More than 500 delegates, representing 319,108 members organised in about 7,300 branches, will converge on the Ekurhuleni International Convention Centre (the Destiny Convention Centre) from 10 to 14 December for the Party’s fourth Special National Congress (SNC). Just over 47% of the Party’s members are women. The SNC will also be attended by 211 others, including representatives of Alliance partners, non-governmental organisations, international guests, and SACP support staff.

An SNC has the same powers and functions as the five-yearly National Congress – except for leadership elections. Organised under the theme Unite our movement: Socialism is the future, Build it now, the SNC will review progress on the implementation of the resolutions and declaration adopted by the 14th National Congress in July 2017.

The SNC is a comprehensive mid-term review gathering, rather than a narrow or one-issue based gathering. The SNC will assess progress on the implementation of the SACP and state and popular power resolution adopted by the 14th National Congress. The resolution addresses the relationship of the Party to state power, and in this context, its approach to elections and electoral modalities.

Taking its cue from Vladimir Lenin, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the 14th National Congress resolved that members must be mobilised against the strategic error of throwing the Party into decisive battles alone and before the working class is ready. The 2017 congress reaffirmed the strategic relevance of the Alliance as a National Democratic Revolutionary front. However, it called for the reconfiguration of the Alliance to give practical expression to its strategic relevance and to deepen it. The resolution rules out continuing with outdated elements of the Alliance in view of the changed conditions since 1994, and which continue to change.

At the 14th National Congress the SACP adopted, for the first time since the first democratic election in 1994, a resolution for the Party to consider actively contesting elections, not only within the framework of the Alliance but also outside, if the Alliance is ultimately not reconfigured. To this end the congress tasked the Party...
organisation to take a leadership role in reconfiguring the Alliance. The SNC will receive a report of the work of the Central Committee and Party organisation at all levels. Related to this, the 14th National Congress resolution requires a scientific evaluation of SACP structures across the board, including the strength, impact and influence in their respective areas of competence. This includes an assessment of the state of the Young Communist League of South Africa as an integral component of the SACP.

To avoid placing all expectations of a favourable outcome on the reconfiguration of the Alliance, the SACP and state and popular power resolution tasked the SACP to take the lead in forging a Popular Left Front. The Congress called for engagements at all levels of Party organisation both with Alliance formations and other progressive, especially worker formations, with specific emphasis on Cosatu and its affiliates. Progress and challenges experienced will be covered in the reports of the work of the Central Committee and its evaluation of the performance of the Party at all levels.

The 14th National Congress defined a dual purpose for a Popular Left Front. This includes building the front as an organisational motive force to move the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), our national transformation and development strategy, into a second, radical phase and advancing, deepening and defending the revolution. And, the danger of throwing the vanguard into decisive battles alone before the broad masses, and particularly the working class, are ready, requires consideration being given to a Popular Left Front as a possible model for participation in future elections.

The SNC will also evaluate the domestic and international balance of class forces and line-up of political formations. The mid-term review congress will accordingly assess the implications of the balance of power for the working class and the SACP as a Marxist-Leninist formation, as well as for the Alliance, the NDR and socialism. Associated with this is policy direction, encompassing the wider policy terrain, including but not limited to political, economic and broader social policy.

The SNC will evaluate the direction and impact of government policy formulation since the 14th National Congress. Specific attention will be placed on the May 2019 general election and the manifesto that the ANC-headed Alliance took to the people in the ballot. Economic policy will receive significant attention, based on the implications that the economy has for political policy and broader social development.

The strategic perspective of the necessity to move the NDR to a second radical phase is expected to take centre stage. Moving the National Democratic Revolution to a second, radical phase is expected to take centre stage at the SNC. At the heart of the perspective is the national imperative to systematically eliminate uneven development and resolve the persisting high levels of class, race and gender inequalities, unemployment, poverty and social insecurity.

Cde Mashilo is an SACP Central Committee member and Media Spokesperson

December 2019
SNC to consider constitutional amendments

Updating and re-aligning the SACP Constitution could take the form of direct amendments and the adoption of accompanying rules and guidelines that add substance to its implementation.

The constitutional amendments proposed at the 14th National Congress in July 2017 were deferred to the December 2019 Special National Congress (SNC) for several reasons, including the need to finalise the Organisational Renewal and Review Commission Framework report to the 14th Congress. The SNC will consider the deferred amendments and new amendments proposed this year.

