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Youth Edition

What is to be done?

by

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SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE, BUILD IT NOW!

What is to be done?

by Neo Maneng



“Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it,” these words by a revolutionary writer, Frantz Omar Fanon, continue to have relevance in our revolutionary struggle as South Africans since its beginning in the early 19th century. In the early 1940s a group young members of the ANC, most of whom were university graduates, professionals and graduates; became increasingly frustrated with the diplomatic approach of the then leadership in confronting and seeking to abolish South Africa’s oppressive white rule.

It was these frustrations which propelled this group of young people from within the ANC, the likes of Ashley Peter Mda, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede and others to form the ANC Youth League and launched it in 1944. The basis for the formation of the Youth League was that the ANC then was not radical enough to effect the necessary change in South Africa, it was the view of the Youth League founders that deputations to England were not sufficient to force the white minority rulers to abandon their policies and laws of oppression

and segregation in favour of freedom and equality.

It is without doubt that the formation of the ANCYL was a turning point in the fight for freedom in South Africa. Immediately after its formation the ANCYL adopted a programme of action which advocated for radical protests and campaigns against the laws of the then apartheid government. The widely acclaimed and written

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about defiance campaign of 1952, spearheaded largely by Youth League leaders within the ANC, has its genesis in the programme of action. The generational mission of the founders of the ANCYL was to radicalise the ANC and put impetus to the struggle against oppression. The marches against the pass law, which left hundreds of black people dead from brutal attacks by the

apartheid police, drew the attention of the world to South Africa and its oppressive laws. Through these and other historic events the generational mission of the founders of the ANCYL was therefore in some or other way fulfilled albeit not in totality.

The period leading to the 1976 June 16 Soweto uprising was characterised relatively by a lull in political and revolutionary activity inside the country. This period was preceded by the banning of all progressive political parties (ANC, SACP, PAC and others); the arrest and imprisonment of key political figures particularly from the ANC on charges of treason; exiling of many struggle leaders and some who went into Mkhondo weSizwe camps across the borders whilst others went to the USSR, the UK and so on. The activities of the struggle were either conducted underground or in exile in Zambia, Tanzania, the USSR and so on. There was very little if not no explicit political or struggle activity in the country except for perhaps sporadic labour strikes in the mines and factories around the country.

The National Party government under Hendrik Verwoerd had

enacted apartheid as government's supreme policy, part of which was the establishment of homelands or bantustans, which drove the segregation of blacks from other racial groups and placing them in different homelands based on their ethnic groupings. The HF Verwoerd government also came up with a "bantustan" education system, which was designed to 'train and fit' Africans for their role in the newly evolving apartheid society. This system meant that education was viewed as a part of the overall apartheid system including 'homelands', urban restrictions, pass laws and job reservation. The apartheid government went as far as closing schools in the township and forcing young people of school going age to relocate to the homelands if they wanted to receive some form of education, particularly secondary school education. In his words the atrocious HF Verwoerd said at that time... "*There is no place for the African in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. It is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim, absorption in the European community.*" The aim of the Verwoerd government was to totally segregate native blacks from white Europeans and deprive blacks from reaping the benefits of their native land. Another hallmark of the "bantustan" education system was its poor quality when compared to education which was provided exclusively to white children. The government linked funding for "bantustan" education to the taxation of blacks which obviously was very low, schools were few and without the necessary equipment, teachers were scares

and poorly trained. However, around the early 1970s the white business sector realised that it needed trained black labour in the cities and as a result pressured the government to reopen and build new schools in the townships of Soweto and other townships. Though more schools were open the "bantustan" education system continued to



receive inadequate funding and continued to be poor in comparison to education for the whites. The move to reopen schools in the townships changed the social culture of the township youth at that time because before then many young black people spent the time between leaving primary school and obtaining a job or being involved with gangs. That

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culture meant that young people generally lacked any political consciousness because there were no sufficient opportunities or platforms for such for the youth in the townships let alone in the homelands. The change in the social culture of the youth in the secondary schools made it possible for

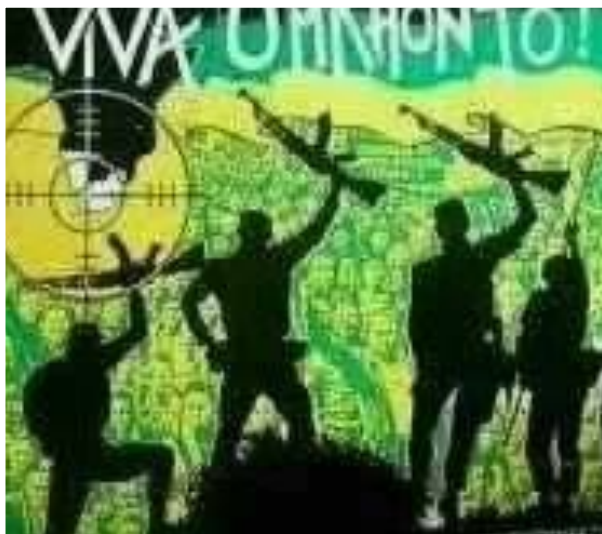
them to be conscientised; this happened through their interaction with some youth who were lucky enough to go to universities and had come into contact with and became members of progressive students' organisations of that time such as NUSAS, SASO and others. The system itself, because of its poor quality and design, meant to buttress the apartheid system made, made itself susceptible to rejection by the black youth.

