opposed to the traditions and practices of the African National Congress." (**Expulsion of a Conspiratorial Clique**, statement by the NEC of the ANC, Morogoro, December 1975).

Today, two very contradictory political

realities are at play within our ANC-led tripartite alliance. On the one hand, the commercial media is having a field-day, portraying "deepening" crises within the Alliance, and reporting on a steady stream of personalised attacks on SACP, COSATU and selected ANC leaders emanating from within our movement. On the other hand, it is an Alliance that over the last two-and-a-half years has actually begun to consolidate a considerable policy and programmatic convergence – for the first time in over a decade.

So what's going on?

The beginning of any wisdom on this matter lies in recognising the connection between these two contradictory realities. There are elements within our movement who are threatened by the deepening Alliance policy and programmatic convergence underway since the ANC's 52nd National Conference in Polokwane in December 2007. These elements are doing everything they can to disrupt the convergence process. They play a disruptive role in meetings. They bombard the media with demagogic attacks on all and sundry, hoping to distract the nation's attention away from the key strategic priorities that we agree must occupy our lives, ^{24/7}.

So why do they fear an Alliance that is programmatically unified?

These are elements that have always seen the 1994 democratic breakthrough as an opportunity to advance not just the national democratic revolution, but also their own narrow self-enrichment interests. They have little interest in organising and mobilising our mass base around our key priorities of jobs, health-care, education, rural development, and fighting crime and corruption. Their only real concern for organisational matters within our movement is to secure positions for themselves and their clique. It is no accident that in their mouths any political question quickly descends into a promise or a threat about some relatively distant elective ANC conference. They are obsessed with electoral lists and not the issues confronting millions of working class and poor South Africans.

A new developmental growth path

Despite their disruptive actions, across the Alliance and in government itself we have successfully built a major consensus. We have agreed upon our five strategic priorities. We have agreed that to address these we need to place South Africa on to a new developmental growth path. Before the recession struck SA, we had 17 years of growth, touching 5% towards the end. But after 17 years, the unemployment rate (even narrowly defined) still stood at crisis levels above 23%. Despite a massive redistributive programme of social grants and other measures, after 17 years the levels of racialised income inequality has risen!

This was the context in which President Jacob Zuma's state of national address to parliament in February this year called for us to place SA onto a new, developmen-

tal growth path. In his budget speech, Finance Minister, Pravin Gordhan, evoked the same central challenge.

But how do we get onto a new growth path? A key (but not the only) pillar of a new growth path is a state-led industrial policy programme. Also in February, Minister of Trade and Industry, Rob Davies published the Industrial Policy Action Programme. Minister of Economic Development, Ebrahim Patel, has also begun to provide preliminary outlines of a new growth path proposal. Government has stressed the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation based on clear strategic outcomes and linked outputs.

All of these are very important steps along the way to consolidating the Alliance policy consensus, not just in theory, but in practice. This is not to say that there are not many points of discussion and outstanding debate – how do we align our macro-policy with our industrial policy, for instance? But such debates should not be muddled up with a very different challenge.

This different challenge is precisely dealing with the disrupters, the wedge-drivers, those who have no interest whatsoever in having any serious policy discussion. They do not want to see the consolidation of policy consensus and an active programme to implement our policies.

Again, we need to ask: Why?

The answer is simple. Any serious effort to place our country on to a new developmental growth path will have to expose and tackle the huge siphoning off of public resources through all kinds of tender-preneuring, political bullying, rent-seeking and patronage distribution. This is what they fear, and this is why they try to create a permanent state

of tension and recrimination, hoping to distract us from a unified approach to dealing decisively with the multi-billions rand diversion of public resources into private pockets.

How should the SACP react to these challenges?

Precisely because the SACP has uncompromisingly stood up against these tendencies we have become a prime target. In particular there is a factionalist campaign against the SACP's supposed attempt to "control the ANC". There is nothing surprising about this. Back in 1976, the SACP central committee issued a statement on the activities of the "Gang of 8", who had recently been expelled from the ANC:

"The issues on which they have chosen to attack the liberation movement are as old as the struggle itself. The slander that the ANC is run by the Communist Party is not something new; it has always been spread by the racists and those who act as their agents. And it has always been designed to weaken the people's struggle. As early as the 1920s, liberals like Ballinger helped destroy the ICU by raising the banner of anti-Communism, and spreading scare stories about 'Communist take-overs'. In the late 50s, the break-away PAC group also used the white liberal parrot-cry that 'the Communists were running the ANC' in an attempt to destroy it."

So what do we do?

In the first place, let us not descend to the level of vulgar insult-trading.

In the second place, let us ensure that we play a leading role in defending the unity and integrity of the Alliance and of the ANC itself. This means that our own interventions should never be sectarian or personalised. Let us be firmly focused on the foundation principles of the ANC and

its alliance, as enshrined in our respective constitutions and policy documents.

Let us remind ourselves that the ANC's own constitution is very clear that:

"The following conduct by a member or public representative shall constitute misconduct in respect of which disciplinary proceedings may be invoked and instituted against him or her:

(...)

"Behaviour which brings the organisation into disrepute or which manifests a flagrant violation of the moral integrity expected of members and public representatives or conduct unbecoming that of a member or public representative.

"Sowing racism, sexism, tribal chauvinism, religious and political intolerance, regionalism or any form of discrimination.

"Abuse of elected or employed office in the organisation or in the State to obtain any direct or indirect undue advantage from members or others

"Behaving in such a way as to provoke serious divisions or a break-down of unity in the organisation.

"Undermining the respect for or impeding the functioning of the structures of the organisation."

Let us ensure that we all uphold our respective constitutional and disciplinary codes. Failure to do this costs each of enormously in terms of the prestige and moral standing of our movement.

Finally, as the SACP, we need to ensure that all points of difference and debate within our Alliance are not conflated. Many ANC members are not communists. To be non-communist is not to be anti-communist. Similarly, constructive criticism and engagement with the SACP is also not anti-communist. We need to appreciate and respect this important difference. ★

SPECIAL NATIONAL CONGRESS

Central Committee Political Report to the SNC, Dec 2009

*Together, let's defeat capitalist greed and corruption!
Together, build socialism now*

Introduction

We are gathered in Polokwane as some 1 000 delegates representing 96 049 SACP members from throughout South Africa. In the 88 year history of communist activism in South Africa, this is the largest ever membership of the Communist Party. Our membership has been growing by leaps and bounds over the last few years of this year. We attribute this growth to the SACP's active campaigning in communities around the issues that affect the great majority of our people. The profile of our membership is relatively young, nearly 40% of our members are now women, and a majority of our members are drawn from the ranks of the millions of unemployed and marginalised.

Why have we gathered together in this Special National Congress? We are here, in part, because we have resolved that the SACP should meet, mid-term, at least once in a non-elective national congress between our regular five-yearly national congresses. But this Special National Congress is not just a matter of routine. It has not simply been convened by a calendar.

Its timing and its objectives are,

above all, related to the aspirations, the frustrations and the struggles of millions and millions of South Africans – workers, rural and urban poor, marginalised middle classes, struggling petty entrepreneurs, teachers, health-care workers, social workers, professionals whose careers are stunted and whose professional values are constantly under threat of being perverted by an all-encompassing and greedy capitalist market.

This Special Congress is about the landless and land hungry poor. It is about those living in appalling conditions in shacks or in shoddily built “RDP” houses. It is about casualised workers, it is about today's modern chattel slaves, those enchained to heartless labour brokers. It is about thousands of women and children who suffer from domestic violence - the symptom of a society in distress. It is about learners struggling to acquire an education often in the most appalling conditions. It is about students battling to pay fees. It is about the 2,8 million young South Africans between the ages of 18 and 24 years who are neither in an educational institution, nor in employment or training.

Today, we are saying to all of you – Stand Up! Let us not suffer in silence!

Together, let us organise and mobilise to roll back the heartless domination of a capitalist system!

This Special Congress is about the millions of South Africans infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. It is about the tens of thousands of heroic care-givers, family members, health-care workers and child-headed households. It is about millions of South Africans stranded in distant townships and rural areas, in spaces that continue to replicate apartheid exclusion and marginalisation. It is about the 10 million who daily depend on under-resourced and overcrowded public transport to travel long distances to work.

This Congress is about tens of thousands of defence force personnel who have been neglected, sometimes mistreated in a so-called integration process that has failed to seriously transform our armed forces into a motivated, patriotic cadre upholding the democratic values of our new society. It is about warders and policemen and women, who are bearing the brunt of a serious and often violent crime problem – another indicator of grave social distress in our society.

This Congress is about the threat that corruption poses for the deepening and advancing our democratic gains. It is about continuation of our 2009 Red October Campaign to mobilise every worker, community member and all South African citizens to fight the scourge of corruption, wherever it occurs, whether in the public or private sector. Corruption is tantamount to theft from the poor, and must be relentlessly exposed as it is a cancer that may slowly bleed our democracy to death. Let our people refuse to keep silent, irrespective of who is involved in corruption. Let us root

out corruption in business, in the public sector, in our communities and in all of society.

This Congress is about the plight of our region and of the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. It is about building solidarity with the millions of economic refugees living in our midst. It is about the global struggle against imperialism and the capitalist greed-driven destruction of our rivers, our forests, our oceans, the pollution of the places where we live and where we work, and of the air that we breathe.

This Congress also addresses itself to elected political representatives and the senior management cadre in all spheres of the state. We know that many are constantly torn between the values of public service, of building a developmental state, of participatory democracy, on the one hand – and the temptations of power and capitalist incitement to greed and corruption, on the other.

This Congress addresses itself to the black majority of our country. It was the Communist Party in SA in 1929 that first pioneered the call for a collective struggle for black empowerment as the core democratic task in our society. Together, led by the ANC and its broad movement, let us ensure that the noble task of black emancipation is not captured by a faction of parasites who use and abuse their political connections for their own private accumulation. Let us defeat javelin-throwers and ‘tenderpreneurs’. Let us defeat fronters, go-betweens, compradors who parade their blackness only in order to advance their own private interests by doing the bidding of their masters – well-entrenched monopoly capital.

This Congress addresses itself to the women of our country, who constitutes

the majority of the South African population. To you as South African women we say, organise and defeat sexism and patriarchy. To working class women in particular we say organise to defeat your subjection to the most exploitative of jobs. But this is also a call to men, to say that sexism, patriarchy and subjection of women to violence cannot be defeated unless you all join in this struggle. Let working class women and men be at the forefront of all the struggles for women's emancipation!

This Congress addresses itself to all South Africans, black and white. The SACP is proud to have been the pioneer of non-racialism in our country, not just in theory, but in the actual trenches of struggle. The SACP proudly upholds the values of internationalism. A people that oppresses another can never itself be free. Together, let us defeat all forms of racism, narrow tribalism, and ethnic chauvinism – whether white or black.

This Congress even addresses itself, yes, to those in business. We know that many of you realize the trajectory on which our world and our country are currently embarked is simply unsustainable. We know that, many of you, deep down in your hearts, realize that the pace of climate change poses a grave danger for the whole of humanity, regardless of class. We know that at least some of you appreciate that the persisting levels of poverty, racialised inequality, and crisis-levels of unemployment in our society cannot be sustained forever. They cry out for radical solutions. Together, let us discuss what these solutions might be.

But above all, this Congress addresses itself to the workers and poor of our country. You are the key motive force for change. It is you who must be the principal agents of transformation.

Together, let us organise and mobilise around your aspirations, your frustrations, your collective strength. Together, let us build working class hegemony in all sites of power! As workers and poor of our country, properly organised, you have what it takes to tackle any task in front of you, as you did in your class leadership in your heroic struggle to defeat the apartheid regime!

Socialism has to be the future...or there will be no future. Together, let us begin to build capacity for and momentum towards a society increasingly based on meeting social needs, not private profits. Let us build the beginnings of socialism, right now!

2. The three major tasks of our Special Congress

This Special Congress has three major tasks:

- 1.1 We need to develop an understanding of the current global capitalist economic crisis. It is a crisis that is very far from being over. Playing our vanguard role, collectively, we need to help our movement, our government and the people of South Africa understand the underlying structural features of this worst capitalist crisis since the 1930s. Even in the recent so-called “good times” of capitalist boom, a billion people around the world went to bed hungry, a billion lived in slums. Now, with the crisis, conditions have worsened for workers and the poor. Global capitalism has no solutions to its crisis other than the crisis itself! Various bail-outs and stimulus packages are simply delaying the advent of worse crises, while shifting the burden of indebt-

edness on to future generations. So what are the programmatic responses that we must develop as South Africans? And as humanity? How do we defend the working class and the poor, and how do we go beyond defence? How do we turn a crisis within capitalism, into a crisis OF capitalism? How do we transform the world economy from one dominated by speculative profits for a few, into a world based on meeting the social needs of all? How do we begin to roll back the empire of the capitalist market? Beginning to answer these questions is our first major task at this Congress.

- 1.2 Our second major task is related to the first. We need to help our movement and our country understand a major paradox, a cruel irony. Why, after more than 15 years of democracy, after 15 years of many earnest efforts, after 15 years of some real advances...why do we still live in a society in which the legacy of apartheid appears to be constantly reproduced and even expanded? In 1994 unemployment in SA was at crisis-levels of around 24%. So why, 14 years later towards the middle of last year, after what was heralded as a decade and more of “unprecedented” growth, and BEFORE the current recession began to hit our economy...why had we only managed to bring unemployment finally down to roughly the SAME figure of 24%? In 1994 our RDP document estimated that we had a housing shortage of 3 million. Over the past 15 years the state has built 3.1 million low-cost houses for the poor. So why is the housing shortage STILL almost the same as it was back in

1994? Why do we seem to be going around in a circle? Why is our GINI-coefficient, measuring income inequality, still stubbornly among the very highest recorded in the world? And why does inequality remain so dramatically racialised in our country? This Congress must pose these awkward questions. This Congress must not just analyse these realities – it must come up with concrete programmes of state intervention and popular mobilisation. In particular, as our mid-November Alliance Summit underlined, the challenge is to radically change our current growth path. It is the particular character of SA’s century-long capitalist growth path that continues to reproduce racialised inequality, serious structural unemployment, systemic under-development and our persisting semi-colonial position with the global economy.

- 1.3 Our third challenge is to make sense of the relatively turbulent past two-and-a-half years in the history of our ANC-led movement. And we will not be able to make sense of this turbulence unless we understand the linkages between this turbulence and the global economic crisis, and our local reproduction of racialised under-development and inequality, notwithstanding 15 years of democracy.

The SACP discussion document distributed and debated by our structures ahead of this Congress (“Building Working Class Hegemony on the Terrain of a National Democratic Struggle”) has laid the basis for discussion in our commissions and for Congress resolutions – particularly in regard to the first two major challenges.

In what follows in this CC Political Report to Congress, we will be turning more substantially to the third of our major challenges – how do we analyse our intra-movement challenges? How do we assess progress made by the SACP? What are our tasks going forward on the terrain of our movement?

In addressing these matters, we will need to map a way forward towards our 13th Congress in 2012 and beyond

3. Developments since our 12th Congress

Since our 12th Congress in Port Elizabeth one of the most significant developments has been the dislodging of the 1996 class project in the ANC, and significantly rolling back its influence not only in the ANC, but in the Alliance broadly and in government.

The Polokwane Conference was a watershed not only for the ANC, but for the Alliance as whole, including for our own country. It has ushered in a new era for our alliance. However, one of the key challenges to consolidate advances brought about by Polokwane is to ensure that we use the post-Polokwane defeat of the 1996 class project to reconstitute a new (multi-class) unity that is left-leaning and worker biased. To do the latter will require exposing and marginalising all forms of right-wing opportunism, while winning over the widest range of ANC-alliance forces on the basis of a principled strategic programme as reflected in our CC discussion document and MTV vision. For us as the SACP it is critical that we continuously re-affirm the multi-class character of the ANC, whilst maintaining its bias towards the working class.

It is critical to ensure that the advance is not narrowly appropriated by smaller

groups and factions to serve their own interests. As pointed out in the Special Congress main discussion document, there is a new tendency which opportunistically seeks to appropriate the Polokwane advances to itself. Most impressive about Polokwane was that it brought together a whole range of progressive forces that constitute the core and the backbone of our movement (communists, the workers, youth, women, former MK soldiers, veterans and mass democratic movement activists), to defend and reclaim the ANC as a mass based national liberation movement. But at the same time there was an opportunist element that went with the wave of mass dissatisfaction, not in order to reclaim the ANC as a progressive mass movement, but in order to use it for its narrow, and often elitist interests. Our task is to seek to isolate this tendency, expose it for what it is, in order to cement the unity of all the progressive components of our national liberation movement.

In order to further consolidate the Polokwane advances, it is also essential that we strengthen alliance work, especially at sub-national levels, through sustained implementation of the Alliance programme of action. The SACP needs to prepare itself also to take the initiative, where necessary, to engage our allies at the branch level for the purposes of the implementation of the Alliance programme of action.

The Polokwane advance was accompanied by divergences between, on the one hand, the ANC, the Alliance and, on the other hand, government's orientation which subsequently led to the recall of former President Mbeki from office in September 2008. The SACP supported this recall as it was clear that the Polokwane fall-out had created an untenable

situation in the relations between the ANC and some of its very senior cadres deployed in government. The recall also established a firm principle of recall in our movement, something that needs to be used where conditions require, also in order to deal with the many challenges relating to some of the deployments.

The recall of President Mbeki was used by those who lost democratically in Polokwane to form a break-away organisation, Cope. As the SACP we had been aware that the recall of Mbeki was merely used as an excuse, as plans to break away from the ANC had already been hatched immediately after the Polokwane conference.

In Umsebenzi Online we correctly characterised this breakaway faction as a “spoilt coalition of class elites who benefitted immensely through the leadership positions they held in the ANC, and in the case of some, in the SACP and Cosatu as well”. In addition:

“The core of these was part of the 1996 class project that became dominant in both our movement and the state. They forged a different and new tripartite alliance between themselves occupying key government positions, sections of the domestic and global capitalist classes, and sections of the emergent black capitalist class.

“Many in this grouping effectively used their positions in the ANC and the state to accumulate wealth, dispense patronage and created a hierarchy of ‘personalised followings’ at various levels and components of our movement

“For the dissidents, the loss of leadership positions, especially in the ANC NEC, and some in the SACP and Cosatu structures, means loss of access to the state institutions thus depriving them of the major means of private accumula-

tion and capacity to dispense patronage

“This grouping had also actively sought to demobilise the ANC, turn it into a narrow electoralist political party, and mobilise our people only as ‘voters’ during election periods, so that they as ‘leaders’, continue to access state power and amass economic resources”.

We also understood this grouping for what it was, joining a long list of anti-communist and anti-working class crusaders both inside and outside our movement; a matter we shall return to below. It is for these reasons that these dissidents have now found common cause with the Democratic Alliance in its attempts to undermine our revolution and stage a political comeback.

However Cope is now falling apart under the weight of the very problems they had caused inside the ANC, factionalism, a dog eats dog mentality, the fight for positions and resources and an inability to effectively relate to and mobilise the mass of the people on the ground. For too long they have been comfortable crown princes and princesses in the palace of the 1996 class project, and had long forgotten how to relate to the workers and the poor of our country.

Because of its class agenda, the 1996 class project had sought to marginalise the ANC allies, and at some stage even attempted to provoke a walkout by the SACP and Cosatu from the alliance.

There are a number of lessons we need to learn from the Cope experience, including the following:

- The failure of this grouping to marginalise and defeat the SACP and Cosatu whilst at the helm of the ANC and government was due to our ability to steadfastly defend our independence, run SACP campaigns (many of which have resonance with the broader

membership of the ANC itself), and do consistent grassroots work including forging a closer relationship with the organised working class

- That whilst defending the multi-class character of the ANC, the post-1994 democratic breakthrough, with ascendancy to power and new opportunities for accumulation by the previously oppressed, poses a new challenge for our revolution, thus necessitating strong working class organisation and mobilisation
- The need to consistently assert and defend the core principles of our national democratic revolution, especially the leading role of the working class, and giving priority to the interests of the workers and the poor of our country.

Perhaps the second most important development after Polokwane has been the ANC's overwhelming electoral victory in the April 2009 election. We do indeed want to use this occasion to thank all our cadres for running a successful SACP election campaign in support of the ANC, as well as our participation in the election campaign structures of the ANC to ensure this victory.

Particularly significant about this victory was the extent to which we participated in the development of the ANC Election Manifesto, and the fact that we have emerged with a consensus on five priority areas for our movement and government over the current term of this government. We discuss later in this report challenges for our Party towards the most thorough implementation of these manifesto commitments.

4. Anti-communism in its historical context and contemporary manifestations

We are seeking to advance and deep-

en a radical national democratic revolution in a period in which we are, among other things, witnessing a resurgence of anti-communism and anti-SACP postures (accompanied by a virulent Africanist tendency), interestingly not so much from our class enemies, but within the ranks of our own national liberation movement. It is therefore important for Congress to properly analyse the reasons for the re-emergence of this tendency, not in order for us to lock ourselves in a defensive mode, but as part of understanding the terrain upon which we seek to build working class hegemony in key sites of power and struggle. This is informed by the fact that it is the working class that is most capable of leading and advancing a thorough transformation of South African society towards a society of solidarity, substantive equality and eradication of poverty.

Throughout the history of the SACP, we have been faced with a variety of anti-communist tendencies that have sought to destroy the existence of communists in our country, in defence of the greed and exploitative practices of capitalism. It is therefore important that at this particular juncture we understand the distinctions as well as the common thread that runs through these anti-communist tendencies. In some instances, it is a broadly anti-communist tendency, but in other instances it presents itself not so much as anti-communist and rather more specifically as an anti-SACP tendency

The (white) capitalist class – this class has been consistently opposed to the SACP throughout the 88 years of our existence. This opposition has taken various forms, depending on the balance of forces between the ruling class as a whole and the working class. Depending

on the balance of forces it would use either naked violence or repression against communists or through an increased ideological offensive or naked appeal to narrow and sectarian (often Africanist and petty bourgeois) views especially found within elites both inside and outside the national liberation movement. During the earlier period of colonialism of a special type (1910-1950), anti-communism from this class ranged from naked repression (especially during the 1922 white mineworkers strike, through to a combination of repressive, ideological offensives and co-optive measures towards the white working class (1924-1950). During the war years, there was a temporary toleration of communist activism during the years of the Smuts regime, as there was a temporary coincidence of interests in fighting against the war declared by the fascist regimes of Germany, Italy colluding with the imperialist Japanese interests in Asia during the 1940-1945 period.

With the ascendancy of the apartheid regime in 1948 in our country, political power shifted from a conservative (neo-colonial/liberal)/capitalist alliance into a neo-fascist/ capitalist alliance. This alliance sought to roll back whatever minor liberal measures had been implemented by the prior regime, entrenching the racial division of labour and intensifying the intensified exploitation of the black working class through openly racist and sexist measures. This was partly necessitated by the need to exploit opportunities brought by the post-war reconstruction in Europe (and South Africa and South Africa's economic strength as a relatively developed, but mineral rich, semi-peripheral centre) the consequent demand for South Africa's mineral exports and the opportunities in the man-

ufacturing sector during this period. In the mid-to-late 1980s working class and black resistance against apartheid also progressively sought to overthrow not only the apartheid regime, but its capitalist system as well. The uncertainty brought about by this forced the capitalist classes to begin to earnestly explore a negotiated settlement with the national liberation movement led by the ANC.

The one consistent strategy, and ability, of the capitalist class throughout the period of colonialism of a special type (1910-1994) was its ability to strike deals and political arrangements with the various ruling political elites – from the British/Afrikaner political (and economic) alliance through to the apartheid regime – with mutual benefit to all sides. It was this experience and skill that the capitalist ruling class managed to use, given the particular balance of forces in the early 1990s, to strike a relationship with the 1996 class project through narrow BEE post-1994 till the present.

Despite all the advances and achievements by the ANC government over the last 15 years, these class deals have had the effect of marginalising the workers and poor of our country, and in many respects (objectively) reducing our government into a welfarist, rather than transformational, mode of operation. It is this colonial type trajectory that the Alliance and government have to disrupt and transform in order to finally defeat both the legacy and continued reproduction of colonialism of a special type. It is not narrow BEE and the new capitalist sectors it has spawned that have the capacity to do this, but a well-organised and progressively hegemonic working class, at the head of what continues to be our (necessary) multi-class alliance of progressive forces.

The other variant of anti-communism has come from within the ranks of the national liberation movement itself. Its antecedents were those from the early years of the existence of the ANC/SACP (and the broader liberation movement (the expulsion of communists from the ICU in the late 1920s, through to the Pixley Seme power axis in the ANC against Josiah Gumede in the early 1930s, and the early years of the existence of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in mid-to-late 1940s).

This was followed by another wave of anti-communism through the 1950s breakaway of the PAC followed by the 1970s Gang of Eight. In the post 1994 period, this 'internal' anti-communism was fuelled by the IFP, followed by the UDM established by Holomisa, through to the (more sophisticated) 1996 class project, the breakaway of Cope and now the new tendency within the ANC that is trying to forcefully assert itself, especially after the April 2009 elections.