The SACP’s approach to constitutional amendments takes into account:

- **The Constitution as a guide, not too comprehensive**: A Party constitution should not be too comprehensive. It should not be a substitute for addressing issues through policies, political education and action. Constitutions should not be changed lightly;

- **Need for rules and guidelines to complement the Constitution**: These Central Committee-approved rules and guidelines could, for example, set out in detail issues like the need for political education, induction of new members, a code of conduct, and penalties for offences; and

- **Differences to communist parties in power**: While there are many lessons to be drawn from the experiences of Communist Parties in government, especially in China and Cuba, we obviously cannot put into our Constitution some of the issues they have, as we do not have control of the state and because of the historical and other differences of our situation. But we should certainly draw from Constitutions of these parties whatever is relevant and useful to our experience.

Among the key constitutional amendments we will have to consider at the SNC are:

- **Number of CC members**: Expanding the number of CC members from the current 35 to 44 or retaining them at 35;
- **Number of Deputy General Secretaries**: Having two or three deputy general secretaries;
- **Increase executive committee members**: Provincial Executive Committees (PECs) to 30, District Executive Committees (DECs) to 25;
- **Increase the terms of executive structures**: PEC three years, Sub-Districts to two years; Branches two years;
- **Women’s emancipation**: There are several proposed amendments that stress that the SACP’s Marxism-Leninism is rooted in women’s emancipation and the need to root out sexism;
- **Tightening of discipline**: There are several proposed amendments on tightening discipline in the SACP;
- **A Revolutionary Morality Committee**: This Committee will strive to ensure that SACP members understand and abide by a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary morality.

The SACP CC-appointed Constitutional Committee merely processes the proposed amendments that come from the provinces and the YCLSA. It does not take any decisions on them. Only the Congress has the power to do so. The Committee does, however, in certain circumstances, where it is necessary at all, seek to negotiate with those who propose amendments to achieve consensus on certain proposed amendments as guided by the CC or Politburo.

At the SNC a Congress Constitutional Commission, comprising the Constitutional Committee members and two representatives each from province and from the YCLSA, will process the proposed amendments for the Congress to take the final decisions.
Water – a right, not a commodity!

The issue of water resources is crucial from several angles, including development. Water is the main constituent of the earth’s lakes, oceans and dams but as critical as it is, it does not provide calories or any organic nutrients. It is a precious resource gifted by nature. Today, water is contaminated by weather, chemicals from mines, and faecal or natural pollution due to over-pumping of non-replenished groundwater. Pure safe drinking water is essential for sustaining human health and the environment. Yet millions of the poor and working class are deprived of this vital resource.

Due to the commodification of water, current implementations of various water management initiatives reflect a shift in the industry’s view of water and its importance to society. In most provinces in the country, we are faced by a serious collapse of water infrastructure particularly in the North West Province. The province has a water backlog of more than 638 091 households. Those fortunate enough to currently have access to potable water have no assurance that they will have such access every day. Our registered crises are in Majakaneng, Ratlou, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati and Tswaing municipalities as a result of failing infrastructure, poor management in municipalities and greed.

How are health institutions supposed to cope without water? Inadequate sanitation is also a problem for our people, as residents get exposed to diseases.

We call for the de-commodification of this natural and life-giving resource!!

Cde Kotlalepula Lekoma, Gender & Social Transformation Secretary, SACP – Moses Kotane Province
THE LAND QUESTION

Land – core of the class struggle

This position paper on ‘land and agrarian change’ has been adopted by the SACP Western Cape Provincial Executive Committee

In 1869 Marx noted in The abolition of landed property: “If conquest constitutes a natural right on the part of the few, the many have only to gather sufficient strength in order to acquire the natural right of reconquering what has been taken from them. In the progress of history, the conquerors attempt to give a sort of social sanction to their original title derived from brute force, through the instrumentality of laws imposed by themselves.”

This passage elucidates South Africa’s reality of colonial conquest and perpetuation of land dispossession by legislative means imposed by successive colonial and apartheid regimes.

The wars of resistance were about protecting ancestral land and the territorial integrity of South Africa. At the commencement of the political struggle the primary objective was securing freedom and restoration of land.