The 1970s generation of young Africans grew increasingly frustrated with the apartheid system of education for blacks and practically signalled such frustrations even before 16 June 1976. It can be said that the June 16 march was the straw that broke the camel's back, the 1970s generation of young people refused to be part of a system that sort to subject blacks to a life of servitude for eternity. Their refusal to be part of the subservient education system propelled them to challenged apartheid and the white oppression of blacks. The youth of the 1970s had out of relative obscurity, much like the youth of the 1940s, discovered their mission and were determined to fulfil it.

The June 16, 1976 Soweto uprising which led to similar marches and protests across the country's township is well documented in history books. This historic event attracted the attention of the world to the atrocities of South Africa's apartheid government and helped to lobby international support for the ANC and other liberation movements in South Africa. More importantly the June 16, 1976 Soweto uprising became a catalyst for the rejuvenation of the struggle against

apartheid inside the borders of South Africa. After the uprising many young people from the townships around South Africa skipped the country illegally running away from the police and flooded the MK camps in the frontline states of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and later Zimbabwe. The military wing of the ANC, Umkhondo weSizwe, was quantitatively strengthened by this development and as a result became recognised as a force to be reckoned with in the struggle against apartheid.

Many of the leaders of the 1976 student uprising went on to form the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), which was established in June 1979 as a national organization to represent the interests of Black school students. During COSAS's formation the South African Student Movement (SASM) and other organizations of the Black Consciousness (BC) movement were banned by the apartheid government, so COSAS organized students at secondary and night schools, as well as technical, teacher training and correspondence colleges. From 1976 henceforth was without doubt a snowball effect in the revolution which further strengthened the struggle against apartheid and led to the overthrow of the National Party government in 1994, once more a generation of young people took it upon itself to effect meaningful change in the society they lived in.



It is now 22 years since the total abolishment of apartheid, its atrocious laws and the replacement of it by a democratic South Africa. South Africa's population is currently standing

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at +/- 54,96 million and the total population of people below the age of 35, is standing at 66%. The challenges currently facing South Africa therefore affect the youth of this country the most chief amongst them being the triple challenges high unemployment, poverty and inequality. Given the youthful population dynamics of this country it means these are the struggles of ordinary South Africans at large. The cardinal question then becomes what

should the current generation of young people do to bring about the necessary, much needed and meaningful change in our society. The proverbial "what is to be done?" is therefore relevant to today as it was in the 1940s and 1970s. In the year 2015 South Africa witnessed youth or rather student driven campaigns which signalled the frustration of the youth with the status quo. It all started at the University of Cape Town when students formed a movement called **#Rhodesmustfall** calling for the removal of colonial and apartheid symbols from the campus. The founders of the movement argued that the retention of these symbols was a manifestation of the university's, and by extension sections of the society's intransigence towards transformation. Shortly after the **#Rhodesmustfall** campaign another similar campaign erupted at Stellenbosch University which was termed **#Luister-mamela**. The Stellenbosch University campaign was sparked by the prioritisation of Afrikaans above English as medium of instruction at the university and the rampant racism that was the order of the day at Stellenbosch. It was not long then another student campaign and protest erupted at Wits University which was a protest against annual fee increases at the university. The campaign called **#Feesmustfall** spread to universities across the country and received international attention with students from as far Australia and Canada pledging their support with the South African students.

Amongst all the 2015 youth/student campaigns the **#Feesmustfall** pointed directly at the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, it is because of these challenges that the majority of young people in this country are systematically denied access to tertiary education and continue to be trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty. The significance and magnitude of the **#Feesmustfall** campaign should be viewed as a precursor of what can happen in this country if the majority of young people are not freed from the clutches of the legacy of apartheid.

As a significant body which represent young people of this country from across of sectors of society the ANCYL has pondered about the solution(s) to the current challenges facing young people. The ANCYL strongly believes that the ANC remains the beacon of hope to the majority of the people of this country, black and white. It is so because the ANC has proven itself over and over again through its policies and programmes that it is committed to fulfilling the promises made in the Freedom Charter which was drafted at Kilptown by the Congress of the People in 1955. The structural organisation of the ANC and its functioning allows the organisation to regularly do self-introspection, reflect on the successes and failures of its policies and conference resolutions.

