



VOICE

November 2016 # 20

OF THE PROLETARIAT

20th EDITION

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Voice of the Proletariat. Includes photo of a group of people.

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Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Voice of the Proletariat. Includes photo of a group of people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Key to Socialism. Includes photo of a man in a red shirt.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Elections 2016. Includes photo of a group of people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Lesego Maripeta Branch Launch. Includes photo of a woman.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: 30 Fighting for workers' rights. Includes photo of a group of people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Special Edition. Includes text about the party's history.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: #FeesMustFall2015. Includes logos for ANC and COSATU.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Communism: answer to Racism. Includes text about party members.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: We will never forget. Includes photo of Chris Hani.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: May Day 2016. Includes logo for COSATU.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Youth Edition. Includes photo of a group of young people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: Why vote ANC? Includes logos for ANC and COSATU.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: VOICE OF THE PROLETARIAT. Includes photo of a group of people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: VOICE OF THE PROLETARIAT. Includes photo of a group of people.

Kimberley District SACP Voice of the Proletariat. Article: VOICE OF THE PROLETARIAT. Includes photo of a group of people.

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SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE / BUILD IT NOW!

Battle of Ideas

By OJ Fourie



“The SACP must build on its long history of progressive publications, and train and develop a cadre to contribute to internal Party publications.”

The South African Road to Socialism notes that “the ruling ideas of the ruling class will tend to infiltrate the outlooks and beliefs of other classes and strata. This is particularly the case in our own current global and national realities, dominated by monopoly capital, including highly globalized media empires. In these conditions, the ideas of the global ruling class are repeated so often that they begin to seem obvious, self-evident truths.” As communists we need to make use of any platform to repeat our ideas as often as possible and one of the platforms is our in-house publications.

Historically the Party has a very proud tradition of releasing in-house publications.

With the formation of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921 *The International* was published on a weekly basis,

and was the official organ of the Party with key writers like Cde SP Bunting. In 1926 the weekly publication changed its name to *The South African Worker*, and then with the adoption of the national democratic revolutionary strategy associated with the Black Republic Thesis, the newspaper was re-named *Umsebenzi* in 1930.

However, even before the strategic re-orientation and name-change, the Party’s newspaper had not been confined to English language articles. From the late 1920s it published regular

articles in many of the African languages of South Africa. Many local correspondents were developed, among them Cde Alpheus Maliba who regularly contributed articles in TshiVenda on the struggles in the far north of our country. Other notable Party members who combined organisational work with journalism were Cdes Eddie Roux, Edwin Mofutsanyana and Moses Kotane.

Selling the weekly Party newspaper was a key responsibility of all Party cadres. This contributed greatly to building activism and a sense of ideological cohesion. Today this still remains an important role of all Party members to distribute the various Party publications electronically to a wider audience.

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With the rise of fascism in Europe, the Communist International belatedly changed its left sectarian line and in 1935 called for broad anti-fascist United Front strategies. Responding to the change in line, here in South Africa in 1936, the CPSA converted the name of its weekly publication back to *The South African Worker*. The CPSA clearly believed at the time that combating fascism amongst the strata most disposed to it (the white sections of the working class and petty bourgeoisie) would be best served by toning down on its black African image. But in 1938, after 23 years of regular weekly publication (counting back to 1915), the Party newspaper stopped appearing. This reflected the general crisis within the Party at the time – its lack of an independent identity, the lack of clear Party

tasks, and the impact of factional squabbles. While the Party's publications were beginning to falter and even disappear for a time, Communists were intimately involved in the launching of a non-official Party paper, the radical, socialist weekly the *Guardian*, which appeared first in 1937. The *Guardian* was the first truly progressive, relatively mass-circulation, independent newspaper in South Africa.

By 1945 it had achieved a weekly circulation of 45,000. Among the Communists who played a leading role in the *Guardian* were Cdes Betty Radford (its first editor), Brian Bunting (editor from 1947), Lionel Forman, Ruth First, Govan Mbeki and MP Naicker. Although it was not an official Party publication, the *Guardian* made no secret of its sympathies for the CPSA and the progressive trade union movement.

When the CPSA was banned in 1950, the *Guardian* continued to be published weekly, ensuring that a radical socialist voice did not disappear. When the *Guardian* itself was banned, it was succeeded by a string of alternatives, *Advance*, *Clarion*, *People's World* and the *New Age*, each in turn suffering the same banning fate as apartheid repression of all opposition deepened. In the three decades of its existence, the CPSA and the publications with which its militants were associated had pioneered progressive journalism in our country.

When *The African Communist* (AC) was launched clandestinely in 1959 it did not, initially, announce itself as an official organ of the SACP – that was only to come later. Soon after the AC editorial collective and production were forced into nearly 30 years of exile. The editorial team was based in London and the printing and layout was done in the former German Democratic Republic. For much of those three decades of exile the AC was virtually the only public face and testimony of the SACP's continued existence.

Umsebenzi was re-launched in 1985 under the editorship of Cde Joe Slovo.

Using our journals as forums for comradely debate, for exploring new ideas, and for critical self-review is absolutely essential. On the other hand, we must never allow our Party to become little more than a debating society or, worse still, a formation riddled with factionalism in which debates are really pseudo-debates not actually about policy but in fact about personal or factional positioning.