The historical legitimate grievances of the indigenous people of South Africa for the return of the land remains valid and requires urgent resolution.

The NDR and the land question

The debate about land expropriation (with or without compensation) needs to be located within the context of deepening and advancing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) – our strategic route to socialism.

The NDR seeks to resolve the three interrelated contradictions – class, gender and the national question. It is in this context that expropriation of land should not only seek to address the national grievance of dispossession but fundamentally address its class and gender dimension. Put differently, the outcome of land expropriation must undo land deprivation of the working class and women in particular.

Historical positions of the SACP on the land question

The SACP has demanded the restoration of the land over many decades. We recall that the South African Road to Freedom of 1962 advanced the concept of colonialism of a special type (CST). The CST thesis provided an exposition of reality that 87% of the land was reserved for white ownership. The indigenous majority, about two-thirds, of the population, was robbed of their ancestral land and confined to 13% in the homelands.

As far back as 1962 the SACP argued: “The revolution will restore the land and the wealth of the country to the people, and guarantee democracy, freedom and equality of rights and opportunities for all.”

From our point of view, the resolution of the land question is fundamental to the transformation of social relations and relations of production.

The SACP renews its call for the expropriation of all land held by financial monopolies and land speculators, absentee owners, farmers who use convict labour or indentured compound labour, and other idlers, exploiters and parasites who allow the land to lie idle while the masses starve. This confiscated land must be placed in the hands of those who live and work on the land.

This does not suggest the confiscation of land belonging to peasants and small landowners. In fact, Engels in The peasant question in France and Germany (1894) stated, “When we are in possession of state power, we shall not even think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants (regardless of whether with or without compensation), as we shall have to do in the case of the big landowners.”

As the SACP we campaigned for and participated actively in the 2005 land summit. During the summit the SACP called for expropriation of land to create viable farming communities and scrapping of the market-based willing buyer-willing seller principle.

At our 13th Congress we called for regulation of the amount of land owned by one person. We further called for prohibition of land ownership by foreigners.

The Western Cape

The Western Cape has more than 120 000 farmworkers who are subjected to the harshest working conditions and most exploitative circumstances combined with heightened vulnerability to evictions or displacement without any suitable alternative.

In this context, the SACP supports expropriation of land without compensation as recognition of surplus labour value of generations of workers rendered over many years.

Land for housing

While the constitution guarantees the right to dignity, it is indisputable that many informal settlement dwellers live in inhumane and squalid conditions. This is a direct result of lack of access to...
suitable land for residential purposes. Proper land management and land use management practices must be exercised to release land in the urban spaces for such purposes.

With regards to reversing the spatial distortions in the urban and peri-urban land framework, we call for a radical departure from current practices that reinforce apartheid spatial planning and confining people in shacks on the outskirts of the core cities. Government land in the inner cities must be released for suitable inclusive housing for the poor. This necessitates a moratorium on sale of government.

Private developers get privileged or preferential access to prime urban land to build fortresses for the rich. It is untenable for a revolutionary movement to perpetuate this.

**Approach to Constitutional amendment**

Section 25 of the Constitution protects private property by guaranteeing that “no one may be deprived of property”. Placing primacy on the protection of private property is an anomaly for a liberation movement with a historical mission to reverse the legacy of colonial and apartheid land dispossession. The proposal relates to amending the constitution and placing primacy on the necessity for expropriation of land without compensation for equitable distribution and economic development.

Expropriation must not be predicated on market-based compensation. Instead, priority must be given to ensuring re-dress and equitable land ownership within reasonable means.

As is the case of Brazil, for instance, our Constitution must allow for the expropriation of large land holdings that either do not fulfil a social function or are unproductive.

The preponderance of large estates is contrary to the principle of equitable access to land. These estates and ranches must be converted into productive use in the hands of associative institutions or cooperatives. A specific article articulating this principle needs to find expression in the constitution.

**Guaranteeing success of land and agrarian reform**

We must reiterate that the state must subsidise and provide technical and technological support to emerging farmers and collectives for any real agrarian revolution to occur. Emerging farmers and collectives must be enabled to participate in the entire value chain in agro-processing and marketing. These measures are critical for food security and sovereignty.

The SACP further calls for the state to regulate all agricultural land transactions in order to prevent accumulation of land once again back to the hands of the rich.