The 1996 class project perhaps expressed the most sophisticated variant of anti-communism within our own ranks. This was largely because it was led by a faction that had grown within the ranks of the SACP in the 1970s to the early 1990s. A faction that was able to use Marxist-Leninist rhetoric to try and demobilise and liquidate the South African Communist Party, also greatly assisted by its ascendancy to state power in 1994, and by forging an alliance with established domestic and (sections of) international capital. Among other things the 1996 class project sought to provoke (if not dare) the SACP and the progressive organised working class into launching a full frontal attack on the ANC led government and walk

out of the Alliance or abandon socialism and liquidate itself. Ideologically it challenged the existence and sought to put the SACP into a corner by arguing that socialism cannot be built from the womb of a capitalist society.

It is however important to bear in mind that it is not the ANC that is anti-communist but it has been different groupings and factions at different times both inside and outside the ANC that have sought to steer, with spectacular failures, the ANC towards an anti-communist stance

Another anti-communist (perhaps more specifically anti CPSA/SACP) trend has been that from what we have called an ultra-left tendency. From the 1940s especially this has been a mixed bag of Trotskyite, workerist and anti-SACP formations existing largely, but not exclusively outside of the ANC and the SACP. Its early and more prominent formations were the Non-European Unity Movement, the small Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC, through to ultra-leftist, small 'social movements', and of late entryist elements which found their way into the party after opening up the SACP in the early 1990s.

While the former two tendencies were largely informed by a (narrow and nationalistic) petty bourgeois tendency within our movement, post-1994 this anti-communism/anti-SACP tendency has been informed and influenced by ascendancy to state power and prospects of being part of (albeit a compradorial) emergent black sections of the capitalist class. In other words, whilst the anti-communism of the pre 1990 era was informed by a petty bourgeois ideological reaction to communism, the post-1994 anti-communism has been informed by the new emergent class interests accom-

panied by very real prospects of using state power or accumulated dependent BEE capital to capture our movement. After the political dislocation of the 1996 class project, the new tendency has become more desperate, more brazenly Africanist, but without a coherent ideological outlook. Instead the new tendency is opportunistically using the historical documents and positions of our movement to try and assert its new positions (eg an opportunistic use of the clauses of nationalisation in the Freedom Charter and the vulgarisation of the characterisation of our revolution as that seeking to liberate blacks in general and Africans in particular).

Interestingly the seeming desperation of the new tendency is also influenced by the desperate conditions of BEE capital in the light of the current global capitalist crisis and its impact on South Africa. What in fact appears as an articulation of the progressive clauses of the Freedom Charter is immediately betrayed by the naked class interests of trying to use the state to bail out dependent BEE capital. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the bail out for black capital simultaneously becomes the bail out and strengthening of white domestic capital upon which the former is entirely dependent.

This new tendency has its roots in what we might call “Kebble-ism” – in which some of the more roguish elements of capital, lumpen-white capitalists, handed out largesse and favours and generally sought to corrupt elements within our movement in order to secure their own personal accumulation agendas. Some of this largesse helped elements within our movement to emerge as capitalists in their own right. They, in turn, imitated the behaviour of their patrons, using largesse and favours to

build up a network of cheer-leaders and political supporters to safe-guard their positions within the movement (sometimes defensively at a time when they were also being marginalised by the Mbeki inner-circle).

In particular, these elements of BEE capital have been exploring a class axis between themselves and the great mass of marginalised, alienated, often unemployed black youth. The material glue of this axis is the politics of patronage, of messiahs, and its tentative ideological form is a demagogic African chauvinism. Because of its rhetorical militancy the media often portrays it as “radical” and “left-wing” – but it is fundamentally right-wing, even proto-fascist. While it is easy to dismiss the buffoonery of some of the leading lieutenants, we should not underestimate the resources made available to them, and the huge challenge we all have when it comes to millions of increasingly alienated, often unemployed youth who are potentially available for all kinds of demagogic mobilisation.

We do not use the term proto-fascist lightly, nor for the moment should we exaggerate it. However, there are worrying tell-tale characteristics that need to be nipped in the bud. They include the demagogic appeal to ordinary people’s baser instincts (male chauvinism, paramilitary solutions to social problems, and racialised identity politics). They also include the turning of politics into “spectacle” (the German Marxist Walter Benjamin once said that socialists politicise theatre, fascists do the reverse – turning politics into “theatre” – usually of a melodramatic kind). This, in turn, reinforces the nature of the relationship between “leaders” and their popular base – the latter become “spectators”, who clap and cheer in admiration at

their patrons, and boo and jeer at rivals. The mass base is mobilised on the basis of being perpetual “spectator-victims” – not protagonists, not collective self-emancipators. Above all, however, it is the nature of the still rudimentary class axis, at play here that should send out early danger signals. None of this means that we should simply abandon those involved in this tentative class-axis – the buffoonery is a source of increasing embarrassment to their current or erstwhile patrons and we should work to win over those BEE elements who have been tempted to explore this dangerous and ultimately self-defeating project. Likewise, the great majority of young militants who have flirted with this style of long nights of long knives in bottom-baring conferences, with symbolic coffins for rivals, are not beyond constructive engagement. However, it is only a principled and broad-based worker-hegemony that can reconfigure these forces into a progressive project.

The overwhelming majority of BEE elements have NOT gone off in this direction. Some, feeling threatened by both the left AND this chauvinistic right-wing – and of course ideologically constructing both the left and right-wing as the “same” thing – have made their way into Cope, and are exploring (or reconstituting) the 1996 class project’s privileged axis between established (white) capital and themselves. Increasingly this reconstituted 1996 class project is assuming an open political form (whereas previously it was a covert political arrangement, while an overt economic programme) – with growing cooperation between the DA and Cope on an oppositionist liberal platform of “defending the constitution”.

But the majority of the black BEE up-

per and middle strata remain within the ANC – partly out of loyalty and genuine commitment, and partly because the ANC remains the ruling party.

The task of the SACP in this conjuncture is to help to rally the maximum number of basically democratic and patriotic forces around a principled programme of transformation focused on the five major priorities of our electoral programme. This means, in the first instance, consolidating the unity of the working class with the great mass of marginalised urban and rural poor. To achieve this, we need to guard against the dangers of a narrow workerism, in which the legitimate aspirations of the formal working class and particularly of the formal public sector working class, dominate and marginalise the issues and aspirations of the informalised poor. We need to advance programmes and slogans that unite these two core popular constituencies (and they include crime, education, health, rural development and decent jobs and sustainable livelihoods).

But we also need to win over the middle and upper strata among the black majority – this means exposing and defeating attempts at consolidating anti-left axes between them and other strata – whether with established capital (eg. on a liberal watch-dog platform, ie Cope), or with a demagogically mobilised popular base. It means, also, that in advancing our strategic transformational agenda (as outlined, for instance, in our CC discussion document) we need to rally the black middle and capitalist strata and all other democratic and patriotic forces. Given the ideological and material crises of global (and South African) capital – including the environmental crisis – there is both the

possibility and necessity of developing a left-leaning patriotic alliance. A core potential element of such a multi-class patriotic and democratic alliance is a programme to transform our present growth path that locks us into a subordinate, semi-colonial status within the global capitalist system.

Like the 1996 class the new tendency does not equal the entirety of the ANC and the broader liberation movement, but represents an emergent class interest that seeks to capture our movement for narrow capitalist interests. This new tendency is deliberately seeking to isolate communists in particular and the organised working class in general by resuscitating an old and tired debate of 'two hats'. Dual membership (especially since the 1930s) and sometimes multiple membership (especially since the 1950s) has been one of the hallmarks and strengths of the ANC. Precisely because it is a broad movement it should seek to draw its membership from broader society, including progressives who may belong to a variety of other civic, trade union, and (in the case of the SACP) political organisations. The claim that communists want to take over the ANC is merely a rooi gevaar tactic, deliberately being played in order to try and consolidate the ANC as an organisation for elites and capitalists. We are quite convinced that ordinary ANC members shall not be fooled, just as the 1996 class project failed to hoodwink them!

It is for all the above reasons that this Special Congress must also deeply reflect on the past and contemporary challenges facing the SACP going forward. Our posture going forward must never be a defensive one, as if we were under siege. Instead it becomes even more important to strengthen our alliance, as well as

deepen our activism as ANC members and cadres in our own right.

5. 'Socialism is the future, build it now': The changing character and tasks of the SACP post-1994

In order to map out the challenges facing the SACP, the working class, our entire liberation movement and society, it is also important to reflect on the role of the SACP over the past 15 years since our 1994 democratic breakthrough.

In the wake of the unbanning of the SACP in 1990, a necessary debate ensued within the SACP about its character and tasks in the wake of the new global and domestic realities in the early 1990s. The SACP was unbanned during a thoroughly contradictory period for socialist and other progressive forces in the global and domestic arenas. On the global arena, we were unbanned in a period where the eastern bloc socialist countries were collapsing, significantly marked by the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union.

On the domestic front there were huge advances with the apartheid regime on the back-foot and the public emergence of the national liberation movement as the foremost voice of the oppressed and exploited masses of the people of our country.

This necessitated a debate about the type of SACP we need to build after 1990. At the first Central Committee in Lusaka immediately after our unbanning there was a debate between those who felt that the SACP needed to remain a very small and largely symbolic entity (with some even arguing for its dissolution) while cadres focused on rebuilding the ANC as the single political centre to lead the last mile towards dislodging the apartheid regime, and those who felt

that it was precisely at such periods that we needed an even stronger SACP. The latter view prevailed thus setting the stage for new debates inside a now legal SACP at our 8th Congress held at Nasrec in 1991, mainly revolving around the character and new tasks for the SACP.

The one side of the debate was for maintaining the party as a small, vanguardist (as distinct from vanguard) Party organised along the lines of a Leninist Party in the conditions of underground. The opposing argument (under the banner of 'democratic socialism') argued for the rebuilding of the SACP as a mass party, given the new conditions of legality. What emerged out of that Congress was essentially a compromise position, that later came to be characterised as that of building a 'vanguard party with a mass character'. That is, we had to openly recruit and accept new members rather than reproducing the tight probationary process used in the underground period. At the same time it was agreed that we needed to build quality Party cadres. Achieving an effective balance between size and quality of membership remains a challenge.

Alongside this debate was another parallel debate on whether the SACP needed to embark on mass activism or seek to ideologically influence and steer the ANC towards mass activism whilst remaining an 'intellectual and ideological centre' of our movement. The latter debate was largely resolved at the 10th Congress, which adopted a programme for the SACP to embark on mass mobilisation in its own right, principally through the annual Red October Campaign launched in 1999.

Building a vanguard party with a mass character and deciding to embark on SACP-led mass campaigns led to the

significant growth of the Party that we have experienced over the last decade, but at the same time it has attracted into the party tendencies that had not been drawn into the Party since the 1940s. On the positive side, we drew a lot of members broadly from the workers and the poor of our country through mass campaigns that had an impact on the daily lives of the workers and the poor of our country. Through these campaigns, we cemented, in concrete struggles, our relationship with Cosatu as the largest organiser of the working class on the shop-floor. In the process we also re-launched the YCL, which has added youth mass activism into the Party, thus enlarging the pool from which the SACP can recruit. The prestige of the SACP grew in leaps and bounds with the organised working class, communist youth and the rural poor joining our ranks, thus placing us in a position we had never been in since the decade of SACP mass activism of the 1940s.

But through the mass opening of the SACP we also drew into our ranks an entryist ultra-left, (but often collaborating with the right) tendency into the SACP. This entryist tendency is often drawn from an anti-Congress tradition that is thoroughly opposed to our own Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. It has sought to hijack, if not derail, the SACP from its Congress traditions and allies. This tendency has sought to exploit the SACP's own insistence on its independence towards anti-Alliance and anti-ANC positions. It has also sought to use our principled debate on the SACP's electoral options as a platform to sever our relations with our principled allies, specifically the ANC.

Of late, elements of this tendency are now in the process of forming a new

political formation outside of, and in opposition to the SACP, but using such opposition to the SACP as its platform for breaking away. In many ways this tendency is operating in the same way as Cope, forming a breakaway, but simultaneously leaving some of its own co-conspirators and associates within our organisation. Even more disturbing is that some within our own ranks treat this tendency as if it is part of a healthy and democratic debate within the SACP, thus unwittingly strengthening its destructive behaviour inside the SACP. Building the unity of the SACP does not mean toleration of entryists, but instead requires that we isolate and defeat this anti-SACP tendency! The isolation and destruction of this tendency is the precondition for building a more unified, but democratic SACP! Democracy and freedom of debate inside our party must not be reduced to or equated to ill-discipline or chaos.

The usual offensive of this tendency is to try and discredit the SACP in the run up to and during major events of the SACP, as is the case now in the run up to our Special Congress.

The principal anchor around which the SACP has been able to play an important role in our post-1994 political conjuncture was our historic 9th Congress Manifesto which anchored us around the appropriate strategic and programmatic perspective of 'Socialism is the future, build it now'. This perspective sought to link the national democratic revolution and the struggle for socialism as two distinct but yet inseparable struggles. It also sought to capture the reality that much as there is no prospect for an immediate advance towards a full-blooded socialist system in our country, the struggle for rolling back the capitalist market and

constructing elements of socialism are possible and necessary in the here and now, and are also essential elements of consolidating a thorough-going national democratic revolution.

'Socialism is the future, build it now' also captured the twin realities of the necessity of both an independent SACP and an SACP that was also part of a broader mass based alliance led by the African National Congress. It also captured the fact that much as the 1994 democratic breakthrough was a major advance in our revolution, yet it was 'aluta continua', as the key strategic objectives of the national democratic had not yet been met. In order to realize these strategic objectives there was a necessity for both an independent political party of the working class, working in alliance with the ANC and a progressive trade union movement, in this instance Cosatu.

However, much as this strategic and programmatic perspective helped to ground us in the realities of the post-1994 period, it was limited by the fact that we did not have a concrete programme and set of activities of our own that were both independent and contributing to mass activism of the workers and the poor of our country. In fact between 1993 and 1998 there was a significant organisational decline of our party, with very weak structures on the ground and with no visible programme of its own.

It was with the adoption of a concrete programme at our 10th Congress, immediately followed by the launch of our Red October Campaign in 1999 that gave concrete expression to mass, communist-led activism that laid the basis for the visibility of the SACP as a force in the post-1994 period. This programme, and our Red October Campaign, also

deepened the presence and influence of the SACP among organised workers, and helped to defend the SACP and the working class from one of the most serious offensives by the 1996 class project against our party and the working class as a whole.

It was this programme-driven activism that also defeated attempts by the 1996 class project to liquidate the Party, through among others a privatisation offensive, the downsizing of the state, and the notorious 'briefing notes' of the ANC that aimed to isolate the SACP (and Cosatu) from the mass of the workers and the poor of our country, but especially from the mass base of the ANC.

It was also this programmatic activism, strengthened through our 2002 11th Congress programme, and adoption of our medium term vision, that laid the basis for the subsequent crisis of the 1996 class project. The 2005 ANC NGC marked the peak of the monumental failure of the 1996 class project, and the capitalist class that backed it, to transform our national liberation movement into a narrow, electoralist party that used our people as voting fodder to bolster an elitist project, whose only generosity to the mass of our people was a welfarist project of social grants and pathetic housing settlements located kilometres away from centres of work and other economic opportunities.

It is by learning from all the above experiences that we can be able to properly understand the challenges of the conjuncture and map a way forward for the SACP and our revolution as a whole, guided by our overall strategic and programmatic slogan, 'Socialism is the Future, Build it Now'.

6. Progress towards the realization of

the key objectives of our Medium Term Vision

It is important that we use this Special Congress to honestly assess progress towards the realization of our MTV, as contained and updated in our programme, 'The South African Road to Socialism'. This assessment must also include new issues and challenges that have arisen, especially since Polokwane and in the wake of the 2009 April electoral victory.

6.1 Building working class hegemony in the state

Guided by our 12th Congress programme, as elaborated in our 2008 policy conference resolutions, the SACP has sought to, among others, contest elections as part of the ANC-led alliance, under the banner of the ANC election manifesto. In the wake of this approach, there are a number of new issues and challenges that have arisen that this Special Congress must discuss.

The first, and most critical, one is that in the wake of the Polokwane advance, which has opened a number of doors, the SACP decided to forward its most leading cadre into specifically the government, and broadly the state. This decision was informed by, among other things, the necessity for the SACP to participate in state structures in a new way that has the possibility of advancing the objectives of the ANC as captured in the Election Manifesto, incorporating some of the perspectives of the SACP regarding the challenges of the NDR in the current period.

Our new mode of participation in government was also informed by the fact that this time around we were effectively consulted by the ANC on all the major aspects of governance, thus paving the way for deepening common alli-

ance perspectives on the transformation of South African society. These common perspectives were consolidated through the May 2008 Alliance Summit and the subsequent Alliance economic summit later that year, our participation in the ANC NEC January 2009 lekgotla, as well as in our mid-November 2009 Alliance summit.

The key challenge for the SACP in this new period of a reconfiguring alliance is that of simultaneously maintaining the independence of each alliance partner while together working towards an inclusive transformative project whose primary objective is to address the needs of the majority of the people of our country, the workers and the poor.

The advances made in Polokwane mark an important victory for the SACP and the working class in their struggle to rescue the ANC from the clutches of a neo-liberal, capitalist backed, 1996 class project. It is a significant rolling back of the agenda to marginalise the SACP and Cosatu from the ANC and governance. This opens up huge spaces for the SACP to consolidate the impact of the working class over the character and direction of the democratic state.

It is however important for the SACP not to be submerged by the new realities while at the same time not walking away from the opportunity to participate in governance in a manner that does not contradict our strategic objective of addressing the needs of the workers and the poor of our country.

Our participation in governance is also informed by the fact that the Polokwane resolutions mark a significant departure from the agenda pursued prior to that conference, including resolutions that commit to a developmental state in favour of the workers and the poor,

the development of an industrial strategy aimed at transforming the current colonial-type growth path, and a government committed to listening to the overwhelming majority of our people.

However, there are also new challenges that the SACP has to confront and raise forthrightly within this new political environment. The fundamental challenge is that of further elaborating on a developmental state, not in an oppositionist manner, but as part of the overall thrust of the goals of the ANC-led alliance. Part of building a developmental state is already contained in our main Special Congress discussion document, that of addressing the fragmented nature of the state and lack of a co-ordinated planning capacity.

The SACP welcomes the establishment of a National Planning Commission, whose primary objective is to overcome the fragmented nature of the state and to have co-ordination across all the spheres of government. This Congress will, however, have to further elaborate on how we believe such a planning commission should function.

As highlighted in our discussion document, we need to mobilise against all attempts to subject the developmental state to the logic of the free market, in a manner that privileges the interests of the capitalist class and its compradorial BEE type networks over the interests of the workers and the poor of our country.

A new area that the SACP will have to focus upon is how the defeated agenda of privatisation of the late 1990s continues to seek to resurrect itself through new ways of subjecting the state to the interests of an unfettered free market and its narrow BEE tentacles. One such form is that of the increasing use of Public Pri-

ivate Partnerships to imprison the state within the logic of private capital. It may as well be that in a period of a mixed economy, PPPs may be unavoidable (eg. independent power producers particularly in the renewables sector, BRTs, and transforming the anarchic minibus sector), but in such instances we need to make sure that such PPPs are subjected to the discipline of our developmental agenda, rather than subjecting the state to the logic of the capitalist market.

For instance, private interests in the health sector are seriously exploring ways and means of capturing the proposed National Health Insurance Scheme through PPPs, by seeking to entice government's planned investment into the public health system through the rebuilding of hospitals and clinics via such private arrangements. These PPPs are usually arrangements where public hospitals and clinics are built through private sector money, where the state is locked into being a tenant for decades, paying for the use of such buildings run by the private sector. These PPPs can also easily be extended to the private supply of drugs, provision of private health personnel as well as many other services under the guise of private sector support to the NHI and public health facilities. In this way the whole planned NHI can be captured by private capitalist interests in a manner that would undermine the very logic of a public sector led NHI. It is going to be important for the SACP to be vigilant against such arrangements, as these are likely to undermine the NHI.

Instead the SACP must campaign for investment of public moneys into the transformation of the public health sector, and ensure that the capitalist market is rolled back from the provision of

health care facilities and services. This must form an important component of our campaign for an affordable and equitable health care system, and defeat all attempts of the corporate capture of our health system by the capitalist system in the name of supporting an NHI. This is going to be a crucial struggle for the building of a developmental state and a progressive health care system. Elements of the capitalist class, which have grudgingly accepted the introduction of an NHI are already positioning themselves through planned PPPs to try and capture the resources to be poured by the state into an NHI.

The above struggle must also be buttressed by an intensified campaign against outsourcing of important public sector services (cleaning, the building of public hospitals and clinics, as well as provision of food and other services). This constitutes a new front of struggle in building working class hegemony in the state.

It is indeed possible that elements of the capitalist class are also considering similar arrangements in the building of schools, rural development infrastructure, and other planned government investment into infrastructure. It is for instance of no surprise that the DA has reacted negatively against the withdrawal of labour broking by the ministry of police, as labour broking in itself constitutes an important method of holding the state hostage in its transformation agenda.

6.2 Building working class hegemony in the economy

The single biggest obstacle in building working class hegemony in the economy is the current recession underway globally and in our country. It is therefore

important that we mobilise not only for defensive measures against the current global capitalist crisis, but we also embark on offensive measures to transform the current growth path in our country.

As the SACP we welcome the recent Alliance Summit commitments to thoroughly review macro-economic policy, including a review of the mandate of the Reserve Bank, and seek to align macro-economic policy to overarching micro-economic and industrial policy objectives. This marks a significant and positive departure from the neo-liberal economic perspectives that had dominated our economic policy since 1996.

The ANC election manifesto commitment to the creation of decent work, the commitment to strengthening the public sector, including the creation of more jobs, as well as government's commitment to very extensive investment into infrastructure, is indeed a far cry from the 1996 agenda of downsizing the state and the arrogant claim that government cannot create jobs.

A key challenge for this Congress to discuss is that of ensuring that the increasing dependence of private capital on state infrastructure investment and procurement is effectively used to transform the current growth path. If and as when an economic recovery happens we need to ensure that a new growth path emerges as we cannot simply return to what the economic situation and growth path were some two years ago. In other words what concrete offensive measures should we be campaigning for in order to radically transform the colonial type economic trajectory in our country? Or put differently, what opportunities does the current capitalist crisis present for us to embark on a major offensive against the capitalist system itself? And how do

we use this crisis to take working class organisation in the economy to higher levels?

To answer these questions we will have to elaborate on the resolutions taken at the Alliance Summit on economic transformation.

But one certain task is for the SACP to unapologetically and lead a struggle for an offensive against capitalism and its decadent ideas, through a consistent critique of the capitalist system, both as a global system and our own domestic reality. The critique of capitalism must consistently be accompanied by our advancement of socialist alternatives and concrete struggles to roll back capitalism and its market.

The immediate terrain against which to fight for the above must be an advancement of concrete policies to transform the semi-colonial character of our growth path, while simultaneously exposing the compradorial relationship that monopoly capital seeks to forge with the emerging black sections of the capitalist class.

6.3 Building working class hegemony in the workplace

This Congress will have to seriously reflect on how the capitalist class has sought to roll back the gains made by the working since the adoption of the 1996 Constitution, guaranteeing the right to strike, and the passage of the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in the mid 1990s. The adoption of our new constitution and the progressive transformation of labour market legislation have been important victories for the working class. But these have tended in practice to only protect 'permanent' workers in the formal and urban workplace employment. Other

sections of the working class have been marginalised through increasing casualisation, outsourcing and the ejection and intense exploitation of the rural working class.

In the urban working places the capitalist class has sought to roll back increased worker rights through a combination of intensified outsourcing, casualisation, labour brokerage and an increase in the employment of more vulnerable labour from SADC countries.

In the 'white' countryside there has been an increase in the expulsion and displacement of black farm-workers through increased mechanisation and periodic evictions, as well as intensified exploitation of the black working class in the countryside through brazen flouting of labour laws and removal of farm-workers and farm-dwellers from housing and schooling in white owned farms.

Since the passage of progressive legislation there has also been a phenomenal increase of labour brokers. The increase in labour brokerage has further fragmented South Africa's workplace and diluted trade union organisation.

It is therefore absolutely important for the SACP to throw its full weight against labour broking as part of an important struggle to transform the workplace in favour of the black working class.

One of South Africa's biggest weaknesses has been the lack of skills development, both in the formal education system as well as in the workplace, thus turning what would otherwise be abundant skills (artisans, etc) into scarce skills. Scarce skills are essentially a reflection of the reproduction of the racial division of labour, continuing to privilege the shrinking white, and other non-African, working classes in South Africa's workplace.

Much as government over the last 15 years has placed a lot of emphasis on employment equity, this has tended to focus more on middle class professions (important as this may be), with little emphasis on the skilling of the black working class as a whole. This has been reflected in the growth of the black middle classes, particularly in the state, but with worsening skills shortages among the black working class.

Therefore a major struggle for the transformation of South Africa's workplace is that of intensifying the struggle for a skills revolution, buttressed by mainstreaming intensified ideological training of the working class to be more than just human robots, but to also be combatants for a developmental state. This means a radical transformation of our education and training landscape to produce a highly skilled but socially and politically conscious working class.

But in the short-to-medium term it would be unrealistic to hope for drastically increased employment opportunities and high skills for the majority of the South African people. It is therefore important for the SACP to continue to struggle for the creation of other forms of sustainable livelihoods for the poor of our country. It is for this reason that the building and capacitation of co-operatives and other forms of SMEs must remain a priority struggle for the SACP. While we should support the skilling of the majority of South Africa's working class, we must at the same time avoid a workerist tendency that tends to reduce sustainable livelihoods only to formal employment. It is for this reason that the SACP must promote an all-round struggle for building sustainable livelihoods for the majority of our people, especially those in the urban informal settlements

and rural areas.