After the 1994 democratic breakthrough, SACP publications continued to advance the perspective of a mass-driven transformational struggle to complement and reinforce the new democratic state. Yet, despite all of this, Party comrades need to continue to engage the commercial media, which is a key way of reaching a wider working class and general audience.

The South African Road to Socialism further notes that "The SACP must build on its long history of progressive publications, and train and develop a cadre to contribute to internal Party publications. In addition to our national publications, we should encourage the production of branch and district newsletters dealing with local issues and as means for communist propaganda in the various localities."

The Voice of the Proletariat is an example of a district newsletter. The Voice of the Proletariat was launched on the 03rd of June 2015. It was initially launched as just a one page "district newsletter" but it has since gradually developed into a more formal publication.

We must continue to implore our members to write and thereby express and advance our revolution.

It continues to remain one of the most fundamental and revolutionary responsibility of a communist to continuously engage in the battle of ideas.

OJ Fourie is the SACP Kimberley District Deputy District Secretary and a former YCLSA National Committee Member

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Question of Leadership

By Hlengiwe Nkonyane



“Leadership comes in numerous forms and it takes immense insight from one to clearly be able to identify a leader without narrow assumptions.”

The letter of Lenin to Congress, referred to as the Last Testament (1922), was regarded as an uncertain affirmation by Lenin on who is the most capable and viable to oversee the organization in the following years without running into a spilt coursed more particular from opposite personalities (comparison between Stalin and Trotsky). He raised his assessment of certain leaders within the Central Committee and eventually after that, he discussed each person’s strength and weakness for organizational leadership positions. This assessment by Lenin left a void as to who was most qualified to lead. I will not dwell to the anticipated conclusion that many use to disqualify Stalin as proposed by Lenin, but rather I what to open a discussion on ‘the question of leadership’ within our current situations toward congresses and beyond.

In most instances it is assumed that leadership is possessing superior orator skills and charismatic abilities, but all of that is a failed analysis. Leadership comes in numerous forms and it takes immense insight from one to clearly be able to identify a leader without narrow assumptions.

Let’s breakdown the types of leadership we are exposed to in our general interaction within the organization.

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The front man: Noticeable of this kind of leader is to have all the great expressions to easily communicate with the masses and to be able to articulate situations and circumstances from all angles. To be able to speak of the past, and make the masses see and almost be able to touch the future. This leader can inspire a highly depressed and hopeless folk to break free of their chains and be motivated that they can change their present for a better tomorrow. This leader can speak to the masses from all different ranks, from the top to the bottom and maintain a sense of importance to all that he engages at all levels.

The grounds man: This leader is the link between the people he leads. This leader is a great organizer and assembler of the masses. This kind of leader is more like an activist and is in touch with the ground and can execute the programmes and projects. This kind of leader keeps the organisation active and relevant. The leader becomes the face of the organisation on the ground. This kind of leader is easily identifiable and almost synonymous with masses he leads. This kind of leader is viewed with no divide in class relations, is easily approachable and accessible.

The shadow: This leader is the strategist and analyst. This kind of leader is the map of the organisation because this leader has foresight and an above average intelligence. This leader is able to not only see the present and have knowledge of history, but is able predict the future. This leader can then give the organisation tactics and strate-

gy to move from the current situation but also give direction toward the ultimate goal. This leader can advise us on the alliance to pursue and almost be able to predict the outcomes of any given situation. This leader can also draft policies of the movement.

The people's voice: This is a leader that can unify the masses in song, and is able to express the masses happiness, sadness, misery, disappointments and anticipations. This leader is the unifier when there is division.

The Volunteer: This is a leader who is a hard worker and highly industrious, this leader dedicates his time to the organisation. This leader understands that there are day to day functions that needs to be fulfilled and hence keeps the organisation moving. (These are the volunteers in all aspects). This type of leader is often overlooked and at times, to those without organizational understanding, degraded. But these are leaders that are the heart of the organization. They ensure that all mass campaigns are a success and are disciplined to be the first to arrive and the last to leave.

People must be schooled to understand that to be a leader it does not mean that you need to lead just from the front (executive), from the back (volunteer) or in between (strategist), one can lead as we all have roles to contribute. An easy explanation of these coordinated domino reliance of these different types of leaders is the functioning of the body. The head, of which is the brain, is the decision-maker needs the whole body to function. The neck gives the head all angles so it is the analysis and strategist. The heart

pumps the blood to the whole body which is the activist. The nerves give feeling or sensation to the body to be able to feel pain, heat, coldness, ext. which is the people's voice. The hands receive and give and the feet give the body mobility which is our volunteers who receive from the organisation and give to the community and connect the organisation to the people. If it was on its own (the head) it will just be a display without connection to the organization, its member and the masses. We need to understand where we are better placed within the broader organization. When we start to advocate for leadership, it should be from the whole angle of leadership then perhaps we won't have a problem where everyone wants to assume one type of leadership.

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Lenin in his broad assessment of those posed as the next layer of leadership, he warns against leadership that has too much power concentrated in them and his fear of them excising that power without the consideration of fellow comrades, more particularly those that voice descend. He notes that one maybe a good cadre generally but if the comrade shows an excessive self-assurance, that leader is a danger to a collective. He zoomed in to the young members, stating that one maybe good theoretically but the importance is to grasp dialectic's as a tool of analysis.

This piece is meant to stir up discussions on leadership, rather than on personalities. Let us engage!

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