We note that land in the countryside is still subject to feudalist control and accordingly call for such land to be placed under democratic institutions.

**System of land ownership**

Some parties, particularly the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), have called for nationalisation of the land. It is important to spell out that nationalisation under the capitalist mode of production is unviable. As Lenin eloquently explains (1907): Nationalisation of the land under capitalist society? It is not income from the land in general. It is that part of surplus value which remains after average profit on capital is deducted.

Contrary to the EFF’s position, the SACP has consistently called for socialisation of the land which simply means transfer of land to public ownership or bodies of self-government (communities or cooperatives).

In conclusion, land as a source of economic production is the core of class struggle. Let us once again borrow from Marx (1869): “The property in the soil – that original source of all wealth – has become the great problem upon the solution of which depends the future of the working class.”

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December 2019
The land question is a fundamental dimension of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and should be approached from the perspective of how the redistribution of land transforms the colonial, racial and gender inequities in access to and ownership of property. It is argued that the form of access, of tenure or ownership of land is of utmost importance in this debate and the gendered implications of the decisions on the form of access, tenure or ownership must be fully unpacked to avoid the unintended consequences of deepening women’s dependence on a familial or tribal relationship to men.

Women’s access to land and their ability to be involved in productive agriculture (and/or have access to housing and land assets) cannot be underestimated as an important contribution to emancipation of women. This is particularly true where the burden of poverty and the impact of migrant labour results in under-resourced households, with women largely bearing the responsibility to make do in such a situation.

However, whether land redistribution and access to assets contributes to women’s ability to be independent of their relationship with men for economic opportunity is a challenging and complex question. We should be conscious of the need to break from the patriarchal commodification of women that renders them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse from the men in the household. This significance of women’s access to land, whether for housing, agriculture or other productive use, cuts across cultural and religious categories, and across class, while obviously being more significant for women of the working class and the poor. And, it remains a particularly difficult topic to address given women’s location in the family and household unit and the prevalence of patriarchal relations in the family and household unit.

A study of family units in Mpumalanga has noted the following: “The family represents one of the key social units in South Africa. South African families are diverse, consisting of nuclear families, extended families, and re-constituted families. However, despite the important role of families particularly with regard to socioeconomic development, there is a dearth of data on how families function. “The historical overview of families in the South Africa reveals that significant changes over the years, brought about by globalisation and modernisation, have contributed to a transformation of the family structure and family relations. Unlike in the past, the presence of nuclear families and intimate couples has emerged as the primary family unit among those of higher socio-economic status. At the same time however multi-generational and extended families are the most common among people of lower socio-economic levels.” (A baseline study on families in Mpumalanga, Monde Makwane, Mokhantsa Makoae, Hannah Botsis and Mohammed Vawda, HSRC)

Gendered implications of land dispossession
Land dispossession across the world has varied gendered implications. South Africa’s historic form of colonialism, colonialism of a special type (CST), resulted in a gendered form of migrant labour that left African women in rural areas of the homelands, taking responsibility along with the children, for working land and tending the animals. This capturing of the majority of African women into the homeland system shaped a particular relationship that these women had with the land, although not in the form of ownership or legal control.

Khoisan women will have experienced land dispossession in a far different manner, given the gendered division of labour within a hunter-gatherer mode of production where land was not owned in a pastoral or agricultural community. Obviously, forms of productive activity in these communities have since been changed significantly.

Who owns or controls or accesses what land?
Do we know the current status of women’s access to and control over land in South Africa? The 2015 report on the status of women in the South African economy found that data on women and land was particularly poor and recommended...
Individual land ownership is unlikely to empower women, given prevailing particular patrilineal inheritance trends

that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) must attend to this situation and correct the statistical information. It is not clear that four years later this has been adequately achieved.

What the report did not do was to theorise the complexities of the patriarchal nature of the household as the unit through which access to assets is measured, outside obviously of private ownership with title deeds where the owner is actually named and hence the gender can be (but had not been) determined.

The SACP fully supports the land redistribution programme and the need for land expropriation without compensation. But the debate must elaborate on what form of access and control of land is envisaged and what the policy options are – communal ownership and allocation through a communal decision-making process; traditional or tribal ownership with allocation of land to a household through its head; state land ownership and long-term lease of land; private title deed ownership of land, etc.