All of the above pose the challenge of deepening organisation of the peripheralised working class and promoting other forms of sustainable livelihoods, like building a strong co-operative movement. While there has been sustained organisation and mobilisation of the working class in the workplace, there has simultaneously been very weak organisation of the casualised, peripheralised and rural working class in South Africa. In addition, the colonial-type economic trajectory has placed the organised working class in a state of defensive, instead of offensive, forms of struggle and organisation (defending jobs, fighting against retrenchments, and weak focus on the skilling and re-skilling of the working class). If we are to move out of purely defensive measures for the working class, this means that the workplace needs to be transformed into an active site for offensive struggles to roll back the unilateral restructuring of the workplace by the capitalist class.

Capitalist methods of resisting the implementation of progressive labour legislation have led to a serious fragmentation of the working class. The SACP is well placed to wage a struggle for a united working class located in different sites of exploitation as part of transforming South Africa's workplace and the current colonial-type trajectory of our economy.

6.4 Building working class hegemony in communities

Since 1994 there has been a gradual decline in progressive organisation of communities, especially black working class and poor communities located in the townships, informal settlements and the former Bantustans. The extent

of this paucity of organisation has been reflected in the very deep crisis (albeit with some improvements of late) of our ally, SANCO.

The semi-anarchic protests that have rocked our country over the last few years are an expression of both the deteriorating conditions in which our communities find themselves and a lack of credible, sustained organisation in many communities. This is also a reflection of our weakness in building and sustaining mass campaigns outside of the election campaigns. The void created in this regard allows for all forms of protests and negative campaigning that has also led to xenophobic and other forms organisation.

We have not managed to build upon the positive mood and hope often generated by our election campaigns into sustained positive community mobilisation and participation in local government, among other things.

The systemic features of our largely untransformed, semi-colonial capitalist growth path, the failure to carry forward rural development, and the related active reproduction of apartheid spatial patterns despite 15 years of non-racial democracy, have turned many of our urban, peri-urban and rural townships into pressure-cookers of seething malcontent and marginalisation. With our Red October campaigns, the SACP has succeeded in touching upon and highlighting critical issues of concern to working class and poor communities. However, we have not always succeeded in sustaining our campaigns, or rather, in anchoring our campaigns so that they are sustained organically from within communities themselves.

The crisis in our rural areas and in our townships often results in inward-look-

ing rivalry and fragmented protests and other negative symptoms in which the poor are often bashing the poor – male violence against women and children, competing taxi warlords, spaza shop rivalries, sometimes violent clashes over tenders resulting in factionalism within our own structures. Sometimes this leads to self-defeating protests in which trains and buses are destroyed, and municipal property and public libraries burned.

The 1996 class project politics of “welfarist”, top-down bureaucratic “delivery” is part of the problem and not part of the solution. It is NOT a question of seeking “more delivery” into the same pressure-cooker hot-spots. Rather, it is a question of:

- Uniting working class and poor communities around a strategic agenda of transformation that raises broader questions of the wider town, or city, or countryside – and not just of demanding more delivery into the same overcrowded and under-resourced ghettos. We need to raise calls (and actively campaign) for mixed-income human settlement developments within our towns and cities, for instance.
- Building local organs of popular power and finding more effective ways of institutionalising this power so that it is able to transform the local state from below. Recent proposals to have elected (rather than appointed) ward committees that have powers over IDPs, etc; and also means for better institutionalising the right of communities to effect the recall of their ward councillors, for instance, need to be considered in this regard.

The crises of underdevelopment in our communities have sometimes been captured by local political entrepreneurs and ‘tenderpreneurs’ who have

demagogically used popular frustrations to wage their own individual battles for access to local state power. This is at the heart of many of the so-called ‘service delivery protests’.

The SACP has over the years managed to organise significant sectors of our communities around the provision of basic services through our annual Red October Campaign, showing the potential of proactive and progressive mass organisation in changing the conditions of our people for the better.

The biggest gap on this front has been the failure of the ANC itself to lead mass campaigns for local transformation, to build organs of popular power and to fight against corruption. There remains a huge space for progressive mobilisation of our communities to change their own lives for the better. This Special Congress will have to discuss these matters very seriously and come up with strategies and tactics to ensure that the way in which local government functions and is resourced is radically transformed.

It is in the light of the above that we are proposing that we once more declare the year 2010 ‘The year of the SACP branch’. This is informed by the fact that we are in the midst of the restructuring of the SACP so that it builds branches along the lines of the voting districts. Secondly, emphasis on the SACP branch must be related to building popular power on the ground to lay a better foundation for the turnaround in local government and better preparations for the elections.

6.5 The ideological struggle and the battle of ideas

The SACP, principally through its mass campaigns, has managed to remain a strong ideological force among the ma-

majority of the workers and the poor of our country, a reality that is begrudgingly conceded to by the often hostile commercial media. Through our campaigns we have managed to maintain some form of presence in many of our communities flying the red banner, giving hope to the workers and the poor of our country.

Through our own internal media we have attempted to provide an alternative interpretation of the world and South Africa, despite all the odds on a terrain dominated by the mainstream bourgeois media.

Our key challenges on the ideological front and terrain of the battle of ideas is the need to build and strengthen the capacity of our cadres to adequately perform this work. Each SACP activity and campaign must include a media strategy (both our internal media, pamphleteering, and external media, especially engagement with community media and bourgeois media as well).

A key entry point to this work is the fact that the ideology of neo-liberalism is in deep crisis, and we should therefore intensify our critique of capitalism and advance our socialist perspectives on all fronts, and even more boldly.

6.6 The necessity for anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and internationalist struggle

Although there are indications of modest recovery in many parts of the world, including within SA, the world capitalist system remains in deep crisis, and this crisis is impacting with great severity on the great majority of the world's people. One billion people are living in hunger world-wide, while farmers in the EU dump a million kilograms of milk powder in a single day. Another one billion

people are now living in squatter camps in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Hundreds of millions of workers have lost their jobs in this recession, small farmers have been dispossessed of their land by banks, loan sharks and agri-business, and hundreds of millions more workers and middle-class strata have seen their life's savings disappearing into thin air.

What is more, there is now an overwhelming global scientific consensus that the current world capitalist accumulation path is carrying the entire human civilization into destruction through profit-driven depletion of natural resources and the destruction of the bio-physical conditions for human life on our planet.

A once prominent member of the 1996 class project once boasted that he was "too red to be green". As South African communists we say today: "We are too red NOT to be green". The struggle to reduce carbon emissions, the struggle to save humanity's common-wealth—our seas and rivers, our forests, our biodiversity, the very air we breathe – this is a struggle against the profit-maximising greed of the world capitalist system. To be red, is to be green.

"Together, let us save our planet from capitalist plunder and destruction"

Since our 12th Congress, we have taken important steps towards the creation of a network of progressive forces on our continent. In 2008 we held an inaugural meeting of the African Left Network in Johannesburg, and we have committed to hold such a gathering annually (due to elections we were not able to achieve this objective in 2009).

We do need to deepen intra-continental progressive relations and solidarity as part of laying a foundation to rebuild a left movement on the continent. Pri-

ority attention must be paid to those areas where there is existence of some form of progressive left organisation as a stepping stone to rebuilding a continent wide left political movement. This is indeed not going to be an easy task, but it does nevertheless require that we intensify work on this front.

During the latter half of next year, the SACP will be hosting the international meeting of workers and communist parties of the world. This is an important opportunity to strengthen our own left ideas internally, as well as a critical platform to link our African Left Network, Latin American left forces and the global communist and workers formations.

The task of strengthening the African Left Network is also integrally linked to our anti-imperialist struggle and the critique of capitalism especially in the wake of the current global capitalist crisis.

All the above terrains of struggle must be engaged from the standpoint of seeking to address the three deeply interrelated contradictions that the national democratic revolution seek to address. For instance, it is women who bear the most of the brunt in the structure and functioning of the often patriarchal state, the most exploited in the economy, and the most discriminated against in the workplace. It is women who bear most of the brunt in lack of basic services, often being the ones who have to fetch wood and water, and cook for families.

In all these terrains of struggle gender inequalities are often daily reproduced, thus subjecting women to the worst forms of oppression and exploitation. Unless the struggle for gender equality and against exploitation is consciously factored in, and mobilised for, it is indeed possible that we can build working class hegemony only for males, while

women remain in their subordinate status.

Therefore, building working class hegemony in all the six key sites of power must centrally mean the build of both male and female working class power in the whole of society.

7. The organisational tasks of the SACP towards 2012

The overarching challenge facing our party and the entire national liberation movement is that of the accelerated implementation of the five priorities of the ANC-led election manifesto. There is no contradiction between the objectives of our MTV and the ANC election manifesto. Instead there is a complementarity between the two, in that the goals of the election manifesto cannot be realized without building working class hegemony in society. Building working class hegemony in society is also not an abstract task, it must be built through concrete struggles to realize the five priorities of the manifesto.

The struggle for the accelerated implementation of the ANC-led Alliance Manifesto is going to be a site of intense struggles both in wider society as well within our broader movement. A key site of struggle is already that over the implementation of the National Health Insurance as well as the complete overhaul and strengthening of our public health system. Powerful capitalist interests in the private health sector, in alliance with some in our own broader movement who have business interests in the sector, are already involved in intense behind the scenes lobbying for either a total abandonment of the idea of an NHI or to try and build a watered down version of the NHI, imprisoned by the interests of private capital and/

or through Public Private Partnerships that favour the capitalist classes.

These capitalist forces in the health sector have for months now been embarking on a media offensive trying to discredit the NHI, with multiple figures of billions of rands being thrown up as the cost of the NHI and therefore projecting such a scheme as unaffordable.

It is for these reasons that we need to deepen our campaign for the establishment of a quality and affordable public health care system with the NHI at the centre.

On the education front, the SACP must throw its full weight, and where necessary lead, in the ANC campaign to transform our education system. This means mobilising local people's education committees to make our schools functional and Sadtu, for instance, must play a leading role in ensuring that the non-negotiables are implemented; an intensified focus on skills development and the strengthening of the Further Education and Training Colleges, and the transformation of our university system to ensure that it is aligned with our overall developmental objectives.

The SACP needs to ensure that we re-orient our rural districts and branches to prioritise the task of building and strengthening the motive forces for rural transformation, especially the building of people's land committees and the organisation of farm-workers and farm-dwellers. We have long adopted this as our programme of action, but our rural structures seem not to be responding adequately to this challenge. While it is important for the SACP to have an overarching programme of action, but our test as a vanguard party lies in prioritisation of programmes in line with local and regional realities. The Special

Congress will have to discuss this matter extensively with a view to directing our rural structures to take up rural transformation struggles in earnest.

Key to the challenge of creating decent work is the strengthening of the progressive trade union movement, principally Cosatu. Related to this must be the intensification of government's programme to develop an overarching industrial policy, a comprehensive human resources development strategy. The SACP must also intensify its efforts to build a progressive co-operative movement, not as a substitute to decent work, but as an obvious necessity to create opportunities for sustainable livelihoods especially also for those out of work. Underpinning this must be the intensification of our policy work and activism in aligning our macro-economic policies to our micro-economic policies, including the implementation of the Alliance resolutions on changing the mandate of the Reserve Bank to include employment.

A critical area that will require our attention in the coming period is that of the nature and functioning of the National Planning Commission. The SACP welcomes the establishment of the National Planning Commission by government. The composition, structure and priorities for the National Planning Commission are matters that require serious reflection at this Congress and beyond.

8. Towards an SACP Programme of action for 2010

We propose that our programme of action for 2010 must be based on the slogan: "Together, let us build a society based on People's Needs" "Together begin to build socialism now". The SACP

must declare the year 2010, as the year of the branch, in order to focus all our structures on strengthening our branches. Strengthening our branches must not be reduced to convening of BECs and BGMs, important as these may be, but to build the capacity of our branches to embark on local activism and mass mobilisation, including taking up issues affecting workers and communities. This should also be used to accelerate the implementation of our resolution to build branches based on voting districts.

Focusing on strengthening the SACP branch must simultaneously mean deepening our support for the recruitment and advancement of women with the SACP structures at all levels, as well as supporting the building of an even stronger Young Communist League (YCL). The strengthening of women cadres and building of a vibrant YCL are the only guarantors for strengthening the SACP itself as the vanguard of South Africa's working class, and ensuring its future role as an indispensable force in our national democratic revolution.

This coming year the SACP must focus on the education and health campaigns, as well as the serious revival of our financial sector campaign. These issues are at the heart of building a society based on meeting people's needs. While the alliance has focused much attention on the public development finance institutions, it is the responsibility of the SACP to struggle for the state to direct and steer the private financial sector towards transformation and investment into developmental projects. This must include both the private banking sector as well as worker retirement funds. We also need to ensure that our industrial strategy must also include the transformation of the private financial sector.

Our weakness on this front is now being fully exploited by the financial sector capitalists to roll back the gains we have made through our financial sector campaign over the years.

Related to this must be our continued focus on the transformation of local government and buttress government turn-around strategy for municipalities through mass mobilisation and organisation. The transformation of local government to serve the interests of the people as a whole will also be the only guarantee that we liberate the majority of the women of our country from the oppression of the burdens of extreme poverty.

As part of achieving all of the above, we must pay particular attention to the rebuilding of the alliance at subnational level. Focusing on branch work and taking up issues towards building a society based on people's needs, must also be a platform for joint alliance campaign to implement the Alliance programme of action.

9. Conclusion

The Central Committee, and indeed the Special Congress, must assess the achievement and setbacks of the two alliance summits and the Alliance economic summit held since our 12th Congress. An assessment must be made on whether the Alliance programme of action has been adequately implemented, the obstacles towards such implementation, and action to be taken to ensure that such programme is indeed implemented.

A critical issue that needs to be reflected upon is the character and strength of the SACP itself. While our Party has grown significantly, especially over the last ten years, it is important that we re-

flect on the quality of our cadres as part of building the SACP as a vanguard Party. Is it perhaps not time now to focus a bit less on quantitative growth but focus on the qualitative growth of our Party?

To be a communist is not an insult, but it is an honour and a badge we must wear with pride. There is no more noble a cause than that of fighting for the workers and the poor, and to end all forms of exploitation and oppression, as well as to fight against all forms of prejudices and chauvinisms, including patriarchy.

Let us use this occasion to also celebrate being communists! We must on this occasion celebrate our achieve-

ments over the past 88 years, but by also further committing ourselves to redouble our efforts in fighting against all forms of injustices.

We shall indeed do this inspired by all the communist heroes and heroines who have come before us.

We shall also do this because we are indeed the sons and daughters of 'kitchen girls' and 'garden boys'.

We shall do this because the road we seek to travel has been travelled by Bill Andrews, Moses Kotane, Dora Tamana...

Amandla!

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SPECIAL NATIONAL CONGRESS

President Jacob Zuma's address to the SNE

The SACP SNC should provide guidance on how the Party will contribute to assist us to meet the Manifesto objectives

Bring fraternal and revolutionary greetings from the African National Congress national executive committee and its membership. We bring good wishes to the SACP as it holds its special congress. This congress is taking place during a very critical period in the history of the Alliance. It is a period during which there is an intense focus on the relations amongst the Alliance partners.

Various interests within the Alliance are engaged in a robust political engagement and debate about the role of the Alliance and its focus during this era of freedom and democracy. It is however not the first time that this has taken place. This Alliance has always been a subject of scrutiny, analysis and debate, because of its unique nature, its strength and impact.

We pride ourselves as the Alliance on being able to bring together so many various strands of political thought into one political family. We pride ourselves on being able to accommodate heated and intense debates and opinions about the Alliance or its various components. Many formations would fall apart if they were to have members who are as vociferous in their thoughts and expression

of such thoughts as members of the Tripartite Alliance.

However, the reason we are able to hold this Alliance together, is the traditional focus on discipline, unity, respect for the autonomy of each partner and the respect for each member of the Alliance component regardless of their position in the movement. The 52nd national conference of the ANC confirmed, as did previous conferences, re-affirmed that the leadership role of the ANC places on it the primary responsibility to unite the tripartite alliance and all the democratic forces. We will continue to play this role, as the leader of the Alliance. What has also always made this Alliance to function well is the respect for the individual autonomy of components.

You will recall that the 52nd conference confirmed the assertion that we should respect the right of individual Alliance partners to discuss and arrive at their own decisions on how they seek to pursue their strategic objectives. The conference also confirmed that consistent with this principle, the ANC will continue to determine, in its own structures and processes, how best to advance its own strategic objectives.

We have also always said that the uni-

ty of the Alliance is paramount, under the leadership of the African National Congress. Unity is now more important given the changed objective conditions we operate in. Before 1994, the roles were clear amongst Alliance partners.

We had one common enemy. We had to fight and dismantle apartheid oppression and bring about freedom and democracy to our people.

When this was achieved we moved into another phase, of building a better life for all our people, ensuring total transformation of the State and society to ensure that we remove the remnants of apartheid and racism. In building a better quality of life, we had to work together as Alliance components, led by the ANC; to introduce government programmes that we believed would achieve these objectives.

We have done well over the past 15 years. The record speaks for itself and our people know that too, as shown by the manner in which they keep returning the ANC to power every five years. We however remain honest to our people, and tell them that while we have achieved a lot, much more still needs to be done, and that working together we can achieve more.

In saying “working together we can do more”, we also include working together with alliance components. This then brings us to the question of the role of the SACP in this phase of the national democratic revolution. Has the SACP truly and fully engaged with the question of its role in assisting the ANC government to succeed in implementing its programme of action?

We ask this as we are in a fluid phase, in which the party can be tempted to find itself in the borderline between constructive criticism and being in opposi-

tion to the African National Congress, the leader of the Alliance. Our detractors are very keen to see a continuous quarrel between the party and the ANC and are keen to see continuous counter criticisms and squabbles. It is therefore very crucial that we revive and strengthen what we used to talk about during the struggle, the iron discipline of the party and the clarity and political depth that the SACP has always provided to the Alliance. We are in a more challenging environment as we have to navigate lots of interests. What needs to be clear is that the ruling party is no longer a common enemy of the Alliance as it was during the apartheid era, but is an ally of the components of the Alliance. When the Alliance was established, the founding comrades did not envisage the Alliance finding opponents or opposition within its own components. It would be a new thing altogether. Our view is that we must not lose focus with regards to our priorities as the Alliance. In various election Manifestos, include the 2008 one, we clarified our programme of action and presented it to the electorate. In 2009 we said we would focus on five priorities. We said people would see a difference in health, education, rural development and land reform, the fight against crime and the creation of decent jobs. We have set out to work tirelessly to achieve the objectives of improving the delivery of programmes and services in these five areas. We need the support of the Alliance to fight these common challenges. In this regard, we really must ask if the party has really defined its role seriously in a democratic post-apartheid society? I repeat this question because our view is that the Party cannot just see itself as a pressure group. It should play its historical role and provide robust and

profound intellectual and ideological debate to the Alliance. The party ought to play a role in making suggestions in what we can do better. We ask this of the SACP for historical reasons. It has always played this role. We are reminded of the response of Inkosi Albert Luthuli once when asked why he works with the communists. He said they are most reliable, disciplined and always ready to sacrifice at every given time. Inkosi Luthuli was correct as SACP members were never known for destructive criticisms, and when in the ANC, they never used the fact that they were communists; the ANC was always paramount as the leader of the Alliance. The communists took full responsibility. If the ANC had failed, they identified with the failures and became part of sharing the blame, correcting the mistakes and sharing the successes. That talks to the iron discipline that we speak about, which other members of the components ought to learn from the SACP.

Comrades, in working out our respective roles in this phase of the national democratic revolution, we need to clarify the rules of engagement. For us to be able to focus on the implementation of the Manifesto, there are some tendencies that we must clearly correct within the Alliance. It is critical that we do that because if we do not do so, we will introduce a new culture of chaos and lack of respect for the individual components of the Alliance and members.

We re-emphasise that discipline is the guiding principle and is the thread that must continue to run through this movement to ensure that we maintain comradely relations. The leaders of the three components of the Alliance must lead and guide the membership of the components. They need to assist the

components not to look for enemies amongst alliance components, and should remain vigilant and not allow a foreign culture to creep into our Alliance.

We must engage each other with dignity, honesty and with respect. The public outbursts and acrimonious exchange are not in the tradition of the Alliance. The tendency to engage or deal with members in the media and public platforms instead of through usual channels is foreign and should not be allowed to continue. We must continue to support a vibrant exchange of ideas and a culture of critical analysis on issues, but we must also commit to, and practice the culture of principled debate.

The Alliance is too deep-rooted and entrenched to be disrupted by activities or statements of a few of its members. The Allies must instead focus on the primary task of uniting our people and uplifting them from poverty and deprivation. An Alliance that is seen to be besieged with tension, squabbling and conflict does not inspire public confidence.

As the leader of the Alliance the ANC will play its role to ensure that we all operate optimally in defence and consolidation of our freedom, and in meeting the goals of building a better life for all our people.

The Alliance components also have a responsibility to defend the ANC, to support it and strengthen it. The success of our revolution has in past, and will in the future, depend on the strength and cohesion of the ANC-led Alliance. This is an Alliance in which the components continue, as they did in the past, to act swiftly and efficiently to support and complement, and not to compete with one another.

Comrades, it is important to protect

the image of our Alliance at all times. We must not create an impression that the Alliance is in the intensive care unit.

The Alliance is alive and well, it is fully functional and effective. It has the capacity to withstand individual mistakes and errors of judgement, and will withstand any turbulence that comes its way.

We just need to ensure that we do not spend our time dealing with turbulence that can be avoided, through enforcing discipline, unity and respect for one another.

Comrades, we must rather focus our energies on the matters at hand, the implementation of the ANC election Manifesto.

We said in the Manifesto that we have to ensure that we grow the economy. We said lasting victory over poverty and hunger requires the creation of decent work opportunities and sustainable livelihoods. Together we agreed that education must be at the centre of our efforts to improve the potential of every citizen and enable each one of us to play a productive role in building our nation.

We added that the quality of services that the government will provide must be improved. We also told the electorate that our fight against crime will be a key priority, to ensure safer and more secure communities. We said we would strengthen our criminal justice system and enable our police force to deal decisively with crime.

We also pointed out that rural infrastructure development and agricultural reforms were at the heart of our plan to improve our country's food security. Working together we must ensure that all these undertakings become a reality, and that they are delivered to the people of South Africa. The SACP congress should hopefully provide guidance on how the party will contribute to assist us to meet these objectives.

Working together we can ensure proper focus, and success in delivering on our mandate as the ANC-led Alliance. I thank you.

Amandla!

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Cde Zuma is President of the ANC and South Africa

SPECIAL NATIONAL CONGRESS

Cde Zwelinzima Vavi's address to the SNC

Workers need a vanguard that earns its place by providing consistent leadership to society

It is always an extra special honour to be invited to address a National Congress of our great ally, the South African Communist Party. The SACP, the ANC and the trade union movement have fought together in the trenches of the class, national and gender war for many years. We have always held a very special affection and respect for each other. Indeed we share many members, and of course share many values, principles and policies.

Somebody once said, referring to communists, "by their action ye shall see them." The speaker was of course talking about the high level of principled commitment to revolutionary action and high ethical standing of communists. The Party makes us proud as the South African working class.

The unremitting commitment of the SACP to the ideal of socialism and its pioneering work in non-racial politics and practice remains a valuable contribution of communists.

By hoisting the Red Flag high during this period where many have lost their ideological bearing inspires the South African and global working class and progressive movement. This congress must take the SACP to new heights

rather than be paralysed by short-term internal conflicts.

It is trite to say that this congress takes place at an opportune moment in our ongoing struggle for fundamental change. The symbolism of hosting this Congress in the same venue that ushered in a new regime and spirit in the ANC two years ago should not be lost. This moment thus serve as a midterm review of the outcome and development, not only for the SACP, but also of the historic 52nd Congress of the ANC.

Congress faces the challenge to conduct a dispassionate analysis of the post-Polokwane moment. Suffice to say that a new mood and spirit of cooperation is evident in the ANC and the Alliance. Still we have witnessed the beginnings of the unravelling of the unity of the forces that made Polokwane happen.

Comrades, we confront the challenge to understand the underlying reasons for this apparent rupture and its ideological, national and class character. Unity of the movement is a sacred objective that we should spare no energy to preserve and nurture. However, it is not unity for its own sake but to unite a broad range of forces to attain the goals of our struggle for fundamental change. Nobody said it

was going to be easy! It will be folly to now abandon the ANC when we are confronted by contradictions.

We persevered during the most difficult time in the post 1994 era. Why should we give up now? The broad ANC members voted for accelerated transformation and democratisation of the movement. Leaving the ANC because we are upset by some problematic pronouncements from a minority is a betrayal of these masses that voted for fundamental transformation of society.

Still it is also false to argue that common ground cannot be established with many of these comrades, since there are no principled disagreements about restoring the NDR to its basic goals of eliminating national, class and gender oppression. Our responsibility is to broaden the front of the forces who want genuine change whilst recognising that there is a tiny minority that only mouth empty rhetoric about change but whose agenda is to use the movement and positions for narrow accumulation and personal wealth.