The Achilles heel of the ANC however is the inability to im-

plement all its conference resolutions timeously and with necessary vigour and agility. For this reason the ANCYL proposes a pragmatic programme aimed at ensuring that the ANC implements its confer-

The Achilles heel of the ANC however is the inability to implement all its conference resolutions timeously and with necessary vigour and agility.

ence resolution and calls this programme the “3rd Revolution.” The “3rd Revolution” is premised on the ANC’s “second phase of the first transition” posture with it the ANCYL declares to advance a

The fundamental pillars of the “3rd Revolution” are the 4 E’s which are Economic Emancipation, Education, Empowerment and Employment of Youth.

radical change towards solving the frustrations of young people and advancing their struggles.

The 3rd Revolution is firmly

grounded and rooted on young people taking the baton and championing their struggles fearlessly. The ANCYL resolved on Economic Freedom in our lifetime and expropriation of land without compensation. It is with this vigour that the ANCYL intends on consulting with various youth organisations, clubs and societies on a broader consultative process on critical issues and subsequently instilling impetus to the struggles of young people. The current unemployment rate amongst young people, the poverty trap and the inequality which continues to characterise this country’s society have been a worrying factor for a while now and it cannot be business as usual as we seek to advance struggles of young people in a radical manner. The fundamental pillars of the “3rd Revolution” are the 4 E’s which are Economic Emancipation, Education, Empowerment and Employment of Youth.

The ANCYL remains the political training ground of the ANC by more importantly it perceives itself as a significant body of opinion in the broader mass democratic movement. It is for this reason that ANCYL firmly believes that it has to be in the forefront of championing the interests of young people starting from within the structures of the ANC and using ANC internal processes.

Neo Maneng is the Provincial Secretary of the ANCYL in the Northern Cape



Youth moving South Africa Forward

by Lebogang Moremedi



The commemoration of June 16 this year, is under the theme

“Youth Moving South Africa Forward” to celebrate, commemorate and remember a significant moment in the History of Youth Struggle in South Africa, one of the epoch making moments of youth and students uprising against the pedagogy of the oppressed brought by the Apartheid regime. We salute and say Happy 40th Anniversary to the youth of 1976!

The 2016 NYDA Youth Month Programme entails a month long programme aimed at highlighting the work of government in providing opportunities for the youth, educating young people about their history and heritage, communicating opportunities brought by the democratic government, while having conversations and engaging into dialogues with the youth on their role in building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa.

Borrowing from a martyr of this youth struggle, Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu on the 6th of April 1979 said that: *“My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the*

fight.”

Indeed the Blood of Kalushi and all the fallen martyrs, heroes and heroines, have and will continue to nourish the tree that is today bearing the fruits of geo-political, socio-economic freedom for all the young people of the Northern Cape.

Our freedom would not be pos-

“My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the fight.”

sible without the selfless sacrifice of countless young people. The Class of 1976 exposed the brutality of the apartheid regime to the world and ignited resistance around the country. We call on young people to help build our country by emulating the youth of the Class of 1976. The role of young people is vital if we are to build a better society.

We call on the youth to rise up

like the Class of 1976 and fight poverty, inequality and unemployment. Together we can build a society where every child is free to pursue their dreams through hard work and dedication.

Together we must ensure that opportunities are available for all, and that every young person is afforded a chance to better their lives. We live in a country where our youth is free to live their dreams. The inherent potential in young people can be the catalyst for social change and economic emancipation.

The National Development Plan singles out our youthful population as an opportunity to boost economic growth, increase employment and reduce poverty. Initiatives such as the Social Accord on Youth Employment and Youth Employment Tax Incentive will change the tide of youth unemployment. Government have established a new university in the Northern Cape, the Sol Plaatje University, as well as one in Mpumalanga.

Government must not rest until all South Africans enjoy the fruits of our liberation and democracy.

We must continue to strive for

a society that is more socially and economically inclusive. We must continue to confront the complex and uncomfortable realities of our democracy head on. This generation must continue to work towards a society free from racial, social, economic and class barriers.

We call on youth to take the lead in conversations that help to bring about solutions to the challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and alcoholism.

When infrastructure is destroyed communities are de-



NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

prived of a chance at a better life. Our constitution allows those who have concerns to raise them through various av-

enues, including the right to protest peacefully. We call on communities to express their concerns within the bounds of the law, as well as exercising their right by voting in the upcoming Local Government Elections on August the 3rd.