Each of these forms of access or tenure or ownership has different gendered implications for women, given the location of women within the patriarchal relations in the household, which includes patriarchal ownership and inheritance relations. For example, who in the family or household holds those title deeds? And who inherits them when the holder dies? The norm is that the man is the head of household and has the title deed, and he leaves it to whom he chooses, and often that choice is shaped by patriarchy and so it goes to the oldest son! Where land is allocated by the traditional leader in a truly patriarchal manner is allocated to the male head, and on his death shifts to either his brother or his son, and seldom to the wife. The girl child’s access to land is diminished in this process.

The relationship between access to property or assets and the nature of the family, as discussed by Engels in the Origins of the Family and Private Property and the State, needs consistent interrogation in the implementation of land redistribution. This question needs to be thoroughly explored in relation to the variety of traditional, cultural and religious forms of family and household in South Africa – the manner in which land access may be addressed in a Zulu traditional area, in a Muslim family, in a Coloured urban family, in a rural Hindu family, or in an Afrikaans rural household are going to be significantly different.

Challenges posed by the household basis of allocation of access to assets:
However, in relation to property, be it...
house, land or other assets, the allocation of or ownership by the household or head of the household raises very significant challenges to the empowerment of women. The stubborn resilience of patriarchal family forms, supported by religious and traditional culture and belief, poses serious challenges to any land, rural development or human settlement programme that advances women's emancipation.

When land or housing access is measured, we count the number of households with access. But this can hide the entrapment of women in a patriarchal familial relationship and tribal or cultural system. The gender impact of the allocation of property and resources to a household unit must take into account the patriarchal family structures and practices which mean that household resources are held by men on behalf of the family and ultimate decision-making is carried out by men. Secondly, should the family unit change through death of the man, divorce, marriage of a second or third wife, the implications for women's access to land or housing are serious.

Land for what?
Underpinning the policy position of land expropriation without compensation is the important question: “land for what?” Redistribution of land is not merely a historically corrective programme of ensuring that the percentage of land access or ownership reflects the country’s demography. It must be a programme that is driven by the overall economic and social imperatives of the country – food security requirements, the reindustrialisation of the South African economy, improvement in the asset base of households, the need for shelter and social services implicit in the concept of human settlement.

Each of these imperatives for land redistribution will have different implications for women. For example, in the allocation of land to women for agricultural purposes, the issues of agricultural extension programmes and access to farming equipment become critical, as does women’s involvement in downstream industrial programmes such as agro-processing and marketing.

Access to rural land may also involve access to the land of the ancestors and provision for rural homesteads. In urban areas, access to land is largely for housing and food gardening purposes, albeit that access to land and a house may also provide a base for other economic activity.

Poverty and need for access to cash and impact on ownership of assets
We must learn from the experience of the allocation of houses to working class and rural poor women-headed households by the Department of Human Settlements. The department embarked on a specific programme to ensure single women were able to access houses as an asset base to be able to access finances from banks for economic activity. But the impact of poverty on these women was often so great that they had to sell their houses to get cash for immediate needs of food, clothing, health care, transport etc. This left these women destitute, having utilised the cash received for the sale of the house, but without the asset base to leverage access to resources for entrepreneurial activities.

How do we to ensure that working class and poor women do not dispense with their housing asset? It raises the issue of financial education that must go with the allocation of access to or ownership of land.

Need for review
The form of ownership, tenure or access to land is fundamental to empowerment of women through access to land. Title deeds and individual ownership of land are unlikely to empower women, given the patriarchal nature of prevailing family relations and in particular patrilineal inheritance trends. Nor is the traditional leadership custodianship of land on behalf of the people the most effective manner to empower women, particularly in the context of the rise of narrow patriarchal tribalism, (and reverting to virginity testing and other reprehensible cultural practices that severely limit the emancipation of women). The key method of land access and ownership that are most likely to empower women is long term leasehold of land owned by the state, or communal land ownership where decision-making on allocation is not vested in an inherited leader, but in the collective unit of the community.

Most importantly, the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture must ensure that in the development of policy and regulatory frameworks for land redistribution the complexity of the specific gender relations in diverse South African communities, urban and rural, is carefully understood. The danger of a gender-blind approach to addressing social issues has been long understood in Marxism, where the inclusion of gender analysis of a society has resulted in a profoundly different understanding of the economic and power relations within that society (see Maxine Molyneux’s famous anthropological study from the late 1970s).