In Cosatu there is a popular saying that “you cannot win at the table what you did not win on the streets.” This means we must intensify the struggle on all fronts and participate fully in the structures of our democratic movement. Further, it means we have to defend the post-Polokwane gains and ensure their realisation.

As our recent history has shown, progress results from collective action and a programme rather than an individual messiah. All-in-all comrades I am urging that we should resist the temptation to become paranoid and see enemies everywhere. If we give in to this temptation then we shall fail to grasp the opportunities now, and by extension

fail to offer leadership.

In this regard we must defend the ANC as the embodiment of the desires of our people for a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. The ANC belongs to our people and not a section or a group of distinguished leaders. The best defence of the character of the ANC is to ensure that the branches are fully empowered to participate in the structures of the movement and to hold leadership accountable. As a popular freedom song says “amandla ase masebeni”.

The Congress also takes place a few months after the renewal of the ANC’s mandate to rule this country for the next five years. It is important that we grasp the lessons of the 2009 General Election, in terms of our strengths and weaknesses.

We know that the opposition benches have been reconfigured, with the emergence of COPE, which has eclipsed the IFP as the second biggest opposition party. Further, for the first time in post 1994 era, the Western Cape has been won by the DA with an outright majority, a peculiar outcome indeed!

Voter turnout increased, as did the number of people who voted ANC, but the ANC fell short of a straight two-thirds majority and in some provinces our overall majority was trimmed down. I emphasise these challenges not because we did not mount a spectacular campaign but to call on us to pay special attention to these lurking dangers.

Democracy is a contest of ideas and you cannot take mass support for granted. Let us use this opportunity to attend to our organisational, political and governance weaknesses.

Many were surprised that immediately after the election South Africa was

engulfed by a wave of strikes and social protests in working-class communities. Does this mean our people are confused – vote for the ANC and immediately thereafter demonstrate a lack of trust in their rulers.

An easy explanation is to suggest that this is the work of disgruntled elements or agent provocateurs. In some cases this might be true, but to attribute all strikes and protests to problematic individuals is to have a superficial understanding of what is happening. Moreover it implies that the solution is to arrest these individuals and all will be fine. This securocratic response would illustrate that we may be out of touch with the reality of our constituency.

Rising levels of crime, xenophobia, social protests and strikes are many manifestations of our people's reaction to the neoliberal squeeze. The adoption of conservative macroeconomic policies at a time when there was a huge backlog of service delivery and under-development resulted in the commodification of basic needs, rising unemployment and a general increase in insecurity in the household and the workplace. In fact, it seems that our policies are similar to driving the sea with a teaspoon or filling a leaking bucket.

It is not just a lack of delivery that triggers community protests. On the contrary, visible delivery demonstrates to the people that something is happening, but they ask: when will I benefit? In addition people's patience is running thin as their relative deprivation deepens. When a person you grew up next to is suddenly driving the latest model of luxury car and living in leafy suburbs this is bound to increase anger.

What is even worse is that this society does not reward hard work and effort.

There are many examples of super-rich individuals who have never worked a single day in their life, begging the question: where does the wealth come from? Are we then surprised by the many 'get rich quick' schemes and the 'grab what you can whilst you can' mentality in our organisations and society?

Where will this all end? This is what informs statements like 'I did not struggle to be poor', forgetting that the struggle was not about self enrichment but mass empowerment.

Black people in South Africa are further incensed by the percolation of wealth and opportunities among a minority of (mostly male) whites. A few blacks have joined the super-rich but this does not change the basic fact that white power remains firmly entrenched so many years after the democratic breakthrough. Our people ask: was reconciliation worth it if we remain unemployed and living in poverty? In this regard gestures that impose one-sided reconciliation smack of intellectual arrogance and opportunism. Why is it always the victims that must show magnanimity when the perpetrators do not even show remorse?

Comrades, this Congress comes in the aftermath of the highly successful Cosatu tenth congress. The recent Cosatu CEC agreed that it was indeed a remarkable show of unity, strength and political maturity. A report assessing the outcome of the Congress has been issued and I invite comrades to engage it.

I believe we can all agree that the Congress raised the bar on theoretical, political and strategic debates. This escaped the mass media and the chattering classes who focused narrowly, and distorted, a debate on the Green Paper on National Planning.

Clearly political education is lacking among many of the current crop of journalists. Please, the Party must have a programme to improve political education among our journalists, so they can appreciate the depth of our analysis rather than focus on platitudes and sensational stuff.

Against this background I want to say I agree with the Party when it asks why after fifteen years of democracy the material conditions of our people have not fundamentally changed. The obvious answer is that the structures that produce and reproduce under-development, poverty and inequality have not been fundamentally tampered with.

We must spend time understanding the dynamics of the post-1994 South African society and the current global capitalist order. Ultimately the point is to understand how to transform our society and the world. Capitalism is recovering from its worst crisis after the crash of the global financial markets. The crisis is a recurring theme in capitalism, albeit with different triggers and effects.

Many of our people feel the outcome of this crisis through, unemployment, declining incomes and rising poverty and inequalities. Marx was the first to point out that crisis is endemic to capitalism. Schumpeter called this 'boom and bust' process a 'creative destruction'. Capitalists behave like a herd when they smell opportunity, others panic and the whole structure crumbles and has to start again. Kindleberger called his book 'Manias, Panics and Crashes' to describe this exuberant optimism and extreme pessimism, especially in financial markets.

Therefore comrades, the task facing this congress is to deepen our understanding of the capitalist order in the South African, regional and global con-

text. It must also articulate strategies to deepen the NDR in South Africa and build momentum for socialism.

However this task will be incomplete if it does not encompass the region and the international order. Cosatu congress challenged us to build a broad coalition of left forces at a national, regional and global level. It remains a sad irony that the left forces are fragmented and lack a common platform. We must heighten the ideological warfare to defend the correctness of our ideas. The left label has become a swear word and it is only through our effort and work that our people will respect us.

Leaders of the new tendency, together with non-reading and non-analytic sections of the media, continue to create the impression that the left is some problematic tendency hell-bent on hijacking the ANC, which is supposed to be a neutral player that is not itself a left force. Soon, if we do not expose and isolate this emerging tendency, we may return to the days where there was a witch-hunt against so called 'leftists'. So comrades I plead with you that this congress should not be about leadership but about providing answers to these many challenges we face.

This week world leaders are gathered in Copenhagen to discuss environmental challenges and how we should respond. We commend the South African government for the voluntary steps it has committed to. This proves that you do not have to be a superpower to provide leadership on issues facing humanity. It is very clear that this summit is going to be another missed opportunity, as developed countries continue to duck their responsibility.

This in part reflects the fact that a global mass movement for environmen-

tal change to put pressure on governments is absent. We have allowed environmental issues to be the preserve of the middle class when in fact it is the poor that are worst affected by environmental damage. This congress must go beyond blaming capitalism but develop clear proposals for a campaign on environmental change. In addition, it must articulate a vision of socialism that is ecologically sustainable. The experience of the Soviet Union proves that we cannot take the environment for granted.

I now turn to the most difficult part of my speech. If I had a choice I would skip this part and wish the congress well. I must confess comrades that this is the most difficult speech I have had to write. So much is at stake and the situation is very delicate. I am reminded of a saying that we expressed when facing difficulties in the Alliance. We used to say we are performing a 'complicated egg dance'. I never thought I would face this moment so soon. As you all know, this congress must decide on the best formula to address the leadership question. I am not here to tell you what to do, but our movement was not built by skirting difficult and controversial issues.

As we engage in this debate we need to balance between two extremes. One extreme is to completely miss the opportunity now presented by the post-Polokwane moment through some undefined militant abstention. Cosatu, through its 'walking through the open doors project', has defined a clear strategy on how workers should ensure that they pick the gains for themselves. We do not struggle so that others can be our rulers.

We more than ever before are presented with an opportunity to deploy our leaders to key levers of power so that

they can be in the forefront of the transformation project. We cannot abstain from this challenge, nor can we afford to sub contract it to others. These victories belong to us. This changed political environment is as a result our efforts. We must walk through the open doors.

We are therefore not an opposition grouping or an NGO that is not interested in state power. Those who are arguing abstention must think again. Workers and the poor cannot be happy to have made all these sacrifices to achieve a more favourable balance of forces, and then, just at the time when we need leaders of substance and conviction to navigate through this difficult terrain and help lead to the realisation of the goal of building a better life for all, see them step aside to let others to come through to lead us.

I feel that, as the General Secretary of the organised workers who are your trusted ally, I would have failed if I did not also make you appreciate the other extreme to this debate. In whatever manner you resolve this debate, it cannot be that in the name of walking through the open doors we open a new race for all leaders of the SACP to want to be a mayor and minister.

I want you at this moment to spare some time to think again what you meant when you talked about the need to reconfigure the Alliance, so that you can keep your leadership accountable to your ideals. Recall your discussions that informed the Medium Term Vision (MTV). Recall that you coined a historic slogan that continues to be a clarion call to all socialists: 'Socialism is the future; build it now'.

In whatever way you resolve this discussion about leadership and the new environment that requires that we walk

through the open doors and pick up the gains, please take the following into three points into consideration as your framework:

1. The SACP must not be subordinated to the ANC. We need carefully thought-out mechanisms to ensure that the SACP has leaders who spend adequate time in Party building programmes. The challenges I have mapped above demand a strong, independent and fighting working class party, of course allied to the ANC and Cosatu.

2. There has to be a clear link between whatever we conclude and the MTV and in particular to the clarion call – ‘Socialism is the future; build it now’. We must act ideologically and politically and not be seen to be acting opportunistically. We must occupy the space that has been opened to maximise the gains to deepen the NDR and build the momentum for socialism. Ultimately, the success of this strategy is the extent to which it deepens the NDR and builds a momentum for socialism. Honestly, it will be a lost opportunity if all it achieves is the incorporation of the Party leadership into an untransformed situation without a clear ideology of how this links to our struggle to build socialism. In that case the leaders will simply serve as apologists of the status quo. In the past 15 years we have seen this happening. To be frank, regretfully, it was some of the lead-

ing communists who enthusiastically pushed down the throats of the working class the neoliberal programmes championed by the 1996 class project.

3. The Party’s independence must be jealously guarded. The leadership must be held accountable. The state is a massive monster. Our leaders can either lead the process of its transformation or they can be transformed by the state that still is essentially capitalist in character and therefore a weapon of class rule. In the absence of strong mechanisms to keep the leadership accountable and a fighting programme guiding the work of the party, we face a danger of making the party a weapon to provide jobs for its leaders in government.

Whatever solution this Congress arrives at we must remember that workers need a vanguard that earns its place by providing consistent leadership to society. You are our political insurance and, please, we have not come here so that we witness the process of a slow death of our party. We are here to contribute so that the party continues to be that political insurance for the workers.

I trust that you will rise up to the challenge and not give our enemies a chance to celebrate.

I wish the Congress success. ★

*Cde Zwelinzima Vavi is the Cosatu
General Secretary*

SACP CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Taking our medium-term vision to higher levels

The Political Report presented to the February Central Committee Meeting

1. Introduction and background

This is the first Central Committee in 2010. Our Party has already been in action, opening the year with the commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the death of Cde Joe Slovo and our participation (including mobilisation) in the ANC's 98th birthday celebrations in Kimberley. For both the events, but especially in Kimberley, our party cadres played a very important role in ensuring a successful event, and defeating attempts to try and turn that rally into an anti-SACP platform.

Perhaps we should anchor 2010, the year of the SACP branch, as the year in which we must seek to take our MTV to higher levels, consciously intensifying work towards the realization of the key targets in the MTV towards 2014.

2. Twenty years after unbanning

The year 2010 also marks the 20th anniversary of unbanning of the ANC, SACP and other liberation movements. The media is already building towards intense coverage of this event next week, and it is therefore important for us to reflect briefly on this in order to ensure

that these developments are put in their proper perspective.

It is important that we re-affirm very strongly that the unbanning of our organisations 20 years ago was not an act of generosity from the apartheid regime and FW de Klerk but marked a decisive advance of the liberation struggle towards the defeat of the apartheid regime. It was not de Klerk who unbanned our organisations, but our people themselves. The apartheid regime was in such a crisis that it could no longer continue without trying to reach some settlement with the liberation movement.

Indeed on our side, that moment was marked by the intensity of mass struggle and offensive against the apartheid regime, but we were not strong enough to overthrow that regime. It was these factors that dictated and necessitated a negotiated settlement.

It is also important to briefly reflect on that period not only for the purposes of giving it a proper characterisation but also because there are still a number of lessons from that period that are very relevant for our revolution today moving forward.

The first important matter to reflect upon is that indeed the many challenges

we are grappling with today are a reflection of the fact that whilst we had a political settlement and subsequently the 1994 democratic breakthrough, the underlying economic realities of apartheid remained intact – with the economic and class power of the bourgeoisie remaining untouched. In other words a decisive revolutionary advance but without economic power!

However we need to give a nuanced articulation to this reality. Our reality today reflects a combination of, on the one hand, the failure of our negotiated settlement to upset dominant and entrenched class relations, and, on the other hand, the pursuance of policies that reproduced many of the economic features of colonialism of a special type. This combination created a situation where the black sections of the bourgeoisie and the middle classes in the corporate sector growing at the behest, and as a compradorial extension of the predominantly white sections of the bourgeoisie. In many ways the BEE policies pursued in this regard simply reinforced this reality.

These developments marked South Africa's headlong dive into a neo-liberal economic growth path, whose features are excellently described by Magdoff and Yates (*The ABCs of the Economic Crisis*) as coalescing into the following key features:

- Eliminate all barriers to the movement of both physical and money capital, with a country and among all countries
- Privatising as much public enterprise as possible. The government is asserted to be inherently inefficient
- Tightening requirements for receiving any kind of assistance for the poor from the government or ending

welfare programmes altogether, and at the same time making it easier for businesses to get money from governments

- Cutting taxes on businesses, capital gains and the incomes of the rich. 'Only if (business) prosper will the rest of us do okay'
- Making it more difficult for workers to form unions and bargain with employers
- Seeing inflation as a public scourge and making sure through the monetary policies of the central bank that inflation is kept at bay

It is striking how South Africa reproduced, from 1996, exactly the same kind of script, perhaps with few, but significant exceptions. There are two significant exceptions to the above script. The first is that our government, given where we come from, was forced to expand the social security net, not so much counter to the logic of neo-liberalism, but to provide a necessary cushion, given the scale of poverty and unemployment in our country, in order to pursue this neo-liberal programme. In other words, in our South African conditions, some form of welfarism was necessary for the implementation of a neo-liberal agenda in the mainstream of our economy.

Another slight difference between what Magdoff and Yates say is that given the strength of the organised working class in South Africa it was not possible for government to embark on a frontal offensive against the unions as Reagan and Thatcher did in the late 1970s into the 1980s. Nevertheless this offensive was not entirely absent but was pursued through other means, often as vicious: large-scale retrenchments from the mid 1990s (the job loss bloodbath); (attempted) privatisation and outsourc-

ing; the downsizing of the public sector; the commercialisation of state-owned enterprises. Capital further sought to roll back gains made through the labour market reforms by increasingly, amongst other things, turning to labour broking. Inside our movement this offensive was marked by attempts to marginalise and even provoke a walk out of the alliance by the SACP and Cosatu.

The task of the current period moving forward still remains that of undoing the 'economic content of the political settlement', by transforming the current colonialism of a special type economic trajectory.

Another important lesson to be learnt from the period surrounding the unbanning of the liberation movement is the necessity for ongoing mass mobilisation of the working class and our communities behind a progressive agenda so that they are the makers of their own history. At the time of the unbanning I recall Cde Mzala warning that we must be careful that De Klerk must not do to us what Dingane did to Piet Retief, being unbanned in order to be destroyed once we have emerged. Indeed he was right as the apartheid regime tried to do exactly that immediately after the unbanning – extending its war against the people in KwaZulu Natal and spreading into Gauteng.

It was this perspective which informed the Party's engagement with the period immediately after the unbanning. We insisted, sometimes in the face of the opposition from some within our own ranks, that:

- There is no contradiction between, on the one hand, engaging in negotiations with the apartheid regime, and, on the other hand, intensifying mass mobilisation and maintaining our

armed capacity

- Instead mass mobilisation was a necessity if we were to achieve the outcomes we wanted out of that period

In fact our late general secretary Cde Chris Hani led by example in the implementation of these perspectives on the ground, criss-crossing our country, both urban and rural areas mobilising our people, and building self-defence units in the light of intensified apartheid war against the people.

The lesson from that period for today is that access to institutional state power alone, without mass mobilisation, is inadequate to deepen and consolidate our revolution.

3. A brief political evaluation of our Special Congress

Our 2nd Special National Congress was by all accounts a very successful event. Amongst its highlights was the fact that delegates reflected the extent to which the SACP has a presence in most parts of our country, as well as the fact that the SACP has grown significantly, especially since our 12th Congress in 2002.

In addition, as we noted at the conclusion of the Congress itself, it was the most unified Congress ever in the post-1994 history of party. Yet commissions were characterised by frank and very rich debates, also a reflection of the experiences acquired by the Party especially since 1994. It reflected the depth of understanding by those delegates of our responsibilities in the different sites of power, and that the SACP, through its cadres, has acquired a lot of experience on governance and mass mobilisation after the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

The Congress adequately covered all the key tasks it had set for itself, with a dedicated focus on key areas govern-

ance, party building and international work. The PB and CC will have to sign off on these resolutions so that they can be circulated as a guide to our structures in the implementation of our 2010 and 2011 programmes of action.

Unfortunately, a side show, in the incident of booing was immediately exploited by both our detractors and anti-communist elements within our own movement to completely deflect attention away from our achievements. In fact up till today very little has been reported in the media about our Congress other than this incident.

In the wake of our Special Congress we have held a very fruitful bilateral with Cosatu officials, followed by a meeting of Cosatu provincial secretaries, to which we were invited. These meetings begun to explore new and fruitful ways through which we can run joint working class campaigns with Cosatu. It is also urgent that we work towards a bilateral with the ANC.

It is important that we build on our analysis in the Central Committee political report to the 2nd Special National Congress in order to properly grasp the challenges that we face as the SACP and the broader movement.

One of the most immediate challenges is that of breaking out of being put in a defensive mould, intensifying our programme of independently rooting the SACP amongst the workers and the poor of country. This, amongst other things, means that during this year and beyond we need to intensify our critique of capitalism in whatever we do, advance socialist perspectives and socialism as the only rational alternative to capitalism. This must also be accompanied by intense ideological work, as one of the key pillars in implementing our Year of

the Branch.

It is also going to be important that intensified mass work in the locality must be undertaken as well as intensification of our campaign against corruption and patronage. Part of this must be increased recruitment for the SACP as well as ensuring that all SACP cadres are active members of the ANC branches. Our resolutions and programme of action precisely gives us the tools we need to undertake all these tasks, as well as to strengthen our alliance from below.

Indeed it is going to be important for the SACP to enhance its leadership role in the mobilisation and organisation of the working class, as well as in other key tasks of the liberation movement as a whole. We need to deliberately identify issues and areas, not in competition with our allies, where we will play a leadership role. Cde Alex Mashilo makes an interesting point in the *Sowetan* (28 January 2010) that we need to nuance the notion of 'strategic centre of power' arguing that each of the Alliance components are (or need to be) strategic centres of power in relation to their respective strategic tasks. (spheres might suggest different "turf"). This is a provocatively refreshing perspective, which obviously still recognizes the ANC as the formation we need to continuously strengthen in order to be able to play the role as the overall strategic centre of power, but not the only one.

Of course whether the ANC, its allies, or the alliance as a whole are strategic centres of power is not an award, nor is it ever pre-ordained. It is something that must be won on the basis of the capacity to play a leading and unifying role in key sites of power. It is therefore important for the SACP to play a leading role as a vanguard party of socialism within the

context of an ongoing national democratic revolution led by the ANC. As Slovo once put it, this might sometimes involve helping to build the ANC's capacity to lead the national democratic revolution – that, too, he said, is part of how the SACP plays its vanguard socialist role.

For instance in the area of media and education, we now need to be bold and seek to undertake some serious projects. A concrete proposal for instance is that we must dedicate our next *Umsebenzi* and *The African Communist* to analysis and explaining of the alliance as we see it, both in its past historical context, as well as going forward. This must include explaining our own understanding of what the ANC is and should be going forward. This is crucially related to the tasks and challenges of building a larger, but quality SACP.

In addition, in our next bilateral meeting with Cosatu, we need to propose that Cosatu leads a project to establish a worker-owned national workers' radio station – 'The Workers Daily Voice'. Given the fact that we do not have such a project, we can put a lot of pressure on ICASA that indeed we be granted such an FM licence. We have been singularly focused on having an Alliance newspaper, yet establishment of a radio station may be much cheaper and easier, and with a much wider reach than a newspaper.

In a similar way we should also approach the NUM to consider a possibility of registering the Elijah Barayi college as a private (not for profit) Further Education and Training College which offers accredited certificate and diploma programmes (a la Ruskin College in the UK), which can also incorporate the Chris Hani Institute. Such a college can

for instance offer a wider variety of modules related to building the capacity and skills of workers to be at the forefront of our revolution and developmental objectives. These could include trade union related skills, knowledge on building co-operatives, development studies and the theory of Marxism-Leninism. Our international comrades always point out that we do not adequately use the resources, strength and influence we have to create more spaces for the struggle for socialism.

Such initiatives should not be approached as a reaction to the attacks on the SACP and the organised working class, but as necessary projects to build socialism now!

4. Intensifying the struggle against corruption and patronage

Much as we are going to be discussing our 2010 programme of action, it is important to preface this discussion in this political report. As the SACP we have correctly traced the roots of much current corruption to the intersection of political office and business interests. In many ways the economic policies of the 1996 class project fuelled rather than contained the proliferation of corruption both in the public and private sectors. This is principally related to the realities of a revolution with political, but without economic, power. In such instances the state becomes a terrain for intense, and often corrupt, accumulation practices. But this has a close relationship to, and is fuelled by, elements in private capital who see easy pickings in the state.

But often the difficulty of dealing with the proliferation of corruption and patronage networks is the fact that many of our own comrades are at the centre

of corruption. And it is often people in leadership positions who are the major benefactors in these arrangements. This creates huge difficulties for our own structures to confront such corruption as any challenge or exposure is regarded as 'turning against our own'. Or it is hidden on the grounds any exposure may damage the organisation; yet it is such practices that are daily damaging the organisation in the eyes of the people.

In most instances such loot does not even find its way into the coffers of the organisation, but instead finds its way into the organisation through bribes in the run up to conferences, and the creation and maintenance of patronage networks aimed at capturing the organisation precisely in order to continue with such accumulation.

It is this reality that we must also squarely place in front of us and deal with it frontally if we are to crack corruption both in the public and private sectors.

It is also important that much as we should deal with acts of corruption through the criminal justice system, however the most effective way would be to seek means to prevent such corrupt activities. This is also because in a number of instances parts of the criminal justice system itself have already been corrupted or actively collude and benefit from this corruption.

One fairly significant measure we need to consider in the specific case of awarding of government tenders would be that of publicising those who are short-listed and the reasons thereof. After publication of such shortlists the public and especially our communities must be given an opportunity to comment. Those awarded tenders should also be publicised and the reasons for

such a choice. This can go a long way towards ensuring transparency and prevention of corrupt practices.

However the biggest weapon we have against corruption is that of mass mobilisation so that we can empower the mass of our people and our formations to confront corruption. This should be the primary goal in our campaign against corruption and patronage.

We also do need to insist on declaration of interests from all those who are part of our leadership collectives.

5. Towards a new developmental growth path

Much as we welcome government's commitment to a new growth path, it is important for the SACP to consistently advance its own perspectives to contribute to the elaboration of policies towards this goal, much as this shift also has a lot to do with some of our own positions, programmes and campaigns. In fact, it is from the standpoint of an integrated developmental growth path that we should seek to integrate all our campaigns, past and present, without at the same time losing the specificities of each campaign or arena of struggle (eg. The private financial sector).

5.1 State of the nation, industrial policy and the national budget

The first two weeks of the new parliamentary session have seen three major policy statements from the side of government – the president's state of nation address and subsequent debate; the budget; and the DTI's "Industrial Policy Action Programme 2" (IPAP 2). Taken together (and it is important that we DO take them together), in many ways they represent the further consolidation of the key themes that have been consist-

ently advanced by the SACP, with growing elaboration, since at least 1996.

Briefly re-stated, we have been arguing that growth (i.e. the expanded reproduction of capital), as a stand-alone objective, absolutely cannot be the core goal of economic policy in the NDR. Rather, we have argued that we need to place SA onto a *systematically* new growth (or, perhaps better, “developmental”) path. We have argued that this new path needs to prioritise “social needs”, and prime among these are jobs and sustainable livelihoods, and greater equality. We have also further argued that a state-led industrial policy programme is one of the core requirements for propelling any new development path.

In addition, through the Alliance policy process (including the election manifesto) we have identified five strategic priorities related to the above – jobs, health-care, education and training, rural development; and the fight against crime and corruption.

Both the president’s SONA and the Budget speech were organised around these shared strategic priorities. IPAP 2, for its part, takes job creation as its central strategic objective.

For the first time since 1994 we have had a budget speech, for instance, that clearly affirms that: “SA needs a new growth path...Our economy needs to be transformed to meet the needs of all of our people...growth on its own is insufficient to solve our unemployment problem. We need to expand the capacity of the economy to grow sustainably and we need growth that is more labour absorbing.”