Lebogang Moremedi is the Provincial Manager of the NYDA in the Northern Cape and the Provincial Secretary of the YCLSA in the Northern Cape



Develop the Youth of SA

by Godfrey Munnik



This year marks the 40th anniversary of the 1976 student uprising and the 60th commemoration of the 1956 women's march. These two historic events changed the face of the national liberation struggle. They demonstrated the heroism of women and our young people, their willingness to pay the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we enjoy the freedoms we enjoy today. Their blood nourished the tree that produced the fruits of freedom. Their struggle was for political

freedom which we obtained in 1994, however, linked to that struggle was the struggle for the restoration of the dignity of

Africans were deliberately denied access to the creation of wealth...

Africans. Africans were deliberately denied access to the creation of wealth, because Africans could only perform cer-

tain types of jobs, their land was taken, they were subjected to inferior education, and the list can continue.

It is this systematic dispossession of Africans that resulted in the dire conditions of poverty and deprivation amongst Africans today. I am citing these examples because I believe that we should never forget our past, because if we do so, we might repeat the mistakes of the past. We should therefore learn from our past, because like Stevenson Adlai said "We

can chart our future clearly and wisely only when we know the path which has led to the present."

Today we have a Constitution that contains a lengthy list of socio-economic rights which protect and assist the poor and vulnerable people, however the Constitution is not a self-action document, it rely on those charged with the responsibility to create space, opportunity and support for young people and other vulnerable groups to develop and realise their untapped potential in order to contribute towards the development of the Country. Because as stated in the National Development Plan 2030, South Africa belongs to all its people and the future of our country is our collective future. Making it work is our collective responsibility. "We are moving into a unique moment in history. Pushed by necessity and pulled by opportunity, we are being challenged to grow up and build a meaningful life together." Duane Elgin

Too many of our young people remain locked out and kept out of productive and gainful employment. They are Neither in Education, Employment or Institutions of Training. Although many opportunities exist, these opportunities far removed from where they reside. They experience what former President Thabo Mbeki characterized as a "feeling of unease because they feel there is no certainty about our future with regard to any of our known challenges, and therefore the future of the nation."

We must take collective responsibility and be bold in our reflection of what has led us a situation of despair and uncer-

tainty about what the future holds. Because unless we are honest and bold about the current state of youth in South Af-

South Africa belongs to all its people and the future of our country is our collective future. Making it work is our collective responsibility.

rica, what worked and what didn't we will not be able to usher in a new era of hope and a sense of community. This is a responsibility that we cannot pass on, we must act and act with conviction otherwise it

We need enthusiasm, imagination and the ability to face facts, even unpleasant ones, bravely, in order to find creative ways of addressing the challenges of youth unemployment, criminality, substance abuse and HIV/Aids.

might be 'too little too late'. The needs and aspirations of young people are urgent and time-bound. We must therefore act and act with urgency

because our young people will not stand silently forever while things to satisfy their needs are within easy reach. **If there is one lesson t be learned from the "Rhodes Must Fall" and "Fees Must Fall" campaigns** it is that when young people deploy their creative energies and mobilize themselves, they become an unstoppable force.

The National Development Plan 2030 acknowledges that "South Africa has an urbanising, youthful population. This presents an opportunity to boost economic growth, increase employment and reduce poverty". It therefore enjoins us to provide young people with broader opportunities. Strengthen youth service programmes and introduce new, community-based programmes to offer young people life-skills training, entrepreneurship training and opportunities to participate in community development programmes.

We need enthusiasm, imagination and the ability to face facts, even unpleasant ones, bravely, in order to find creative ways of addressing the challenges of youth unemployment, criminality, substance abuse and HIV/Aids.

If there is one lesson to be learned from our past, it is that no Country can achieve prosperity as long as majority of its people are locked-out of the economic system and dependent on Government for survival. No country can afford to waste its human resources, if it is to develop and compete in the global economy.

We therefore need to rethink development trajectory and the role of young people in that. We need to rethink our offering in terms of our schooling sys-

tem because too many young people drop out of the schooling system or leave the schooling system after 12 years being ill-prepared. We need to correct, by drastic means if necessary, the faults in our economic system from which we now suffer.

Importantly, we need young people, like those of 1976 were mindful of their role and responsibility in the creation of a democratic society. We need the courage, resilience and creativity of our young people to address the triple challenges of underdevelopment, poverty and inequality in South Africa.

The challenges faced by our youth are urgent and time-

bound because being young is a passing phase therefore; we need to harness the creative

Failure to act and act with urgency will result in history judging us as those who had the opportunity, but failed to develop the youth of South Africa.

energies of young people in the exploration of creative alternatives to address poverty and underdevelopment.

Failure to act and act with urgency will result in history judging us as those who had the opportunity, but failed to develop the youth of South Africa. History will frown upon us as those who betrayed the noble struggles of the women of 1956 and the youth of 1976.

Therefore, may every one of us be granted the courage, the faith and the vision to give the best that is in us to realise the developmental aspirations of our young people!
Aluta continua!

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