The ongoing monitoring of trends in relation to women’s access to and benefit from access to land must be embedded in a policy approach that ensures that unintended consequences do not undermine the policy intent of women’s equal access to land and its productive use or its shelter use.

December 2019

Access by women to rural land may also involve access to the land of the ancestors and provision for rural homesteads.
Syria is one of many countries hosting Palestinians forced to flee Zionist brutality. In 2018, there were 552,000 registered Palestinian refugees but the number dropped to 438,000 because of the war in Syria.

Thousands of Palestinians gathered at the Al Saïda Zainab refugee camp outside Damascus on Friday, 8 November, to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the passing of Cde Yasser Arafat, organised by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). Also in attendance were leaders from the Baath Arab Socialist Party and the Syrian United Communist Party who presented messages of support, as well as guests from the embassies of South Africa, China, Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, Algeria and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Samir Rifai, member of the Central Council of Fatah, was the keynote speaker.

During Cde Arafat’s 40 years of struggle, he united Palestinians under the banner of the PLO to resist the occupation of Palestine. He fought many battles, military and political, against the Zionist enemy, and suffered numerous assassination attempts. He defended the Palestinian cause at international forums, and sought to attain international recognition of the state and people of Palestine. He also championed international solidarity and was a close friend of both comrades Tambo and Mandela; and an active, militant supporter of our struggle against apartheid.

The occasion was a blend of solemnity and celebration. The sadness of the loss of a great leader; the recollection of the destructive November 1917 Balfour Declaration; the continued imprisonment, harassment and murder of Palestinians; and the reality of life in exile, underpinned the general sombreness. Continuous aggression; the declaration of Jerusalem as the “capital” of Israel, the suspension of funding to support Palestinian refugees, and the imposition of the “Deal of the Century”, made it clear that peace was not on the agenda of the United States-backed, Zionist enemy. The moments of festivity were in recognition of the bravery and tenacity of the Palestinian people.

Comrade Reneva Fourie is a member of the Central Committee and Politburo.
was part of a team that attended the ANC Youth League youth assemblies in the Limpopo Province in October 2019. The assemblies were held across all five regions, the venues were full and young people came in their numbers; the singing was energetic. The environment was electrifying, you quickly realised young people are desperate for an ANC Youth League that represents their thinking, aspirations and ideas, a league of vibrant, disciplined radical and militant young people. They were there to participate in shaping the direction that the youth congress must take and they were ready to battle with each other’s ideas.

I noticed when it was time for young people to express themselves, only men comrades queued up, women did not raise their hands to speak. This does not happen only in Limpopo but across all provinces and all progressive organisations of the movement. It’s the same in Sasco, YCLSA, ANC and SACP meetings.

This is a serious indictment of us as a movement. Any renewal and rebuilding programme that does not take account of this reality will leave behind a significant section of young people. It begs for a deeper reflection on what is the psychology of young women in the movement and why would they attend the assemblies in their numbers, sing freely, cheer, dance and clap hands but only not to be part of those who speak and raise their views.

Many would agree that the nature and character of our engagements in the organisation are inherently violent and masculine. That’s why we must change the game and not the women. There are intimidating factors that lead to young women being timid and discouraged from participating in debates. This happens when you don’t have the protection of powerful men in the organisation who will accept your views as they are or sometimes sponsor them. So it is safer to keep quiet than to speak. Those who speak risk isolation and being picked on. The organisation’s toxic masculinity takes seriously a man who says the same thing as his woman comrade, but the reaction is different, giving more credence to the man. Our systems are male orientated and we all try to fit in as women. Instead of fitting in and fighting for space among ourselves as young women, we should radically change the status quo and demand an atmosphere that accommodates us equally. At the core is the value system that informs gender power relations in the ANC and its structures: the ANCYL is a mirror image of the capitalist patriarchal chauvinism in the ANC, and the ANC mirrors society. The change we therefore want should confront the social positioning of women in society and the ANC within its leagues.