One key factor propelling this growing strategic convergence is the impact of the global capitalist crisis. Again, the budget speech evokes this point explicitly:

“The recent crisis and its aftermath have led to a serious introspection and rethinking of what were thought to be robust and superior economic models.”

In short, there is new ideological and policy space partly as a result of our own SACP activism. This policy space now provides greater scope to consolidate and advance our positions.

However, to consolidate these possibilities for advance, we need to guard against becoming unduly distracted by several factors:

- The first distraction lies in media-driven sensationalism – for example, the president’s personal conduct and, flowing from that, the danger of getting sucked into speculation as to whether he will be supported for a second term, etc. The SACP, correctly, refused to be drawn into these matters – whether in support or opposition.
- The second distraction lies in getting pulled too deeply into stand-alone debates that are largely rhetorical in kind and abstracted from our strategic priorities. The ANCYL’s attempt to place “nationalisation” (or is it PPP’ing?) of the mines in the centre-stage of the economic debate is an obvious case in point. There’s nothing wrong, of course, with a *principled* discussion around the ownership of the mines, but it needs to be located within a broader discussion on the systemic transformation of our developmental path; our industrial policy programme; and our general strategic priorities.
- A third potential distraction lies in making the tactical mistake of opening up too many fronts all at once – while not focusing on the key possibilities and the key *threats* to the

NDR in the present reality.

In regard to the last-mentioned issue, we need to hold on to our Special National Congress characterisation of the “new tendency” (i.e. Kebble-ism, for short) as THE primary threat to the coherence of our movement, our state and, therefore, to the NDR itself. This means that we need to build the broadest unity within our movement in the struggle to isolate and defeat Kebble-ism (and one of its core features – anti-communism). Building this unity requires intelligent handling of other differences – we should not sweep differences under the carpet, or pretend to agree when we don’t, but nor should we turn every point of difference within our movement into an existential crisis for our Alliance.

This applies, for instance, to some of the issues that have become matters of dispute in the budget – notably, macro-economic policy and the proposal to subsidise employers who employ young people without work experience, using the SARS payroll tax platform.

On macro-economic policy, we should note (as Cosatu and the People’s Budget have noted) that the budget signalled a greater openness to debate and to flexibility in the implementation of inflation targeting. (Even the IMF in a paper published last week signalled similarly). However, Cosatu and the People’s Budget, in particular, have roundly condemned the re-affirming of a 3-6% inflation target band for the moment. As the SACP we have always argued that over the years our monetary policy has retained its conservative character and a one-sided focus on inflation with negative consequences for growth and jobs. We have always been concerned about interest rates being used as a blunt instrument to control inflation and their

impact on the value of the currency, investment, employment and growth. In this regard, we need to explore other mechanisms to control price increases, fight poverty, promote creation of decent work and reopen debates on the inflation-targeting framework. We have never claimed to know what an appropriate interest rate should be for our country in any particular conjuncture. It is probable that the interest rates HAVE been too high, particularly over the previous few years, and that these have attracted speculative inflows of foreign currency which have, in turn, forced the value of the rand up. This has weakened our exports and probably cost jobs in key manufacturing sectors (i.e. those geared to exports). This is a complex area.

What IS clear is that there needs to be an effective alignment between our proposed new “growth” path and macro-economic policy. However, the details of this new growth path have NOT yet been provided, still less debated – either in government, or in the alliance. Moreover, the macro-economic task group that was decided upon at last year’s Alliance Summit, has not met. Disagreeing on macro-economic policy, and specifically monetary policy, is fine, but we need to factor in all of the above before turning up the volume-control button too high.

The still vague proposal (further details are promised by the end of March) of a youth wage subsidy is a slightly different case in point. It has never been formally discussed within the ANC or Alliance. It was tactically inept (at the very least) for the minister of finance to float the proposal (even if it is still just that) in this way. This is not to say that we should not be taking the case of millions of unemployed youth very, very seriously. Some kind of subsidy MAY

even be something to be considered. However, there is a lack of appreciation for what is a very serious and legitimate concern from the side of Cosatu – namely, that such a subsidy will be used to SUBSTITUTE existing workers with new, subsidised workers. That is, there is a very real danger that it will NOT result in a job-creating approach by capital. We would have to have very effective oversight and regulatory capacity (does this exist in the Labour Dept??) to prevent perverse outcomes of this kind.

But even in this case where an apparently very half-baked and potentially dangerous idea has been floated, actual reasons for being concerned about it have not been adequately articulated from the left.

The danger in over-responding (particularly in a reality in which the media constantly looks for cracks in the Alliance) is that we open up a whole series of antagonistic fronts and we lose focus on collectively isolating and defeating Kibble-ism...and we risk losing middle-ground support and momentum for the major emerging turn-around in economic policy.

In our engagements with Cosatu and other progressive forces we need also to encourage them to re-engage with the budget process in parliament. Since 1996 (?) Cosatu has boycotted the parliamentary budget process on the understandable grounds that parliament had no ability to amend the budget and other money bills. That has now changed with the new Money Bills legislation.

As a long-standing champion of a state-led industrial policy programme, the SACP needs to familiarise itself with and support through popular mobilisation and policy development IPAP 2. The action programme deals with a wide

range of sectors and has fairly specific proposals for each of these. However, it rests on two key new elements:

- Maximising job-creation out of government's R846-billion infrastructure programme, and, particularly, through ensuring as much as possible that related procurement (rail rolling-stock, buses, etc) is manufactured within SA;
- The more effective consolidation and mobilisation of the DFIs to place us onto a different developmental path.

In particular, this latter pillar of IPAP 2 needs to be more fully integrated into the SACP's Financial Sector Campaign. We need to interrogate the mandates of the DFIs, we need to raise, once more, the role of the PIC, and we need to expose the way in which the private banks have been allowed to block DFIs entry into "their" markets.

5.2 Taking forward our financial sector campaign

At the Central Committee meeting in November last year we received a report on progress in the financial sector campaign. It described the deadlock in negotiations between participants in the Financial Sector Charter. In this report, I will give an update on the Charter and touch on some of the issues that we have to consider going forward.

To recap on the previous report, we heard that the banks and other financial institutions were refusing to compromise in any way whatsoever on their demand for retention of the "once empowered, always empowered" provision in the original Charter. The resulting stalemate prevents the Charter from being gazetted, which would finally put in place all the criteria by which to measure the sector's performance in transfor-

mation in the areas of: Access to financial services; Human resource development (including skills development and training); Procurement of goods and services; Empowerment financing (including targeted investments in transformational infrastructure, low-income housing, agricultural development and black SMEs as well as BEE transaction financing; Black ownership and control and Corporate social investment.

Since that report, the Charter participants have continued to engage and four out of the five constituencies - Community, Labour, Government and Absip - have reached consensus on an equity equivalent in place of the additional 5 percent black ownership required by the Codes of Good Practice. The consensus is that the equity equivalent, which is worth R17-billion, will be made available for Enterprise Development and Procurement for Co-operatives and Black SMMEs; for Co-operative Financing and Access to Financing and for Targeted Investments, as outlined above. Only the financial institutions refuse to concede. The banks lead the sector in remaining entrenched in their position that we retain "once empowered" or collapse the Charter.

Our campaign has always been based on two main objectives: community reinvestment by the financial sector to address their neglect of the majority of our people before, during and after the transition to democracy in 1994; and the reintroduction of prescribed assets to force the financial sector to invest in projects determined by the democratic government.

The financial sector's resistance to transformation raises the question: can we achieve our financial sector campaign goals through the BBBEE Charter

process or do we need other strategies?

We also have to take into account the bombshell announcement in the State of the Nation Address and the Budget this month that the Treasury intends to make available a R1 billion guarantee fund to encourage the banks to finance low income housing for the "missing middle" -people who earn too much to qualify for RDP houses but too little to qualify for housing loans from banks. Banks have tried for the past decade to try to get this concession from Government but up until now have failed. This month's Budget announcement completely undermines the Charter's efforts to get the banks to change their lending criteria, including their low-income housing finance interest charges, which they have consistently resisted. The message from the Treasury, the new Minister of Finance and the Minister of Human Settlements is very clear: Government will take all the risks and banks can take all the profits without changing their conduct. Banks do not need a Charter process - with the nuisance of multilateral stakeholders and objective performance measurements - if they can get such concessions from Government.

What options should we be considering going forward? While we should not change our position on demanding that the Charter remains one channel for achieving our goals, we cannot ignore the fact that this process has delivered little and, even if it was working well and we had willing partners in financial institutions, would be unlikely to deliver very much. We need to remain steadfast in our demand that alignment with the BBBEE Act's Codes of Good Practice is the minimum for financial sector transformation. We cannot go further than the consensus position by the four

Charter participants outlined above. If the banks refuse to be part of this consensus, they will be solely responsible for the demise of the Charter. We must oppose the Treasury initiative to cushion the banks by providing guarantees for what they should be doing anyway - providing affordable housing finance to workers in the “missing middle”, as required by the Charter but resisted by the banks because it eats their profits. And then we must remobilise our campaign to demand laws that will legislate change in banking and other financial services. We need to campaign for laws on prescribed assets and on community reinvestment rather than for voluntary initiatives which fail because we do not have willing partners in the financial sector.

However, it is important now that, going forward, we need to locate this campaign firmly within the framework of the new developmental growth path, rather than as a standalone matter, without abandoning the revival of the specific campaign. It now needs, at least at a conceptual and policy level, to be related to the transformation of the entire architecture of the financial sector in our country, including the development finance institutions, and also be linked to the industrial policy. This must be at least a priority policy area for the SACP, in which we must develop our own small capacity and also link to the NEC ETC as well as with other progressive policy initiatives.

5.3 The nationalisation debate

One debate that has unfortunately been opportunistically foisted upon us is that of nationalisation. As the SACP we correctly identified the opportunism in this debate in that it was about bailing out

BEE capital in the mining sector than a principled position to build a developmental state. It was also a call whose real intentions was exposed by its selectivity, excluding a call for the nationalisation of banks and other monopolies, as called for by the Freedom Charter.

Our Deputy General Secretary correctly entered this debate. The response to his interventions further exposed the hollowness of this call and the fact that there was no intention to start a debate, but posturing and grandstanding in order to achieve the devious objectives we had already exposed.

However it is going to be important for the SACP to further nuance this debate as we move forward. We need to be more explicit in what is contained in Cde Jeremy’s responses. These include the fact that we need at all times to interrogate the class intentions or class content of nationalisation. This is because in modern history nationalisation has been undertaken by all sorts of regimes ranging from the Nazis, the apartheid regime, the advanced capitalist countries and the socialist countries. And these ‘nationalisations’ served different purposes, thus underlining the fact that nationalisation is not inherently progressive hence the need for a class interrogation.

We now also have enough of our own experiences in government that state-owned enterprises can be used to serve the accumulation interests of elites, and as another form of ‘asset stripping’ of the state. In many post-colonial situations like ours state owned entities have also been used to build a compradorial class benefitting from the many investment activities undertaken by SoEs.

In correctly arguing for socialisation as our objective, we should however not

be seen or allow to be projected as if we have an in principle objection to progressive nationalisation, whose goal is to lay a foundation for socialisation, and is used to advance the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. Indeed we ourselves have before called for nationalisation (eg of Sasol), but in order to advance a progressive agenda and laying a basis for future socialisation of the means of production in a transition to socialism.

Engaging the debate this way will also go a long way towards preventing the appropriation of this important debate by elites. But the question now is how do we take this debate forwards and towards what ends? Key in this regard will be ensuring that we locate the discussion on nationalisation/socialisation within (and not outside of) the context of our shared strategic priorities – jobs and sustainable livelihoods; health-care; education; rural development; and fighting crime and corruption. As a vanguard party of socialism we need to encourage (i.e. not in a sectarian way) a growing appreciation, from within the broad mass of our people, including the broad ranks of the ANC, of the impossibility of achieving basic objectives within these shared priorities without rolling back the dominance of monopoly capital. As much as possible, we should make this a practical rather than simply an “ideological” demonstration.

By contrast, the opportunistic appropriation of “nationalisation” treats it as a stand-alone; it becomes a rhetorical badge of apparent “radicalism”, rather than a coherent part of an overall national democratic revolutionary programme. Our own principled call for the re-nationalisation of SASOL has also probably suffered a bit from being un-

duly disconnected from a practical but radical overall programme – which is why we have possibly made little practical progress with it.

So how do we link nationalisation/socialisation with our shared strategic objective? For instance, the discussion around the transformation of the mining sector needs to be subordinated to the question of a new growth path and therefore to the role of a transforming mining (and indeed minerals-energy-finance) complex within the emerging Industrial Policy Action Plan (Ipap). How we transform the mining sector should be located within an IPAP discussion and not be based on one third of a decontextualised clause in the Freedom Charter. Another example – the transformation of health-care (as the ANC is coming, in effect, to increasingly recognize and affirm) requires, precisely the enhancement of socialisation in the sector (strengthening the public health sector; rolling back the power of the pharmaceutical industry – which is also raised in IPAP – and the roll-out of an NHI, etc.). The ANC and government might not use the word “socialisation” (and that doesn’t matter) – but this is exactly what is implied. The same can be said for the turn-around in education – with the important growing realization that “socialisation” doesn’t just mean an improving “state-controlled” sector (that’s critical), but also, in this case, the effective mobilisation of key social forces (teachers, parents, learners, communities) around a unifying transformational agenda. Fighting corruption critically relates to bringing the state and especially the SOEs under a social/developmental mandate – as opposed to using them as sources for primitive accumulation. The current crisis around governance,

golden hand-shakes, exorbitant tariffs, and failures to actually effectively deliver in many SOEs provides us with an opportunity to advance (not the cause of privatisation, as the DA will do) but rather their effective and increasing socialisation – i.e. subordination to a logic of social needs not private profits.

6. The Alliance and outstanding urgent matters

There are a number of matters that require the attention of the alliance that this gathering must reflect upon and give guidance on how we take them forward.

The first and most important is the need to urgently take forward the work on the Alliance task team on macro-economic policy review. However we need to broaden this discussion without losing sight of the very specific objectives we want to achieve.

It is clear that in government there is some 'stale-mate' towards taking some decisive steps on the key question of the need to align our macro-economic policies with our micro-economic and industrial policies.

The ANC has also resolved to have a bilateral with the SACP, ostensibly arising out of the booing incident at our Special Congress. It is important that we do not allow this bilateral to be reduced to this matter, or even worse to allow ourselves to account and apologise. Rather it should focus broadly on our relations, the role of the ANCYL and specifically its president, as well as refocusing our attention on key programmes and tasks facing the national democratic revolution. It is also important that we must strongly express our displeasure at the behaviour of the President of the ANCYL and our concerns that he has not

been censured at all.

It would also be important that prior to the next Alliance Summit proposed for February that we have an Alliance Political Council meeting. This is going to be important in managing our alliance relations going forward, and laying a better basis for the Alliance Summit.

The PB has to discuss the sequencing of these engagements. However, as the SACP we should be pushing for more joint action on the ground in line with our Alliance programme of action, as part of building a campaign driven Alliance.

7. Size does matter: A class approach to building a larger SACP

The key challenge facing the SACP this year and towards our MTV timeline in 2014 is that of building a larger but quality SACP. Our commitment to 500 000 members by 2014 is indeed one of the most serious commitments we have made as the SACP ever regarding the size of our Party. This also means that we have to grow our membership by at least 100 000 members per annum between now and 2014. Nevertheless it is a task we must undertake with energy.

As we have done in the past we do not just grow our membership through distribution of forms and persuading people to join. This must be part of our ongoing campaigns and being in the trenches with the workers and the poor of our country. This must not just be a numbers game, but we must simultaneously grow the party quantitatively and qualitatively. This also means a more systematic and focused attention to raising the necessary resources as we build a larger SACP.

Our resolution to grow the Party is informed by a number of interrelated

reasons. Firstly, in order for us to realize the objectives of our MTV we need a 'longer reach' than our current membership allows. Secondly, in order for us to effectively play a vanguard role, communists must be literally everywhere, including in all key sites of power. Our numbers as they stand are a good foundation, but not adequate to realize this role. It is also true that a larger SACP is better able to defend itself from its enemies and detractors, thus safeguarding a radical national democratic revolution and a transition to socialism.

If we are to grow quantitatively and qualitatively we must therefore even be more systematic in our recruitment and growth. Most important we must always be guided by our class approach to growing the SACP. Our approach to growing the Party must be informed by the fact that a larger SACP must not dilute its vanguard character and role, but instead it can strengthen that capacity to be a vanguard party.

Our overall approach must be that we need to independently root the SACP amongst the workers and the poor of our country, and also reach out to the intelligentsia and other sections of the lower middle classes who stand to benefit from a radical national democratic revolution.

Our primary and most immediate area for growth is recruitment amongst organised workers, with Cosatu members being our first priority, but also reaching out to workers in other federations. This means strengthening our bilateral relations with Cosatu, but most importantly being in the trenches with the organised working class, around the goal of transforming our current growth path and fighting for decent work. Our recruitment amongst organised work-

ers must also aim to counter the capitalist tendency of wanting to fragment the working class through casualisation, outsourcing, labour broking and replacement of South African workers with workers from neighbouring countries. This means assisting to reach out to organise all workers irrespective of their nationality.

The SACP must intensify targeted recruitment amongst members of co-operatives as well as recruiting the most advanced amongst the farmworkers and farm dwellers directly into the ranks of our Party. The latter task must particularly be carried out by our rural branches located in or next to the farms and in the agri-processing entities in rural towns.

Our campaign against corruption, patronage and tenderpreneurship can also take us a long way towards recruiting within the ranks of the SMEs who are facing a 'tripartite' squeeze. Many SMEs are faced with closure as a result of the expansion of malls into the townships. We may need a campaign to engage and pressure big capital that their expansion of malls must factor in the SMEs. Usually these big retail capitalists find black BEE partners to enter the townships, with no care or due regard to the impact of these in the SME activities in the townships and some rural areas. Secondly, the SMEs are killed by tenderpreneurs, given the fact that many of them do not have government connections like tenderpreneurs. Our struggle against corruption and more transparent tendering processes can open the way for the SACP to have a presence amongst genuine, hard-working and honest small entrepreneurs. It is not these small entities which are our principal enemy, but monopoly capital. Thirdly many SMEs are squeezed by the failure of government to pay them on time for

services rendered. In line with the call by the President, the SACP must take up the campaign for SMEs to be paid within a month of the completion of work.

We need to intensify work to broaden the appeal of the party to progressive professionals and academics, as well as the middle classes located within the state, especially the hard working civil servants committed to serving the public. Many of these hate corruption amongst their fellow public servants, as this dents the image of all public servants. This is also important if we are to build the ideological and policy capacity of the SACP, a very important dimen-

sion for a vanguard Party.

We need to forge closer and tactical relations with those sections of the new black (sections) of the bourgeoisie which value our alliance and are also alienated by the activities of the big tenderpreneurs.

The SACP also needs to support and strengthen the YCL to recruit more amongst the youth of our country. Special attention needs to be paid by our YCL to students and campus presence as well as to young workers. This has also got implications of how the YCL is strengthened both before and after its forthcoming Congress. ★

JOE SLOVO

Ours was never a struggle to replace the white elite with a black elite

'True national liberation ultimately is impossible without social liberation' – Joe Slovo, 1988

By Blade Nzimande

Cde Joe Slovo passed away on 6 January 1995, 15 years ago. Our commemoration of his passing is the first mass activity of the SACP for 2010. There could have been no better way to start this important year for our country, than through the commemoration and celebration of the life, struggles and sacrifices of one of the greatest heroes of our South African revolution, our former General Secretary and National Chairperson, a former member of the ANC NEC and NWC, Cde Joe Slovo. Cde Slovo embodied some of the best qualities that came to characterise our revolution - selflessness, solidarity and complete dedication to the liberation of the overwhelming majority of our people.

In recognition of his contribution to the national liberation struggle and his role as a member and later leader of the ANC, he was given the highest award by the ANC, Isithwalandwe, at the ANC's national conference in 1994 in Mangaung, just under a month before he passed away. This was also recognition of the contribution of communists as members and leaders of the ANC in their own right.

A communist cadre and leader of the liberation movement as a whole

Slovo joined the communist movement as part of the Young Communist League in the 1940s and played a critical role in the reconstitution of the SACP underground in 1953 after the banning of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) by the apartheid regime in 1950. He understood that being a communist was a life-long commitment and not some fashion to be worn and opportunistically thrown off according to personal and other opportunistic reasons.

Cde Slovo played a critical, and often leading, role in the reconstitution of SACP structures in exile, as well as rebuilding them inside the country after the banning of the ANC in 1960. At the unbanning of the liberation movement in 1990, Slovo returned to the country as General Secretary of the SACP; a recognition of his commitment to the cause of socialism and his role in the SACP over more than four decades at the time.

Cde Slovo will forever stand out as a symbol of the immense contribution that some of our white compatriots have made to the liberation of our country. These white compatriots like Bill Andrews, Ruth First, Sonia and

Brian Bunting, Michael Harmel, Ray Alexander, Bram Fischer, Esther Barsel, and many others were trailblazers in the struggle to forge a non-racial movement and a non-racial South Africa. This should continue to serve as an example to especially our younger white compatriots, and also dispel the myth once and for all that white cadres like Joe Slovo are not part of the broader family of our movement.

As the SACP, we were the pioneers of the non-racial political movement in our country. In memory of Cde Slovo we must continue to vigorously defend the struggle for a non-racial South Africa, and isolate and expose both white racism and narrow African chauvinism (whose aim is to hide private and personal accumulation interests).

There is also no contradiction between the struggle, on the one hand, for the liberation of Africans in particular and blacks in general and, on the other hand, for non-racialism! In fact the former is the condition for the realisation of the latter. But at the same time we need to be vigilant that the struggle for the liberation of blacks in general, and Africans in particular, is not corrupted towards a narrow (often elite-driven) anti-white African chauvinism, thus defeating the objectives of building a non-racial society.

Cde Slovo led by example when it came to undertaking difficult tasks, and was amongst the first to join the ranks of Umkhonto weSizwe when our movement embarked on the armed struggle in 1961. Through his dedication he rose through the ranks of Umkhonto to become a commander.

Cde Slovo also stands out as a symbol of the unity of our alliance. We should seek to emulate his example as part of

strengthening and deepening the unity of our alliance in the current period going forward.

Cde Slovo is also the personification of the role played by many other communists in our liberation movement. He was a member and leader of both the SACP and the ANC. He personifies the fact that there is no contradiction in being a communist and a member of the ANC, and that, in fact, good communists must be in the ANC. This also reflects the very strength of the ANC as a movement, in that it draws its cadres from the widest possible circles of progressives in the youth, student, women's, trade union and communist movements.

Cde Slovo's life and example is an answer to those who have always been threatened by the presence of communists in our broader movement, and that in fact there can be no liberation movement in our country without the equal participation of all its constituent parts and components.

Cde Slovo led by example in many ways. He was amongst the first communists that served in Cabinet in our very first democratic government in 1994 and was the first national office-bearer of the SACP to play such a role in national government. As Minister of Housing, albeit for a very short period, he served government with distinction, and placed the interests of the people above those of his own. He laid the foundation for the many later advances made by the government in its housing programme over the past 16 years. The lesson from Slovo in this regard is that good communists in government, at whatever level, must serve with dedication, with the sole purpose of uplifting and transforming the conditions of the overwhelming majority of our people, especially the

workers and the poor. And Cde Slovo's many roles (and hats) serve as reminder that communists must indeed be active everywhere – in the ANC, in community mass organisations, in the trade union movement, in the state and wherever duty calls, to advance and deepen our national democratic revolution!

The ideologue and theoretician of our movement

Slovo was one of the leading theoreticians of the SACP and indeed our movement as a whole. Much that he wrote over the past decades remains as relevant as ever. Some of these are even more relevant in the current period. In one of his seminal writings, *The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution*, Slovo said: “Socialist ideas take root not just through book knowledge but through struggle around day to day issues”. Slovo was not denouncing book knowledge, in which he was a great believer, but was pointing out that knowledge without involvement in practical struggle can be meaningless. In fact we need both book knowledge and involvement in struggle – combination of theory and practice!

Indeed through our annual Red October Campaign and other campaigns the SACP has embarked on mass activity and mobilisation, reaching out and being embraced by the workers and the poor of our country (and even sections of our middle classes) in together taking up struggles around their day to day issues facing our people.

Slovo would have been proud of the achievements of the SACP's Red October Campaign since its launch in 1999, and the extent to which this campaign has contributed to the enormous growth of the SACP, whose membership is now

close to 100 000. In his memory we should indeed seek to double this membership by our 13th Congress in 2012, whilst ensuring that we focus on the quality of our membership as well. Conditions today dictate that if the SACP is to meaningfully play its vanguard role we should aim to grow our Party both qualitatively and quantitatively, and at least aim at a minimum of 500 000 members by 2014.

He argued in the same pamphlet: “We have never hidden our (the SACP) conviction, which we continue to proclaim, that true national liberation ultimately is impossible without social liberation”. This relevant point it relates to the reality that our struggle was simply never only about winning political power, but fundamentally about the transformation of the conditions of the overwhelming majority of our people. In following Joe Slovo we should unashamedly reiterate, both in theory and practice, that our struggle was never about an empowerment of a small elite or about replacing a white with a black elite, but was, and still is, about the liberation and upliftment of the majority of our people.

The SACP shall allow no intimidation or blackmail, of whatever type, whether from inside or outside our movement, to derail us from defending the principal goal of our liberation movement - to change the conditions of the majority for the better and fight against all forms of chauvinism, narrow nationalism and self-enrichment by those in positions of power and authority.

The organisational tasks of the SACP and the working class

On the leading role of the working class, and in the same pamphlet, Cde Slovo had this to say: “The working class can-

not play the key role by merely leading itself and sloganeering about its historic mission. It must win popular acceptance on the ground as the most effective champion of the democratic aspirations of all the racially oppressed groupings. It must work with, and provide leadership to, our youth, women, intellectuals, small traders, peasants, the rural poor and – yes – even the racially-dominated black bourgeoisie, all of whom are a necessary part of the broad front of our liberation struggle”.

This message, though in a different context now, remains an important clarion call to the SACP and a guide to its work. At the centre of what Slovo was saying is that we need to build the SACP as a vanguard party of the working class. But in playing its vanguard role the working class in particular must seek to reach out to a range of forces that still has an interest in the transformation of our society.

For instance in growing its membership the SACP must embark on a systematic recruitment campaign, through mass struggles, to forge relations with a wider range of class forces and strata in society. Through concrete struggles and campaigns the SACP must intensify its recruitment amongst organised workers, which are its principal constituency and the most important revolutionary layer of the working class. In addition we need to recruit farm-workers and small-scale farmers as part of building the motive forces for the transformation of South Africa’s countryside.

We must also recruit amongst small businesses, who continue to be suffocated by monopoly capital – the capitalist malls built in the townships that are killing their small businesses, and the tenderpreneurs who continue to enrich

themselves through corrupt tenders at the expense of honest small entrepreneurs who do not have political connections in the state. We must strengthen small entrepreneurs and defeat tenderpreneurs! We need to support skills development for co-operatives, small and micro enterprises. We need to deepen our struggle for the transformation of our financial sector to benefit the workers and the poor, including co-operatives and small and micro businesses.

As we have done over the past 16 years and before, we need to seek to influence the terms and conditions under which a new black section of the bourgeoisie grows. We need to fight for truly broad based empowerment and seek to direct investment into the productive sectors of our economy that creates jobs. We need to continuously expose and challenge the self-enrichment of a few and fight the emergence of a highly dependent compradorial bourgeoisie! In this struggle we must also seek to expose the opportunistic use of the language and demands of the working class in order to hide the accumulation agenda of a compradorial bourgeoisie. This is the meaning of Slovo’s life, struggles and observations today!

Our YCL must intensify its recruitment of young people into the folds of the communist movement. It must seek to recruit students, unemployed youth and young workers, so that these strata of our society become allies of the working class, and become part of our broader movement. Our YCL must seek to educate our young people in Marxism-Leninism and relate this to our own concrete conditions in South Africa. Our YCL must continue to strengthen the Progressive Youth Alliance, by ensuring that our youth is engaged on concrete

programmes and struggles, especially on education, both formal and informal!

Our YCL must also be guided by what Cde Slovo also said: "To eventually win the majority of our people for a socialist South Africa, we must spread socialist awareness and socialist consciousness now, mainly among the workers but also among the rural poor and the middle strata". Spreading socialist consciousness, especially among the youth, is central in the struggle for socialism in South Africa.

Much more importantly, while recognising the centrality (and continued reproduction) of the legacy of national oppression, communists must consistently, unashamedly and unapologetically raise class issues in the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. The SACP shall not be intimidated by attempts to divert us from the very centrality of class issues in present day South Africa, or we will succumb to an agenda that seeks to deny Slovo's very apt observation that there can be no true national liberation without social liberation.

Intensify the struggle against corruption

All members of the alliance have committed themselves to fight against corruption, both in the public and private sectors. The SACP has adopted this as one of its own programmes as well. If we are to realize what Slovo lived and

died for, corruption must be defeated as it constitutes theft from the workers and the poor.

The SACP needs to concretise the campaign against corruption, and push for the public sector to lead by example, while simultaneously fighting all forms of corruption in the private sector.

For instance we need to consider whether, given the degree of corruption surrounding some of the tender awards in the public sector, we should not call for an open and transparent process in the awarding of government tenders. Is it not, for instance, possible to ensure that all those who have tendered must be publicly known, and for government to publicise those shortlisted, providing an opportunity for communities to comment, and the reasons for final awards to be made public as well? We need to think out of our boxes, as Joe Slovo often did, if we are to root out corruption. Let all our party structures, engaging with our communities and other strata in society, discuss concrete methods to root out corruption, for the sake of Joe Slovo's sacrifices and his contribution in making our country free!

Asikhulume!!

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Cde Nzimande is SACP General Secretary. This article appeared in a recent Umsebenzi Online on the 15th anniversary commemoration of the passing away of former SACP General Secretary, Cde Joe Slovo

JOE SLOVO MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Alliance is a strategic, inter-class relationship

We should avoid placing the Alliance's primacy over the individual organisations, says **Gwede Mantashe**

The Joe Slovo memorial lectures are part of the annual SACP political programmes. As April is the Chris Hani month, January is the Joe Slovo month.

The significance of these memorial lectures lies not in merely paying tribute to individuals but, rather, in their recollection of the many cadres of our movement who sacrificed life and limb for the revolution. These comrades' contribution and history should serve as the bedrock upon which we interpret the contemporary situation. This is dialectical materialism in action, wherein historical reality is recalled to interpret the current material situation.

I would like to dedicate this Joe Slovo memorial lecture to the strengthening of the Alliance.

Joe Slovo was a revolutionary and organic intellectual. He used his intellectual capacity to develop the theory of the revolution for the liberation of the class he organically comes from, namely, the working class. His contribution to the development of the theory on the interconnectedness between the national, class and gender questions is unsurpassed.

Isithwalandwe-Seaparankoe – Joe Slo-

vo earned respect for the role he played as a communist, as a member and leader of the ANC, as a founder member and leading officer of Umkhonto weSizwe and, ultimately, the first Minister of Housing in democratic South Africa.

Paying tribute to Joe Slovo after his death in 1995 Pallo Jordan described him as follows: "A militant democrat and as a communist Joe Slovo threw himself body and soul into the national liberation movement from an early age, joining the Communist Party of South Africa at the age of 15. He committed himself fully to the struggles of the people in his chosen South Africa, becoming an ardent patriot in the true sense of that word, meaning a love for one's country and all its people, not merely a blind support of the government in power."

This encapsulates Joe Slovo, a revolutionary, a soldier, a communist and an intellectual.

In his treatise, *The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution* (1988), Slovo sought to clarify a few issues regarding class struggle and national struggle, that is, the question of the stages of struggle, inter-class alliances and the role of our work-

ing class in the liberation front. It is this ability to engage in political debates and analysis without the constraints of being a nationalist or a communist that earned him respect across the whole spectrum of cadreship of our movement. His understanding of the role of communists in the liberation movement and other democratic formations was instructive. He represented “that which is one of the greatest qualities of cadres of the Communist Party, that is, an ideological and experiential understanding, loyalty and commitment to the Alliance, in particular our strategic relationship with the African National Congress”.

The Central Committee in 1977 published its decision in a document ***Class, National and Gender Struggle in South Africa: The Historic relationship between the SACP and the ANC***. In this document the Central Committee explained the role of the Communist Party in clear terms: “A working class Party does not exercise its vanguard role in relation to the trade unions by capturing them or transforming them into wings of the party, but by proving that the Party and its individual members are the most ideologically clear and the most devoted and loyal participants in the workers’ cause. The same situation applies to a situation such as ours in which the main immediate instrument for the achievement of the aims of our national democratic revolution is a mass movement capable of galvanising all classes...The African National Congress is such an instrument and our loyal participation in the liberation front which it heads is in the best interests of the class whose vanguard we claim to be”.

This vision and foresight must guide us today when the Alliance is questioned by our own. I am certain Slovo

would have produced a paper intervening in the current situation, reminding us of the words of Oliver Tambo that “Ours is not merely a paper alliance created at conference tables and formalised through the signing of documents and representing only an agreement by the leaders ... Instead our alliance is a living organism that has grown out of struggle”. We must engage in this debate without fear or favour and explain that our movement has a responsibility of leading society.

The leadership responsibility starts with the ANC, the leader of the Alliance. In this leadership role there is an obligation to work hard and invest in unity of the Alliance. Equally, the Alliance partners have a duty to work for unity.

In this instance, we must ask whether the debate about the Alliance being the strategic centre of power serves to unite or divide us. If it is projected as replacing the strategic leadership role of the ANC, it is counter-productive in that it forces us on to a false premise. I am encouraging communists to provide leadership in this debate. In the coming Alliance summit we must find a solution to this stalemate that almost derailed our last Alliance summit. We owe it to Joe Slovo, Moses Kotane, Moses Mabhida, Raymond Mhlaba, Ray Alexander, Jack Simon, Brian Bunting, Govan Mbeki, Dora Tamane and many other communists who appreciated the importance of the Alliance.

We must remind our comrades that it is not something new to use communists as a scapegoat when there are class contradictions in the multi-class movement. When we see it today we need to be reminded of what Alfred Nzo said in 1986: “The focus of attack of those who seek to keep us in servitude is today

centred on the role and position of the SACP in the South African struggle, the extent and depth of influence of communists within the ANC to the point of questioning the independence of the African National Congress, the veracity of our own leadership and honesty of our publicly-declared intentions, policy and programme.

“This counter-offensive has gone so far that detailed studies are published which purport to identify the ideological positions of the members of our National Executive Committee. Each one of us, members of the leadership of the ANC, find ourselves confronted insistently and with great persistence with the task of having to explain whether we are or are not members of the Communist Party”.

Our enemies always use the red scare, nationally and internationally, in their attempt to project the movement as a terrorist organisation, with the hope of isolating it. We cannot accept this approach in 2010. We must unapologetically tell our people that the SACP is in alliance with the ANC and, thus, it cannot be a revolutionary task to defend the ANC from communists.

We must develop a joint programme based on what we agree on. Our starting point should be the five priorities for the next five years, as enshrined in the 2009 manifesto. We all agree that high unemployment, deepening poverty, growing inequality and diseases, are the most immediate challenges facing society today. The creation of more jobs, decent work and sustainable livelihood responds to some of these challenges. The ten-point plan on health and the ten-point plan on education must be supported. More than support, every activist of our movement must know

them like the back of their hands. Our fight against crime and corruption is not just a luxury, but it is a programme that must be implemented aggressively. The starting point is to raise the consciousness of the people.

This minimum programme of the Alliance confirms views expressed by Joe Slovo when he said: “This alliance is not merely about three organisations coming together to fight a common struggle, but it is actually, and fundamentally, an inter-class alliance. In many instances, placing the primacy of this front on the organisations that constitute it loses the class character of the alliance. Whilst the organisations as such are very important, we should not lose sight of the fact that the alliance is an inter-class alliance, bringing together different class forces on the basis of a common minimum programme”.

Explaining the concept of the minimum programme Slovo further illustrates: “The classes and strata which come together in a front of struggle usually have different long-term interests and, often, even contradictory expectations from the immediate phase. The search for agreement usually leads to a minimum platform, which excludes some of the positions of the participating classes and strata. It follows that an alliance can only be created if these diverse forces are prepared to enter into compromise”.

He elucidates that the working class, through being in an Alliance, neither dissolves nor abandons its independent class objectives or independent class organisation. The same applies to other partners in the Alliance.

This characterisation imposes the responsibility on the Alliance partners to actively participate in each other’s ac-

tivities. It is this interaction that enables cross-influence between and among the Alliance partners. Any attempt to impose one partner's will over and above the others will be a disaster.

Let me conclude this magnanimous character and quality that is comrade JS, the embodiment of the Alliance, in the words of comrade OR Tambo at comrade Moses Mabhida's funeral in 1986,

"This combination of functions sometimes surprised and puzzled our friends who wondered why Comrade Mabhida had to serve in so many senior

positions in different organisations. But, above all, it enraged our enemies. This combination of functions in one leader of our people upset our adversaries because it reflected the permanence and acceptability among our people of the idea and practice of the unity of the revolutionary democratic, socialist and the trade union movements in the South African struggle for liberation". ★

Cde Mantashe is SACP Chairperson. This speech was delivered in Khayelitsha to the Brian Bunting District of the SACP

CHRIS HANI REMEMBERED

Personal experiences under Hani's command and leadership

Cde Chris emphasised conscientious communist discipline as a key for success of any combat operation, writes **Charles Sechaba Setsubi**

My first direct contact with South Africa's revolutionary martyr, cde Chris Hani, was in Lesotho in 1977, following my deployment there as an ANC\MK operative in that country. The late Chris Hani was then the regional head of the ANC Lesotho machinery, having secretly infiltrated that country around 1974. My deployment in Lesotho was the result of cde Chris's directive relayed from Lesotho to the ANC-HQ in Lusaka to the effect that he needed MK cadres from the camps in the People's Republic of Angola who had specialised in military combat work (MCW) for underground deployment inside the country.

The basic content of MCW was about the art of creation of People's Revolutionary Army behind the enemy lines. It meant the creation of underground revolutionary cells inside the country. This was after my specialised MCW revolutionary training in Moscow in the then USSR after going into exile in 1975.

I interacted with cde Chris, both formally and informally, for many years in exile while under his direct command and leadership in Lesotho and after my subsequent re-deployment in 1980 in the Operations Department of MK Mili-

tary Headquarters in Lusaka. This interaction continued later in Tanzania where again, through his directive as MK Chief of Staff and Deputy Army Commander, I was deployed by MHQ as ANC Military Attache in that country between 1990 and 1992, following withdrawal in 1989 of MK combatants from Angola to Tanzania and Uganda. Cde Chris was officially withdrawn from Lesotho in 1983 by the ANC/MK-HQ who believed, after several enemy assassination attempts that his life was in danger.

It is on the basis of those interactions over more than a decade that I can today look back and summarise some of the main revolutionary qualities of the people's martyr.

Chris Hani was a communist; a revolutionary who in practice saw the need for South Africa's socio-economic transformation for a better life for our struggling masses. He was a visionary who could apply revolutionary theory to predict the future course of events; a leader who at the same time knew how to follow.

Metaphorically speaking, cde Chris had a focused eye on the revolutionary horizon. His ear was always on the ground to listen to anyone or anything

worthy of being listened to. He had his finger on the pulse of the constantly unfolding historical events. Cde Chris always had his facts and information at his finger tips. He was a theoretician who developed and applied Marxist-Leninist theory to South Africa's concrete situation. Chris was an internationalist who believed that the gains and or setbacks of any revolution anywhere in the world were those of South African revolution as well. He was a nerve centre of not only South African revolutionary alliance but also of the world revolutionary movement.

Chris had revolutionary charisma and was stoical at the same time for he was able to display great self control and clarity of mind in adversity. He had iron nerves, resilience and revolutionary stamina. He had an indelible memory that could easily recall historical events and remember names of many MK combatants in every military camp and of those in ANC settlements anywhere in the world.

When I arrived in Lesotho from Angola, I became the ninth MCW trained cadre to be deployed there between the period 1975 and 1977 and I was, accordingly, given the letter of the alphabet 'I' as my combat code. Chris himself then was going by the letter 'B' after 'A,' that is, after the now retired SANDF General Lambert Moloi who had arrived in Lesotho in 1972, two years earlier than Chris.

Besides 'A' and 'B', there were other comrades who came before me who went by the codes 'C' to 'H'. We were all members of the SACP at the same time. It is with great pain in my heart that I note that some of these gallant revolutionary fighters are now no more. Some to this day remain unaccounted for and

others fell in combat, save 'A' and 'I'.

'C' was an ex-Robben Islander of ten years and died of natural causes in the late 1990s. 'F' remains to this day unaccounted for after his capture by the enemy inside the country in the late 1970s. We believe he may have been killed and secretly buried by the enemy. 'D' died in a car accident on his way from a combat mission in Lesotho in 1977. 'G' perished in a premature explosion of a home-made bomb right near the intended target inside the country. 'E' and 'H' were martyred during the 8 December, 1982 Maseru raid by the SADF special forces of the apartheid state.

I reported to cde Chris during my briefing and de-briefing sessions after arrival in Lesotho that I had been a member of ANC underground cell while a student at the University of Fort Hare and an ANC underground operative between 1970-75 before I left for exile in 1975.

In 1967-68 while he was at Wankie, I was a student at a conservative Roman Catholic school, namely, Mariazell High School, doing Form 3 and 4. This school is situated in the Drakensberg Mountains on the southern border of Lesotho with South Africa. One incident comes to mind when thinking of my past school days. This I told cde Chris much later.

One windy August morning of 1967 after the death of the then ANC President, Chief Albert Luthuli, we were summoned to the student parade square by the principal of the school, a German nun named Sister Gabrielis. I told cde Chris that we were instructed to kneel and pray hard for coming days until further notice because 'communist terrorists' had just entered Rhodesia from Zambia and were on their way to South Africa. So we must pray for their defeat

and destruction before they reached South Africa. For some of us being politically conscious then, we relished everything that made the white man scared. Cde Chris then remarked that MK for which he was commissar had not been defeated by the enemy in the battle field of Wankie!

It was Chris Hanu who subsequently 'intra-deployed' me inside Lesotho in the small town of Mafeteng, south of Maseru, where I stayed almost as family with his father, the late Gilbert Hanu, who had been exiled to Lesotho since the early 1960s and the late Elizabeth Mafikeng who herself had been banished to Lesotho in 1959, following the illegalisation of the SACP through the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950. The late cde Elizabeth was from Paarl in the Western Cape. She was a political contemporary and friend of the late Ray Alexander Simons.

Mafeteng was a strategic halfway station of MK cadres en route to infiltration into the country, via Mhales' Hoek, Quthing and Qachasnek.

It is ironic that as far back as 1978, in one of my many interactions, discussions and conversations with cde Chris, he predicted how he was going to die. Looked at in retrospect, this historic and tragic prediction that shook the world became, subsequently, accurate in its realisation. Every Sunday, if the many secret missions he undertook inside the country from Maseru via Mafeteng allowed, cde Chris was in Mafeteng to visit his father. After seeing his father he would brief me on my own missions into or from the country. As a rule, we would then analyse the situation and experiences gained in past missions, successful or failed, good or bad, and then draw lessons for future mission planning and

execution.

There was a standing combat order he gave me when he moved me from Maseru to Mafeteng early in 1978: if he did not show up after a given hour on any of the Sundays he was expected to, I was required to travel to Maseru and to contact him either directly or through comrade 'A' for whatever mission he had for me or whenever the need arose. Naturally, on my way back, I would bring along the usual consignment of South African Sunday newspapers for the tuck-shop that was managed by the old man, Gilbert Hanu. This was actually an ANC project run by the old man. Per cde Chris' instruction, it was compulsory that these newspapers be read by all the cadres meant for infiltration into the country for analytical purposes and to be abreast of the general situation inside the country.

Not showing up as expected was also a signal that he was on a secret mission inside the country or was held up for other local combat commitments.

That Sunday afternoon, cde Chris and his constant companions, his three daughters, had just delivered South African Sunday newspapers to that small tuck-shop in Mafeteng. He, out of the blue, in conversation with his father said that if he were to choose how to die, he would choose to die by the enemy bullet!

This is exactly what happened at his Dawn Park home on 8 December 1993, almost 15 years later. This happened not during the hard combat years of the liberation struggle but rather after the ceasefire during the transition to democracy by the reactionary and treacherous act of the class enemies of the South African revolution – after surviving many assassination attempts over a decade.

This does not suggest in any way that cde Chris chose to die in that fashion on that tragic day. What he meant was, like all revolutionary martyrs throughout history, what happened with some of the members of his Luthuli Detachment in 1967-68 in Rhodesia, to fall in battle was to be expected. But not after the cease-fire. The 1990 Pretoria Minute of the apartheid government and the ANC noted: "In the interest of moving as speedily as possible towards a negotiated peaceful political settlement and in the context of the agreement reached, the ANC announced that it was now suspending all armed actions with immediate effect. As a result of this, no further armed actions and related activities by the ANC and its military wing Umkhonto weSizwe (MK) will take place."

The enemy for his part never ceased fire on us right up to April 27, 1994 and beyond!

I was with cde Chris Hanu in an MK military camp in Mgagao, Iringa, Tanzania on that day as ANC Military Attache in Tanzania. I can tell you now with confidence, like many MK combatants then that cde Chris was not happy at all with that ANC unilateral announcement of which he was not part, though he was then MK Chief of Staff and its Deputy Army Commander at the time.

To express that unhappiness, he called one of the unit commissars to order when immediately after the radio announcement of the MK ceasefire, the said Commissar shouted: "Viva Pretoria Minute"! He rebuked that comrade and concluded: 'We do not know yet what that Pretoria Minute brings us Comrade, so you must be careful'.

But cde Chris was a loyal cadre to the revolutionary movement and to Marxist-Leninist principles of account-

ability, control and democratic centralism. While he disagreed with the ANC's unilateral ceasefire he knew he had to support, defend and implement it because it was a collective decision taken by or in consultation with the majority of the leadership. Based on that understanding, whether he was there or not that was immaterial.

Subsequent historical events have proved beyond doubt that the warning was well founded as he accurately predicted how the class enemy would behave in future. The accuracy of that warning and subsequently what happened on all fronts of the struggle during the transition, up to 27 April, 1994, and beyond is common knowledge.

Cde Chris was trying to remind the revolutionary movement of Marxist-Leninism's first 'commandment' – the violation of which ensures punishment by history – that the class enemy is always treacherous. It cannot be trusted no matter how seductive its promises are, until its class machinery of oppression has been completely disarmed and dismantled and replaced by that of the allies of the revolutionary class loyal to the aims and objectives of the revolution.

The outcome of the Record of Understanding: September 1992 following the collapse of Codesa II is a case in point. It was noted: "Through the sunset clause all civil servants who served in the apartheid govern were guaranteed positions in the public service during the transition period, 1994 to 1999. ... While others were willing to learn and change, some felt threatened by the new approached and continued with old practices that undermined the very changes that were being introduced".

By virtue of their strategic deploy-

ment in the state and its institutions since then, to this day they continue to sabotage and undermine aims and objectives of the NDR.

When engaging with cde Chris, there were favourable topics for some of us, the choice of which was mainly influenced by the concrete situation prevailing then. As frontline cadres we were almost all members of the SACP. I was recruited into the ranks of the SACP by cde Chris Hani himself immediately after my arrival in Lesotho in 1977.

There were general theoretical topics we discussed. But Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory was compulsory for frontline cadres for it helped us to understand and identify who the class enemy was. These topics included, among others, 'how a communist behaves in the enemy hands,' examples of which were the internationalist, Che Guevara, Polish underground fighter Julius Fuschik, and Bulgarian revolutionary Giorgi Dimitrov.

'Revolutionary heroism and martyrdom' as exemplified by a communist, Alexandra Matrosov, who blocked a machine gun nest with his chest to save the lives of his comrades and also to allow the Red Army to storm enemy positions; and the role the battalion of Commander Baujan Momish Uli played in saving Moscow from capture by the German Nazi forces during the defence of Moscow on the Volokolamsk Highway; the Stalingrad battle; etc.

On the home front, Cde Chris would share, among others, his experiences of Wankie and Siphililo MK military campaigns of 1967-68 and of course the famous MK memorandum he authored for

the 1969 Morogoro Conference which put him in trouble with the ANC leadership. South African history would be discussed as authored by Edward Roux and other progressive writers; the SA revolution and its martyrs, the majority of whom happened to be communists.

Through all these discussions, cde Chris was preparing us for infiltration behind the enemy lines. As emphasised by cde Chris, the question of conscientious communist discipline became a key element for success of any combat operation.

These qualities were also displayed at ANC\MK-HQ in Lusaka and in our military bases in Angola and elsewhere. Cde Chris was generally soft, kind, gentle and sensitive to the needs and welfare of the cadres. He was easy to approach for both the collective general good and for individual confidential personal issues. As a revolutionary soldier, he loved to be in the midst of the army personnel in the camps when no other leader would do so. He was inspirational to the army personnel. He was admired by almost everyone, save the class enemy who hated him for what he stood for and symbolised.

But cde Chris could be tough and assertive when a given situation demanded the defence of revolutionary gains. That is why he was the most suitable candidate for suppression of the class enemy instigated mutiny within MK ranks in Angola in 1983.

Eternal glory to the immortal revolutionary spirit of cde Chris Hani! ★

Cde Setsubi is an SACP Central Committee member and MK veteran

YCL NATIONAL LEKGOTLA

Communism: not a riddle but a solution

This is the political report of the February YCL National Lekgotla

1. Introduction

This National Committee Lekgotla is significant no less because of the delegates and alliance partners elected to participate here, but also because of the year and decade that lies ahead. We are meeting in the year of the 3rd National Congress of our glorious youth organisation. We are also meeting on the year of the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. Ours is also significant because it is on the verge of the hosting of an august FIFA World Cup to be held for the first time in our country and in our continent.

Within this coming half a decade, we will celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the SACP, the party of the working class and the poor, and the Centenary of the ANC, the torch bearer of national liberation in South Africa. We will also have various Congresses and Conferences of the SACP, ANC and Cosatu; a symbol of the democratic nature our liberation movement and revolutionary alliance represents. We will next year have the Local Government Elections, an event that will draw millions to the voting booth to reaffirm their commitment to the ANC led Alliance government.

We are meeting here under the theme *In Praise of Communism* so as to reinforce our commitment to the struggle for socialism and ultimately, communism. This theme is taken from a similar title of a poem by Bertolt Brecht's, which proclaims, I quote:

*It's sensible, anyone can understand it/
It's easy.
You're not an exploiter, so you can grasp
it.
It's a good thing for you,
find out more about it.
The stupid call it stupid and the squalid
call it squalid.
It's against squalor and against stupidity.
The exploiters call it a crime but we
know:
It is the end of crime
It is not madness, but the end of mad-
ness.
It is not the riddle but the solution
It is the simplest thing so hard to achieve.*

We have also selected this theme because we are celebrating one of the most prominent communist of his and our time, Joe Slovo. This, his favourite poem, is composed of words of action and rebuke to both inspire the working class

and scorn the bourgeoisie and their political representatives who preached hate against communists. The last line of the poem, “It is the simplest thing so hard to achieve”, remains instructive and a clarion call for communists at this time, to march forward and destroy the citadels of capitalism and on their ruins, build socialism.

It therefore remains our task, as young communists, to rise in defense of the ideals of this benevolent cause and its current leadership. It is our task to mobilise the working class youth, without fear or apology, behind this ideals. It is our task to defend the historical role of the party and of the individuals such as Slovo who brought democracy, freedom and hope not for the empowerment and enrichment of few, but for the ultimate ruining of a ruling elite and capitalist oligarchy, irrespective of their colour. It is our task to build mass formations of the working class both in quality and quantity so that they become the advance organs for the “praise of communism” in the land of despair, and the building of its foundations.

We have a rich legacy of ideas and historical mandate to build on. We have many generations, dead or alive, from whom to take the torch forward. From the generation of David Jones and Pixley Seme who led the formative period of both the Communist Party and the ANC, to that of Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Joe Slovo who launched uMkhonto we Sizwe, to that of Chris Hani and Solomon Mahlangu who led the insurrection from outside the country, we know that we stand on the shoulders of giants, men and women. It is these cadres who had laid the foundation for socialism, and carried the “Praise for Communism” throughout the struggle against Apart-

heid capitalism.

And thus, our task, is to say to the working class and poor youth, communism “...is a good thing for you/find out more about it”. We should urge them to forget the “stupid who call it stupid, [or] the squalid who called squalid”, for it is through their fight against communism that they have cashed in on the continued sustenance of the oppressive system of capitalism. We should urge their patience, which should be parallel to their militancy, for as Che Guevara said, “the road is long and full of difficulties”. We are the generation that should root out opportunism, corruption, anti-communism, narrow nationalism and other reactionary tendencies both within the party and the YCL, and also within working class organisations and the Alliance. In doing this, we should shout that it is “In Praise of Communism” and in opposition to capitalism.

We are also meeting on the footsteps of a very successful SACP Special National Congress. As we said at the National Council, this is our party, the party of socialism. We will defend it and its leaders to the end. We will take the fight to the doorstep of anybody who wants to fight our party, our future and our leaders on the basis of them being communist. The future of socialism and communism lies in our hands, and no one can and will stop us.

2. The Party as a force for Socialism

As part of defending this future, we have to safeguard the Party as a force for socialism. It remains our responsibility to ensure that we foster the independence of the Party, together with its profile and ideological dominance. We should at all times ensure that the legitimacy of the leadership the party is not questioned

or questionable. In the same vein, we should ensure that the Party remains constant and consistent in the struggle against capitalism. This is the Party of socialism.

3. The SACP and elections

At the last Congress of the YCL, we reaffirmed our call for the SACP to contest for elections independent of the ANC. We went to the 12th Congress with this mandate and fought hard for it, and this surely still remains the mandate of our previous Congress. But we need to discuss strategic issues even from that Congress resolution in order to ensure that the Party asserts its independence. The objective reality which we live in is that on the one hand the SACP cannot assert its independence and influence at the mercy of the ANC, whilst on the other hand it cannot remain threatened by nostalgic and paranoiac slogans of an communist take-over.

We should echo the sentiment expressed in the article by our YCL National Chairperson (*African Communist, Special Edition, December 2009*) that we cannot rely forever, without any guarantees, on this or that member of the SACP being a Minister or MEC at the mercy of the ANC, and wherein the ANC determines the mandate and can as and when they wish to, (dis)appoint such a Minister or MEC. We should not have a situation wherein members of the Party cannot wilfully take forward the mandate of the SACP, and even advance some policy decisions that could clearly be to the disadvantage of the working class and the poor, mainly because they are ANC deployees. Something has got to give if we are to be equal partners of a revolutionary alliance.

Some of the contradictions will arise

particularly because the ANC is a multi-class organisation, and in the process, various class forces will contend for leadership and hegemony of their ideas to prevail. The most interesting observation is that within the Alliance, communists are the only organised formation, whereas the capitalist class will seek to lobby for influence with or within the ANC through formal and informal engagements. Is this perhaps not the cause of tensions from time to time, where in the “unorganised” capitalist class feels that the legitimate and formal platforms of the Alliance will advantage communists more than it will the capitalist class. The fear of dual membership only arise because the capitalist do not necessarily have a formalised alliance with the ANC (as the ruling party). It is however in the interest of communists to continuously reaffirm the multi-class character of the ANC, with the working class as the motive force of the National Democratic Revolution and the ANC remaining a disciplined force of the left.

With regards to the attitude of the SACP towards elections, there remain various considerations and options that have been discussed over time, and are not necessarily exclusive and not limited to the one's below. Some of them however, have not been openly discussed but remains strong considerations.

- a. An alliance pact: This is not for the first time that such an option is being mooted, and Cosatu has been its most vocal advocator from its last few Conferences. This means that the ANC, SACP, SANCO and COSATU reaches an agreement on protocol, expectations, allocation of positions and clear agenda for leadership of society. This is also linked to the idea of an Alliance political centre, where

senior leaders of the Alliance at various levels meets and agree on the immediate issues from time to time. This can also mean that the SACP will have their own and direct representatives in legislatures, who will speak as SACP and take forward the mandate of the SACP, and can be recalled by the SACP.

- b. The SACP standing for elections: This is the option that the YCL has been pursuing since the first Special Congress of the SACP. This means that the SACP will stand for elections independently and may agree on a pact with the ANC. Like in the previous option, this will also mean that the SACP is directly represented. This, however, means that the SACP will be subjected to the mercy of the electorate, and will be dependent on its outcomes. There is no doubt that the SACP will fair better than many of the political parties, but the idea is to contest for electoral power, not to warm the opposition seats. The other question is that of dual membership, and what happens to people who are elected in structures of the ANC. Equally, an issue we have always been raising is that electoral power on its own is not enough, and that the idea here is to grab institutions of the state.
- c. Contesting election with the ANC (status quo): This is based on the resolution of the SACP 12th National Congress held in Port Elizabeth. This means that the Alliance collectively determines the Election Manifesto, through the nomination lists process from ANC structures negotiates the final ANC list for legislatures and parliament and Alliance partners are consulted in the appointment of Pre-

miers and Cabinet Ministers. There will obviously be issues of independence of each of the structures, especially with some in the ANC arguing that the ANC is the leader of the Alliance and that there is no “co-governance”.

- d. The ANC declaring itself a socialist party: This leans more towards the Cuban route where the forces that fought for the defeat of the Batista regime collapsed themselves into a Communist Party, with the unity of the July 26 Movement, the student movement and the workers movement. This may not necessarily have to do with the so called “communist take-over”, but an internal realisation that the only route towards complete realisation of social justice, true democracy and the socialisation of the commanding heights of the resolution is socialism. This in essence finds expression in two factors. The declaration by the ANC Youth League President, a matter of fact, that the Youth League uses Marxist-Leninist tools of analysis and that some of the League’s declarations and campaigns are more to the left. The other factor being the ANC President’s continued assertion that the ANC’s route is up to a National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and that the socialists should continue. For us, what matters are the ideals and not necessarily the party of individuals who leads. This is not impossible, impractical and unrealisable, but remains treated as a taboo and a threat in certain quarters within the ANC.

The reality is that all of these options are premised on governance and electoral politics. What is in real terms not being discussed is building the Party

as a Party of Power? How do we ensure that the Party is entrenched in terms of the identified hegemonic pillars of the Medium Term Vision? This should also serve as a guide for the structures of the YCL that power is not necessarily located only in the corridors of parliament, but that there are various centres of power, and that the debate on whether the Party should contest elections should take into consideration the ideological, state, workplace, economic and societal power and power relations.

4. Party and Class

One of the missing links in terms of the ongoing debates, and perhaps better emphasised by the debates at the Party National Congress, is the whole issue of the relationship between “party” and “class”. The working class remains the driving force for socialism, and even better, a conscious working class. This is because it is the class that will rule under socialism, and will replace the ruling capitalist class. We should not in any way confuse the party and the class because in as much as the “Party” represents the “Class”, it does not constitute the class.

The working class in South Africa is more diverse and fractures in terms of interests and aspirations, but are also divided in relation to their relationship to the means of production. The party is the working class organisation or the vehicle, and thus, it should be driven by this class. The task of the Party is not to constitute or replace the working class, but to unite their vision under the banner of socialism. If in anyway the working class does not believe that Party organisation or leadership is or will lead them to socialism, they will either transform the Party or abandon it. Thus, building a working class SACP, that is independent

and pursues the struggle for socialism, should be our immediate priority as the YCL and the working class youth.

5. Reinforcing the Medium Term Vision

There is a lot more to learn from the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela in building transformed institutions that will alter power relations in society inter-related with the discussion on elections. Part of the struggles we should wage as the YCL is that of the democratised institutions and centres of power. To what extent have we managed to support the trade-union movement, for instance, in democratising the workplace and ensuring workers participation in decisions about the production cycle? Efforts to create alternative and parallel forms of production, such as co-operatives, which will greatly alter the relations of power in the workplace and society and serve as a model of participatory democracy, have not yielded significant results. It is not enough to blame the state for not having supported such initiatives. If the working class leads and make a success of such institutions, and make them a model of quasi socialist mode of production, the state will inevitably have to support such initiatives. Opportunities are there, despite some of the objective and subjective factors, to ensure that we make such alternatives a success.

6. Parallel propaganda institutions

The same applies in terms of the battle of ideas. It is a reality that medium of communication and propaganda are heavily dependent on and are the mouthpiece of capitalist institutions. Their role is to ensure that they sustain and justify the continued existence of the capitalist mode of production. In as much as we should smash these forms

of undemocratic, bourgeoisie institutions, we should also create parallel and democratic, accessible forms of propaganda that appeals to young people and that pursues the agenda of an alternative form of society.

We cannot rely on these institutions to reproduce the ideas of the working class party, especially to the youth. Thus, some of the publications of the YCL, and our propaganda work, should remain independent and popular amongst the working class youth as a form of undistorted reproduction of analysis and guide to action in defeating the capitalist class. There are a whole range of ideas that we need to pursue, including messages about the form of revolutionary culture and ideology as the foundation of working class hegemony. We can and should contest the ideological space opened up by a democratic dispensation which encourages capitalist greed and consumerism as the kind of dogma that wins the day. We have to say to the youth that we can win the day.

7. Socialism and the economy

Within the economy, we have to make an assessment of the developments that took place since 1994 and how all of these have entrenched the same foundation that Apartheid SA was based on. Some of the key economic activities that the Party was advocating for included communal forms of the financial sector, which were embedded on the township economy of co-operation and socialisation. The stokvels and burial societies are but one form of these activities which we need to promote. Their democratic, solidarity and caring nature are the parallel values and principles that we need to foster in order to challenge the capitalist culture and social

relations of selfishness, individualism and accumulation. They constitute a key lesson for the working class that there is a different form of social relations other than that permeated and propagated through the factory floors and on the mainstream media.

Of course at the heart of smashing capitalism and capitalist social relations lies the struggle for altering the capitalist accumulation path. This is the line that lies between capitalism and socialism. One of the greatest fault-line in the post-apartheid capitalist path is the perpetuation of class and racial inequalities in the economy. Albeit the Daan Roodt of this world who complains about white exclusion, democratic South Africa still holds features of an apartheid economy. The slums still belongs to the blacks and the suburbs still belongs to the whites (with a sprinkle of blacks). We have to change all of these. We have to change Alexandra and Sandton by making the former a better habitual settlement, and develop its economic and other institutions to the level of the latter. We have to narrow the gap between rich and poor in our society.

The other challenge that we need to fight against as the YCL is what has become generally the relationship between business and government, facilitated in a broker-fashion by what has become known as the tenderpreneurs. The weakness in this relationship is that it reduces Black Economic Empowerment to those who facilitate business between what is mainly white business and government, instead of promoting entrepreneurs. There are young people all over the country who have ideas on a whole range of enterprise whose multiplier effects will include more jobs for in the economy. We hear daily of young

people who invent cars or some kind of revolutionary initiatives, whose wonderful stories end up in the front-page of the Daily Sun or in the design's department of German car manufacturers. Why are we not supporting these? Imagine the prospects of having a South African car, and the multiplier effects that this will have from jobs created through beneficiation of our raw materials, the assembly of the car, the cost to the consumer and many other factors.

Even, when government gives tenders to individuals, why not support these people to be business people, instead of allowing them to sell their contracts to the highest-bidder. Entrepreneurial initiatives should be at the heart of transforming our economy, truly empowering black people, creating jobs and growing the economy. If we do not fight the tendency of quick-buck capitalism, or capitalists without capital, we will be far off the mark of fighting white monopoly capitalism. In fact, those who accuse us of not fighting white monopoly capitalism are the one's who are entrenching it by promoting Broker Economic Empowerment, who sell their tenders to the highest bidding white monopoly capitalist.

8. Fighting corruption and the "bling" culture

One of the dangers of this brokerage economic empowerment is its close linkage to corruption and greed. Because of its pursuit for quick-bucks, and absolutely no justification of capacity to deliver, tenderpreneurs are almost always quick to bribe the tender committee in exchange for the tender, and to pass over the tender to the highest bidder. This is not capitalism but parasitism. It does not contribute in any way to decent jobs,

economic growth and in narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor as the same capitalists deducts the kick-back from the wages of workers. It brings into disrepute a credible economic empowerment programme in the form of BEE.

We should ask ourselves why the Auditor-General and the Anti-Corruption Unit claims that there are more than 4000 government bureaucrats who are suspected of corruption, and the unit is overwhelmed with fighting corruption through legal technicalities. We should also ask ourselves how a government bureaucrat who should be earning not more than twenty-thousand-Rands can afford an expensive car, house and top-brands of champagne. We are equally guilty of being part of this social lifestyle that is sometimes fully-funded by corrupt activities. Importantly, in exposing this and fighting corruption, we need to ensure that we restore a new, alternative and progressive revolutionary culture that is opposed to consumerism, which rewards hard work, that shams corrupt individuals and isolate them, and that celebrates good entrepreneurial initiatives from young black South Africans.

What constitutes a "bling culture" in our country has also perpetuated other forms of violent crimes and theft from the public purse in pursuit of this lifestyle. As soon as we instil in our youth the spirit of opposition towards this culture, then the road ahead will be much easier, for it is within this generation that we must begin to plant the seeds of a new culture. The role of culture and breaking the back of revolutionary activity and deviating revolutionaries from the intended objective cannot be denied. And even more, the role of culture in fostering and sustaining any form of social relations remains key. Lets

fight this capitalist culture by changing the capitalist mode of production.

9. Eco-socialism and the environment

One of the realities of 21st Century capitalism is how it has managed to build itself on the complete destruction of the environment. This has happened through industrialisation, war, internet technology and many other epochs of capitalist development. In fact, every epoch of capitalist reproduction has been accompanied by the complete destruction of the environment. The strongest Western economies were built on the carcass of a destroyed Sub-Saharan environment. Even apartheid capitalism had to sustain itself through massive appropriation of raw materials into fossil energy such as oil and coal to develop electricity and gas.

With the pressures exerted on the global community by the recent financial crises, many economies will be forced to find ways in which they can create jobs and sustain their economy for the sake of immediate survival. Some of these interventions include sustaining the very same industries and lifestyles that will continue to destroy the eco-system and increase emissions of green-house gases. The issue of global warming is also a class issue in the context that in the process of accumulation, the capitalist class has not only exploited variable capital (labour), but also constant capital (in the form of raw materials, carbon emitting machinery and engines etc) and have thus disregarded this danger to humanity and abused the environment. The anarchy of capitalist production, for instance, determined through the whims of the markets, completely neglected the impact this will have on the environment. The crises of overproduction has a relationship with

global warming in that because production is chaotic and unplanned, capitalism sometimes produced more than what the market can consume and has thus led to literal dumping of certain products in order to stimulate demand and control prices. This is a class issue also, as we have seen in Haiti, that when temperatures rise in certain regions of the world and cause hurricanes and earthquakes, it is mainly the working class and the poor who gets affected. In New Orleans, in Cuba, in Miami, in India, and even here in KwaZulu Natal where there are now occasional flooding, because of a whole range of factors; it is the working class that is affected. This means that issues such as climate change are not some white woman NGO or civil society based challenges but are challenges for working class organisations, especially the youth as this is their world in the now and in the future.

Part of the pressure of the financial crises and the need for job creation actually lies in reducing temperature levels to the agreed Kyoto Protocol standards. Following some of the ideas below in creating jobs should lead us into saving the planet:

- a) Engaging the media industry, government and the private sector to use only recycled paper instead of paper produced from deforestation. The Sunday Times, for instance, produces more than 1200 pages of newspaper every year. Imagine how many trees can be saved from that process;
- b) Committing both Eskom and SASOL to reduce their carbon emission rates. The figures released from what an extra power station as planned by Eskom will do to the environment

- c) Strengthening the forest economy in provinces such as KwaZulu Natal where we have an abundance of water is one of the factors we should consider pushing for. And creating jobs through cutting out high-water demand gum trees is another.
- d) Electricity consumption in Southern Africa is dominated by lighting, which takes up to 60 percent. The benefits in terms of costs can be huge if this is reduced, including the load on power-stations, if we change to florescent lighting. With all of these, we still do not have even a single factory that produces these bulbs, and we do not have laws that prohibits the use of heat and light bulbs that uses resistors.
- e) Alternative forms of energy production such as solar and wind in our country can work miracles in creating green jobs, and will be a huge saver for the envioroment.
- f) We should as the YCL mobilise youth and school children to clean the envioroment, and recycle the dirt in exchange as fundraising projects for schools.

10. 21st century socialism-learning from the Bolivarian revolution

These are some of the features of the 21st Century Socialism that centres on the Bolivarian revolution in Latin America. Some of the facets of this Socialism have been propagated by the party, and constitute what is usually referred to as traditional practices and “*ubuntu*”. With all of these principles, Venezuela remains the special hope of a transformed, democratic and non-bureaucratic form of socialism and an example of removing the terrible features of Stalin’s socialism. “In

praise of Communism”, we should mobilise the youth of our country behind these ideals. We have to fight the dogmatic and propagandist ideological onslaught of the capitalism that suggests that socialism is barbaric and has failed. Or even worse, that socialism is an old, academic and euro-centric concept that came with the white man. Or that socialism is about the mass-murder of people and suppression of democracy. Or that socialism is just but a dream and unrealisable, and that we are all naturally different and that poverty and unemployment is for the lazy and unlucky. Or that socialism is about the sharing of poverty whilst capitalism is about the sharing of wealth (and emphasise that capitalist do share wealth, but only amongst themselves).

We have to start with exposing the fact that we are in this nightmare because of the failure of capitalism. It will be our duty to expose the fact that corruption, greed, unemployment, poverty, exploitation, discrimination, racism, sexism, dispossession, unnecessary wars, debt, the financial crises, and destruction of the eco-system are all the results the failures of a capitalist system. We should say that when the capitalist say things will get better, they actually mean better for themselves, and not for all. And that when governments say they are bailing the nation out of the financial crises, only one-tenth of that bail-out may actually reach the working class and the poor. There is not future but socialism. Socialism in our lifetime.

11. Post SACP Special Congress Alliance issues and YCL Response (We will die for the Alliance)

At the Special National Congress of the SACP, a small section of the delegates

booed certain members of the ANC delegation. This was an unfortunate occurrence and was rightly condemned by the leadership of the SACP and YCL. However, this seemed to be an opportunity to launch an onslaught on the leadership of the SACP and of the YCL. It has also become an opportunity to question the *bona fides* of the Alliance and whether it will break. We must emphasise that the booing of some of the ANC delegates was not an isolated event, but was part of a sequence of exchange amongst alliance partners. This included the unwarranted attack on the General Secretary of the SACP and the Deputy General Secretary, and an equally and carefully orchestrated agenda to send signals on contesting the National Chairperson of the SACP in his capacity as ANC Secretary General.

Firstly, we have to emphasise that as the YCL we are proud of the Alliance historical and current achievements, and are willing to overlook all of these events in favour of building a strong alliance. We understand that the historical mission of the alliance is incomplete, and thus, the alliance as the driving force of this mandate can never be allowed. The Alliance will clearly not break solely because a section of the ANC delegates was booed.

Secondly, the sequence of differences between the YCL and the ANC Youth League have nothing to do with the call made by the ANC Youth League for the nationalisation of mines. We surely do not differ with this call, and in fact are supportive of it. We still have to engage the ANC Youth League on the modalities contained in its discussion paper released last week from their National Lekgotla and on many other issues, including on military conscription and

sanitary towels. We have to emphasise that our sup[port for nationalisation should consequently lead to socialisation of the nationalised industries. But the reality is that we have to say to our ally threatening and labelling people in the course of debates in order to coerce them to agree will surely cloud the issues on the table and alienate possible allies. Getting the ANC Youth League and the YCL national and provincial structures hurling uncomradely labels and insults towards each other does not in any way contribute towards constructive engagements, and the joke remains on us. In the process, we should also apply self-criticism into whatever role we might have played in perpetuating the media attention on the people and not the issues.

Thirdly, we have to engage with what seems to be, or presented as, an anti-communist agenda that seems to be targeted to leaders of the SACP and the YCL. We must emphasise that the business of elections at the ANC Conference in 2012 remains purely an ANC matter, and that there are agreed protocols by the Alliance on this issue.

However, targeting individuals in the ANC on the basis that they are also leaders or members of the communist party, and seeking to persuade them to abandon their leadership of the party, ceases to be an ANC matter but becomes part and parcel of the inter-class contradictions within the ANC. The basis of electing or not electing any leader of the ANC can never and has never been their communist credentials. This smacks of McCarthyism and we will never allow that to happen.

In fact, the ANC and the entire liberation movement has always risen above those who seek to oppose cadres on the

basis of their communist credentials. Communists have never constituted a threat to the ANC, and has never sought to “take over” the ANC. The ANC is equally their home, so how do they conspire to take over their own home. Many individuals who have cried foul of “rooi-gevaar” had only their personal jackets to protect, and not the interests of the entire membership of the ANC. We cannot and should never allow the ANC Youth League or the YCL to be divided on the basis of communists and anti-communists, and neither should the ANC or SACP.

These are pre-Polokwane tenden-

cies and we should defeat them as we defeated those who perpetuated them pre-Polokwane. We must, from this National Lekgotla, proclaim that the Alliance Lives and the Alliance Leads society with the ANC at the helm. We must proclaim that we will die for the Alliance. We must take the battle to those who seek to divide the Alliance. We are definite that the ANC Youth League will never, ever, seek to break the alliance.

Lastly, any member of the YCL who is not a member of the ANC Youth League or ANC is not a revolutionary. We must encourage members of the YCL to be part of the ANC Youth League. ★

INTERNATIONALISM

Reasserting solidarity: notes on solidarity vs development aid

Solidarity can – and must – work both ways: past recipients may now find they could extend solidarity to struggling workers in imperialist strongholds, writes **Mark Waller**

This article looks at the way development aid policy in many rich countries has undermined efforts to seek change in the world through the international solidarity of workers and the poor. An overview of development aid is followed by definitions and descriptions of solidarity in ways that may be useful in advancing discussion on how to further develop solidarity in the international political work of communists. Much of the initial description refers to the development aid situation in northern Europe, the countries of which have been the strongest proponents of donor aid. But the situation surveyed here overlaps greatly with trends elsewhere in the OECD club of rich countries.

One of the effects of the general weakening in the early 1990s of communist and workers' parties in much of Europe and other wealthy hubs of imperialism amidst the collapse of the Soviet Union and its neighbouring allies was a loss of Left input in solidarity work with people's struggles in other parts of the world.

This was partly due to the dragging undertow that accompanied the surge in re-establishing capitalism on the ruins

of the statist socialist economies of the Soviet Union and its allies. One of the many effects of the demise of the Soviet system was to immeasurably boost the confidence of capitalist and imperialist ideology and practice. No country or struggle anywhere in the world was left unaffected. But for socialists in Europe, and particularly in those countries that are closer to Russia and its East European neighbours, the backlash against Left parties and socialist ideas – even those that were hardly inspired by Soviet practice – was especially intense.

In Finland, which shares a long border with Russia and which during the Soviet period had a treaty of cooperation and mutual assistance with Moscow, capitalism was on a roll. Never mind that it was also in crisis and with 19% unemployment due in large measure to the loss of trade with the Soviet Union. The “end of history”, so confidently and dimwittedly proclaimed in the US¹, was the vindication of the capitalism as the only viable reality. Finland, a country within the system of Nordic welfare capitalism, now happily set about cutting its welfare programmes as part of a broader swathe of severe public spending cuts. Left opposition was stymied.

These welfare programmes had been the fruit of powerful anti-capitalist labour movements that had exercised much leverage over the post-World War II Finnish state. Welfare represented concessions won from capitalism “in broad daylight”². It was not capitalism gone cosy but it had greased the wheels of centrist politicians to posit welfare capitalism as a lasting social model. They still do, while blithely dismantling the welfare element and replacing it with a host of opaque, second-rate private-public service enterprises.

It was in the early 1990s too that development aid programmes were given an altogether new emphasis. These programmes go under various names in rich countries: ‘overseas development assistance’ (ODA), ‘development aid’, and in the Nordic sphere, ‘development cooperation’.

Much of these had their roots in the Bretton Woods institutions and the creation of official imperialist development aid policies around and through them following World War II. There was also a sizeable, largely non-governmental development community that had pioneered or grown up around development assistance efforts. Some traced their influences back to the missionary and charity work that had accompanied colonial domination in Africa and elsewhere.

But development thinking and practice was never class-neutral, divorced from the ideological and political motives of capital. It was always a contested arena. Communist parties and labour movements in the capitalist hubs sought to bend it towards supporting progressive change for poor countries. Capitalist governments, on the other hand, often used development as an instrument of

exploitative leverage on these countries. ‘Tied aid’, where poor-country recipients of aid have to spend part of all of the assistance on imports and expertise from donor countries, is one example of this exploitation. It still figures in the donor-recipient imbalance of relations.

The UN and its agencies have had a non-binding guiding role in much of the character of development aid. The IMF and the World Bank, created following the 1944 Bretton Woods meetings, determined the conditions of much of this aid, in addition to which national governments created their own development policies. In the 1980s actual spending on aid by many rich countries sought to reach the UN recommended target of 0,7% of GDP. The Nordic countries generally reached this level or surpassed it. In Finland it was 0,8%.

This was at a time when the Left had some input into the nature of development aid – input it was to lose in the 1990s. The solidarity component of development aid was much in evidence. Organisations such as the ANC and Swapo had received non-military material support from Finland and Nordic countries during the 1970s and 1980s. This was a result of the great influence of communists, socialists, the trade union movement and a wide level of public solidarity. This influence gave a progressive colour to some of the development aid and humanitarian aid policies of the centrist and social democratic governments of the period.

As with the reforms that produced the welfare state, it was communists and the rest of the Left who lent development assistance its more progressive character up until the 1990s. It was not because the capitalist governments were by some strange quirk of Nordic charac-

ter more progressive in the north of Europe than in the bigger capitalist states of other parts of Europe.

Peace and solidarity were intimately connected in the broad progressive movement. Solidarity work was conducted with people's struggles in many parts of the world. The threat of peace in the world was seen not just to emanate from the nuclear arms race but from the attempts by imperialist countries to suppress, quell and subvert progressive struggles. These struggles were not only for national liberation, as was the case in South Africa and Namibia. They were also to end oppressive rule, for instance in Central and South America, and to ward off efforts to subvert national self-determination, as in India, or to thwart revolutionary gains, as in Vietnam. For much broad movement peace work in Finland and its Nordic neighbours these issues were intertwined.

Development aid goes neoliberal

Towards the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s this purchase on international issues was to crumble and fall in this part of the world, at least in terms of organisational muscle. A number of interlaced historical trajectories converged in a maelstrom of objective and subjective realities. The fall of the statist socialist countries and the resurgence of capitalism in their territories – in part realised as mafia-style wealth grabs – saw a massive subjective sea-change in much mainstream ideological thought in the West.

The narrative of the 'end of communism', with all its distortions, omissions and political illiteracy, was triumphantly told and retold in myriad different forms and contexts. It pervaded subcultures and mainstream popular culture,

academia, the media, the configurations of bourgeoisie political parties, and most of civil society. It is a change that is still being played out all around us and which is the fabric of most of the political and social opposition socialists face globally. The watershed of much of this change was the late 1980s and early 1990s.

One effect of all this in Finland and the other Nordic countries was to rip the ground out from beneath progressive movements that sought any sort of Left analysis. Broad Left parties scrambled to ditch the term socialism. There was an apparently new consensus of liberal capitalism that appeared to obviate class and liberation struggle. Amidst much bombast and shallow analysis, multi-lateral international forums such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, soon to be made an organisation, the OSCE) asserted the indivisibility of the rule of capitalistic market forces with notions of the democratic rule of law. Democracy was the property of capital. Privatisation was the conduit for both.

This was the normative context in which many on the Left found themselves in this part of the world. Amidst the many policy shifts of emphasis that resulted, development aid came in for some major readjustment in the 1990s. The GDP percentage apportioned to it was drastically cut. Development aid to Africa dropped 40% during this period. Programmes and projects were suddenly cut. At the same time, the policy rhetoric of development was inflated. Gone was the solidarity component of development – the notion of support for freedom struggles – both in conceptual and actual terms. Development aid became 'development cooperation' in

which poor countries were 'partners'.

This was the spin surrounding the changed policy circumstances. It partly drew on an earlier criticism of development aid, one of the polemical threads that had earlier run through critical views of development aid: the fact that poor countries were never on a level footing with donor countries, were treated with smug patronage by rich countries, had their needs and solutions described for them and that the notion of 'development' was framed within the self-interested presuppositions of Western capitalism.

These criticisms were pruned and trimmed to inform the governmental development aid thinking of the 1990s. It gave the notion of 'development cooperation' a new and apparently realistic grasp of the problems of poor countries. At the same time, any of the socialist analysis of development problems that had had some leverage in earlier years – such the workings of imperialism through and beyond such phenomena as neo-colonialism – were unsurprisingly jettisoned. Solidarity movements and groups had no input in the new development thinking.

One aspect of the new thinking was that 'poverty' was presented as the main reason for underdevelopment and the plight affecting the majority of people in the world. Attention shifted away from what might be the cause of poverty, to poverty itself being the root problem. Whereas before, it was possible to contextualise poverty as being the result of processes and policies, and the talk was of eradicating poverty (along with the political processes that were its cause), poverty was now something to be 'alleviated'. Although the new thinking criticised processes which it saw as keeping

people poor, it did not answer the question of why poverty blighted so many parts of the world to begin with.

The second aspect was the emphasis on the development of private enterprise in poor countries as the motor of change to get rid of poverty. In the new thinking of the 1990s, private sectors everywhere were sacrosanct. This in part was a return to the notion of the trickle-down effect of development that had seemingly been discredited years before: the wealth creation of private enterprise, and outside support for the markets that sustain it, would drip down through the class tiers of societies to allow those at the bottom to prosper.

Third, development aid policy thinking started to posit a view of civil society in poor countries that would offer a new kind of leverage on the governments of poor countries. This was based on the idea that, in order to be credible, civil society had to necessarily stand at a distance from government structures and practices. The subtext to this thinking was that any organisations aligned with government smacked of the Soviet or Marxist style shams of the past, whether in parts of Europe or Africa. Once again, a failing of statist socialism was used to justify supporting societal relations in poor countries that would neatly plug into the requirements of market capitalism. With characteristic doublethink, the logic of distancing of civil society from government was not urged in Finland and elsewhere. Not a bit of it: Finland's umbrella organisation of over 200 NGOs that provides direction and guidance on development work in poor countries receives all its funding from the government and works to support and develop most government ODA positions.

Fourth, development aid policy was

keen to show that it was deeply concerned to foster good governance in poor countries. All the corruption that blighted governance in the Third World was a main barrier to development, in other words to alleviating poverty. Again, this was a crucial issue used to push the capitalist agenda. Good governance, as envisaged by development aid thinking originated in the development economics of the World Bank and IMF in the late 1980s, was intertwined with the liberalism of market capitalism. Capitalist expansion was seen to benefit greatly from administrative and government transparency insofar that it facilitated that expansion. Good governance prescriptions meant a good purchase on developing countries that wanted aid. Good governance did not, for instance, extend to promoting free collective bargaining by workers, or socialising the use of natural resources, or regulating the private sector.

Fifth, development assistance promoted democracy and human rights. This was the high ground on to which capitalist governments had scuttled when the Berlin Wall came tumbling down. And as with the other development policy emphases, it was used selectively and with no conception of a progressive deepening of democracy.

Resurgent criticism

In the last couple of years there has been an increasingly impatient criticism in the Nordic countries and elsewhere with the whole paradigm of development aid, its policy rhetoric and prescriptions. One reason is that development aid is day by day being shown up for palpably failing to dent the problems it purports to tackle. This is not a new criticism. ODA was variously dissected and shown by

progressive critics in the 1970s as doing little but sustaining imperialist agendas and unequal trade and other relations.

But that was then. The new criticism of development aid now often comes from a younger generation of activists who were willing enough to go along with the new development policy orientations of the 1990s. These are activists who saw the Jubilee 2000 movement come to little, at least in its efforts in Europe, and who were first suspicious of and now reject the way their countries are harnessed to EU development policies that hammer poor countries. The behaviour of the rich countries in relation to poor countries at the Copenhagen climate conference in December 2009 was further proof of this.

This is not to say that when Finland and its partner countries present a better practice in development aid policy, such as battling corruption in poor countries, it should be automatically trashed. The new criticism of current practice takes in positive dynamics as long as they really are positive, but it is also equipped to reveal the class interests behind positions that are depicted as unassailable. Anti-corruption prescriptions from the rich countries invariably target government and the public administration, with scant attention to the corruption that festers in the private sector.

More important, though, is the notion that development aid is simply the other side of the imperialist coin, despite all the good intentions that may typify donor activity. The argument against aid has also been forcefully put by many analysts who see it as an obstacle to capitalist growth in poor countries. What they have in common with progressive analysts and activists, who also see development aid as a dead-end,

is that it not only doesn't do anything to tackle poverty but has instead been complicit in the poor becoming poorer³. \$500-billion has been spent on aid from rich countries to poor countries since 1960, though poverty in the latter has deepened and spread, and \$400-billion flowed out of Africa alone as flight capital between 1970 and 2004⁴.

Again, this is not to dismiss some of the initiatives that development aid has spawned. There have been masses of good individual development projects run by Nordic NGOs – usually with government backing – that have not had much to do with official development aid policy outlooks and which have been based on genuine solidarity. The criticism of development aid does not reject them as a waste of time. But for the most part they are projects that should stop being 'projects', with all the short-termism that implies, and instead become long-range programmes incorporated into the social, health and education structures of developing country governments. Development projects run locally in South Africa, for example by Nordic countries such as those concerning HIV education, water and sanitation, forestry, and township micro businesses are laudable enough, but they could be far more sustainable if they were incorporated into municipal and provincial policies and budgets.

However, the point here is not to go into the many examples of why development aid fails in its ostensible aims and is often anti-development in its concrete practice. There are piles of literature on this, much of it arguing earnestly for reforms to the development aid structure – to 're-think aid' and to achieve 'real aid'. Their proponents resemble that section of the bourgeoisie described

by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto who are "desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society. To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the conditions of the working class, organisers of charity... hole-and-corner reformers of every kind"⁵. Aid organisations may produce useful critical analyses of development, but their recipes for change are overwhelmingly pro-capitalist.

Sources of solidarity

International solidarity between working people, the poor and the marginalised through and among their various political and networked formations is the necessary counter and alternative to development aid theory and practice and the piecemeal reformism it advocates. There are a number of aspects to this that seem increasingly relevant now. Development aid economics and policies are palpably falling apart the more frenetically the Incredible Hulk of global capitalism crashes from one crisis to the next. The international dimensions of class struggle stand in clearer relief. Economic globalisation, or heightened imperialism, more starkly reveals the mutual interests of oppressed people across national and other divides. Lenin depicted this in *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. The processes he describes are now deeper and all pervasive. The indivisibility of questions of ecological survival, sustainable developmental growth and peaceful existence confronts us furiously and graphically every day.

Solidarity in general terms denotes mutually supportive and comradely relations between organisations of the

working class to assist one another in struggle. But the concept tends to lack clarity, sometimes appearing as a socialist version of assistance. We can unpack more about it from the ways the concept has developed and been used, and this might be some help in developing the discussion on how international solidarity can be developed.

The solidarity of socialists and communists envisages a very different set of relations between people of different countries and situations than development aid theory and practice. We could say that solidarity is, in a political setting, a sense of empathy with others. Development aid, by contrast, like charity and philanthropy, is one of sympathy. Empathy derives from Greek, literally meaning ‘in feeling’ (em+patheia). Sympathy literally means ‘with feeling’ (sum+patheia).⁶ The difference is that empathy puts us in the situation of others, a situation that is our own, while sympathy is more removed, stands at a distance and, like pity, carries the sense of looking at the plight of others from some commanding height. As Aurora Levins Morales puts it: “Solidarity is not a matter of altruism. Solidarity comes from the inability to tolerate the affront to our own integrity of passive or active collaboration in the oppression of others, and from the deep recognition of our most expansive self-interest.”⁷

When we think of *ubuntu*, it’s not hard to see that solidarity, especially as a communal quality, has been around a long time in subtle and dynamic ways. But the word itself was first used comparatively recently in English, by the 1848 Chartist Convention, translated from the French *solidarité*⁸, and taken up after 1862 and the formation of the Working Men’s International Associa-

tion (the First International).

The Association was conceived as a mutual aid society with the aim of supporting workers’ struggles throughout Europe. This solidarity work was expressly practical – sending money, printing tracts and leaflets, conducting agitation, and blocking imports. By 1875, when Engels wrote that “the idea of solidarity could finally... grow to a point where it will embrace all mankind... as a society of brothers living in solidarity”⁹, the concept had come to describe both the character of social relations of the socialist future, and the assistive and collaborative work between organised workers.

Solidarity was from the outset based on equality between workers and the understanding that their struggles, wherever they took place, were part of the same effort. We see this particularly in the role of solidarity as a keystone of trade unionism and, since 1890, in the celebration of 1 May as a day of annual workers’ demonstrations worldwide. The weakening of one struggle meant the weakening of all struggles, and conversely, the strength of one bolstered the strength of all.

It was also a matter of workers’ political education and advancement. One instance comes to mind. In 1900, Lenin wrote to the workers of the Russian city of Kharkov, who in the demands issued at their May Day demonstration that year included one for the introduction of the eight-hour day. Lenin singles this out as being special. The reason was that the other demands were minor because they were trade-related and addressed individual employers. The demand for the eight-hour day, on the other hand, had a universal resonance, seeming “to indicate that the advanced workers of

Kharkov realise their solidarity with the world socialist working-class movement ... It is a declaration of solidarity with the international socialist movement.”¹⁰

The point is still relevant and has significant ramifications. When we align our demands with those of workers and the oppressed internationally we join with them and simultaneously deepen the maturity of our own struggle. We all certainly have our locally specific demands and struggles, but it is those that are in identity with the struggles of people globally that have the greatest traction for global change.

Later, from the mid-20th century onwards, the notion of solidarity acquired additional depth. This came with the rise of national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia and South America against colonialism and with the support of progressive forces in the various, mainly European, metropolises and their allies. Solidarity became more complex. The struggles taking place on terrain A did not necessarily mirror those taking place on terrain B. They were interdependent struggles but with obvious priority given to the frontline struggle of national liberation.

Communist and workers’ parties in colonial states in Europe acted with varying degrees of strength and commitment in solidarity with the liberation forces of colonised countries. In assisting the liberation process, the ruling classes of countries such as Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium and Italy were weakened, which strengthened the hand of progressives in those countries, at least for a while. International solidarity, as Samora Machel said, is “not an act of charity but an act of unity between allies fighting on different terrains toward the same objectives.” Solidarity for libera-

tion was primarily about national liberation, and this involved the dialectics of national and class struggles. It was, incidentally, also from the mid-20th century that machinery of donor aid from rich to poor countries came into existence and the manipulative conditions for aid imposed by the World Bank and IMF.

Solidarity expanded and developed between national liberation movements, and, crucially, from the socialist countries. One of the lasting achievements of the Soviet Union and other socialist states was the support it gave the liberation movements. That such solidarity was based on mutual trust, with no strings attached and no ulterior geopolitical motives is something that bourgeois commentators and officials are seemingly hardwired not to comprehend. Vladimir Shubin can only shrug at the scepticism of a reviewer of his book on Soviet-ANC relations over the fact that the Soviet Union gave weapons, equipment, money, training scholarships, air tickets, medical care and paid holidays because it wanted to help a worthy struggle: “Here I can hardly assist: I did not write about Soviet ‘grand designs’ because there was none...”¹¹ This nature of solidarity is also highlighted in the great assistance given to liberation movements in Southern Africa by Cuba. Cde Fidel Castro’s moving speech to the NGO forum of the first UN conference against racism, held in Durban in 2001, dwelt in part on the contribution by Cuba in the South African liberation struggle, and how Cuba took nothing from southern Africa except the bodies of its fallen internationalist soldiers.

Networking and reasserting solidarity

The setbacks in the international communist movement of the past 20 years

meant that strong support bases for international solidarity disappeared. There is a more fluid situation now with parties and national movements deciding on their own solidarity priorities without recourse to outside help or much international coordination. At the same time there is a great need for communist parties to strengthen their solidarity work nowadays, particularly in light of the way the world has shrunk under imperialism's globalized reach.

Struggles for national liberation are far fewer than several and more decades ago. In Africa, the struggle for the freedom of Western Sahara is the last of this directly anti-colonial struggle on the continent. In the Middle East, the struggle for an independent and sovereign Palestine remains crucial to any peaceful settlement in the region. Struggles against dictatorial oppression, for example in Swaziland and Burma, are more common. In addition there are peace struggles, for example against Western aggression in Iraq, Afghanistan and against Iran and Yemen, and against Russia's war in Chechnya that hinge greatly on solidarity with the people of those territories. Still more widespread are the struggles against capitalism and imperialism in countries that have varying degrees of liberal democratic rule and rule of law. The abundance of national liberation struggles until the final decades of the 20th century understandably focussed international solidarity on particular forms of work. The field is now more diverse, and one-time recipients of solidarity, such as South Africa's liberation movement, may now find that they could well extend solidarity with struggling workers' and communist movements in Europe and North America and other imperialist strongholds.

The mutual assistance aspect of solidarity, in the spirit of the solidarity conceived by the First International, is now more pressing. It may be that long term recipients of solidarity have to reorient themselves to giving it, and that the mutual nature of solidarity needs to be better developed. International solidarity can of course take many forms and be honed and shaped to the particular conditions and needs of situations. But the general forms of such work have much in common, ranging from the simplest, such as issuing statements and taking positions, to the more demanding, such as dispatching cadres and providing material support. International solidarity is not just about support in times of struggle crisis or bloody repression; it is also needed in the more routine work of communists in different countries in carrying through their programmes.

A key challenge facing communist parties is to develop a deep enough understanding of international issues among comrades through intensive party education so that they can appreciate the different emphases and contexts in the need for international solidarity. We need to be able to develop the expertise of cadres on international issues. Such education can foster the identity of internationalism among comrades, one that instinctively recognizes progressive struggles in countries as being of equal importance.

One effect of this is to preclude slippage, where the national contexts of so much of our daily areas of struggle can lead to national chauvinism and blinkered vision in our political behaviour and outlook. There is a pressing need for more rapid and frequent practical exchanges between parties. The annual international meetings of communist

and workers' parties (the 2010 one of which will be in South Africa) are a good potential for this. But conferences and other such forums should be seen as the means of creating practical international solidarity work in different fields of struggle.

Another challenge is for international solidarity to be developed from piecemeal activities, in which priorities are vague or unarticulated, into more systematic sets of relations. The danger, otherwise, is of focussing on a few prominent issues in some parts of the world with scant attention to the glaring oppression faced by people in others.

Socialism is the most viable and just solution to the crises of underdevelopment in poor countries, to ruinous development and exploitation in and by rich countries, and to the massive social fallout these crises cause. Tackling them demands forms of international solidarity that draw on a diverse range of work, some of it incorporating the best of development aid work especially that conceived through NGO initiatives.

Those aspects of development aid worth keeping need to morph into international solidarity, and, in the process, discard the whole development aid paradigm. Such international solidarity would, from the perspective of countries that are currently aid donors, focus on mutual support for progressive movements in poor countries struggling to bring about the revolutionary changes in their societies that are needed to create true development. This presupposes vast changes in many national and regional contexts. But what is encouraging is that the impetus for these changes is

increasingly apparent now that we have reached the dead-end of development aid. ★

Cde Waller is the correspondent in South Africa for Tiedonantaja, the weekly paper of the Communist Party of Finland.

(Endnotes)

1 The phrase coined by Francis Fukuyama from his book *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press 1992, became a kind of slogan of resurgent neoliberalism, implying that liberal capitalism was the final zenith of human development.

2 In his Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association in 1864, Marx described the achievement of the 10 hours bill on working hours as "the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class." The welfare reforms of the Nordic countries were of similar historic magnitude.

3 This is the argument put by Dambisa Moyo in her book *Dead Aid*. Moyo argues that the solution to the aid problem is to end development aid and to open up Africa fully to capital markets and greater trade liberalisation.

4 See Jonathan Glennie, *The Trouble with Aid*, Zed Books, 2008.

5 Karl Marx and Fredrich Engles, *The Communist Manifesto*, OUP, 1998.

6 Neither word is very old: empathy is a 20th century word, sympathy a 16th century one.

7 Aurora Levins Morales, 1998, *Medicine Stories*, Boston: South End Press.

8 Some sources say it was first used in French by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in 1840.

9 Engles' letter to Lavrov, 17 November 1875.

10 Lenin, Preface to *May Days in Kharkov*, 1900, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, 1964, Vol. 4.

11 Vladimir Shubin, *ANC – A View from Moscow*, Jacana Media, 2008.



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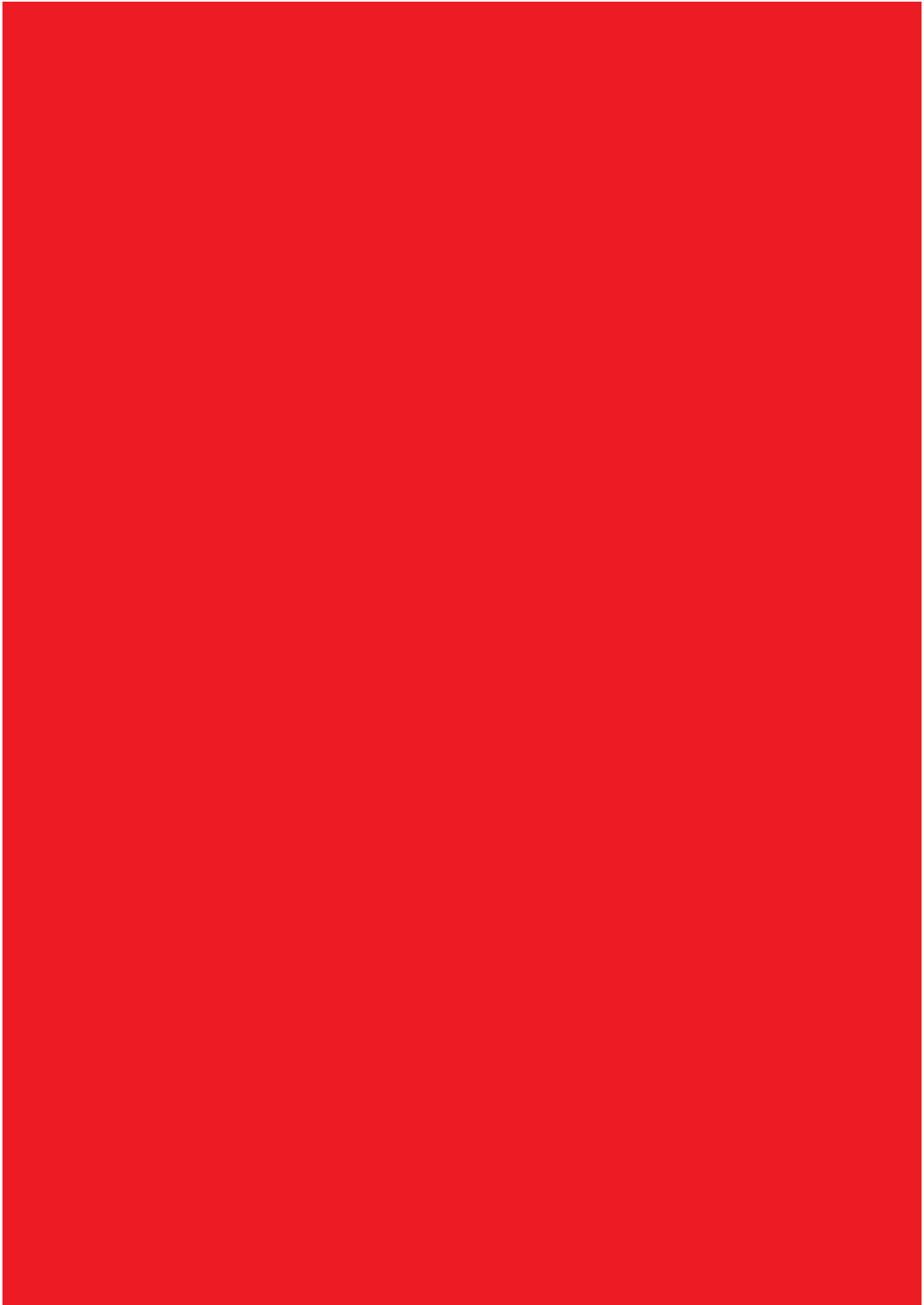
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