We need to also confront the ANCYL for being an ANC-Lite, which follows everything the older generation does, including when it is wrong. Instead of young people experimenting with new ideas, we choose to resemble the old guard and align our views with them. The Waterberg Regional Assembly collapsed because young people were fighting in the name of the old guard. Inherited violence against women is passed on to the younger generation making it difficult for a young woman to express herself. Even the factionalism that plays itself out daily in the movement is very patriarchal and undermines women. Obviously young women should not be forced to speak in meetings if they don’t want to, but this must happen only if there are no factors that negatively contribute in their choice not to speak. We must ask young women where and when they want to speak; their responses must inform a clear programme that we must adopt to give them the platform that they are comfortable with. The life of the organisation is not only sustained in meetings, so our aim is to ensure that young women are there in all spheres of the organisation and contribute freely without fear, including in meetings.

Let us find voices of young women and start women-centric initiatives and...
programmes that are deliberate. So the battle of spaces, faces and voices of young women remains a necessary tool for gender equality. What we must establish is a feminist agenda so that we don’t mimic a male narrative of political posturing. The ANC renewal programme and the Morogoro 50th anniversary commemoration can become the most immediate platform that responds to the lived experiences of young women in the movement and gives them confidence to express themselves. In the long run, the OR Tambo School of leadership must provide research on women’s participation in decision making and debates and what needs to be done pragmatically to change the status quo.

A feminist agenda in the Congress movement is needed. Young women, gender non-conforming people and all progressives ought to imbibe and hone a feminist theoretical understanding to first accept women’s bodies and identities, which are their tangible realities. Such an understanding must be expressed within the current context, which is a multiple representation of body and identity. It must not persist with old stereotypes, variations on the old theme of pretty, well-behaved girls creating a beautiful ambiance in a meeting while the men take the decisions.

We must redefine these spaces, especially the mental space. Young women can only grow organically if they submerge themselves in the daily realities of young women in their communities. Young women must be mobilised behind the vision of the ANC and not those of individuals and factions. Idolising our leaders, personality cults and ice-boyism must be condemned. Let us encourage humility and servant leadership that will encourage those who lead not to live above their comrades and the people.

We must take advantage of technology and explore the creation of a portal on the ANC website where those who log in can leave their personal details and contacts and comment on the conversation of rebuilding, renewing and repositioning of the ANCYL to greater glory than its past. Those who want to be anonymous for fear of intimidation must be afforded that opportunity. That way we will be able to collect the views of those who can’t speak in meetings for any other reason or who can’t make it to meetings and youth assemblies. This will be more inclusive and accommodating, and maybe the young women who don’t speak in the assemblies will have this as a second chance to input their views.

We must be deliberate in our programme of renewal and rebuilding and not leave behind young rural women, sex workers, farm workers, street vendors, young housewives, domestic workers, unemployed youth, school drop-outs, students, young widows, child-headed families, drug abusers, alcoholics, religious youth, young workers, abused and violated young women, and all kinds of young women and people. They must all know and be confident that the kind of ANCYL we will all work hard to rebuild is one that has room for everyone who believes in the mandate of the ANCYL and its twin tasks.

That is why it is a Congress of young people, a place for the impatient youth who want to see change now, a place for learning. Together we will struggle to make tomorrow better than yesterday, and the tomorrow we will fight for belongs to the young women and men, and the political programme must reflect that. Everything for the revolution and nothing against it.

Cde Banda is a YCLSA National Committee member and National Convenor of the ANCWL Young Women’s Desk

We must challenge the tradition of pretty, well-behaved girls creating an ambiance in meetings while men take the decisions
Patriarchy & Class Struggle

The revolution is for everyone!

Dineo Sithole argues that greater reflexivity is needed to undo the entrenched patriarchy of Party meetings to fully include women.

Party meetings today are not for women, but instead maintain the patriarchal composition of politics. How are women supposed to balance the burden of unpaid labour in the home, with full-time paid labour in the workplace and full-time revolutionary meetings without being labelled ill-disciplined, irresponsible, weak, unrevolutionary, etc?

Despite whatever industrial revolutions and rapid digitisation there are, children still have to be picked up from school and fed by a live human, cared for on weekends, and dressed, and our elderly parents (particularly those re-trenched who experience reposessions of houses and cars) need to be taken care of.

It is in the interests of capitalism at certain stages of its development as a system to prevent any broad changes in gender relations, because real changes to gender will ultimately affect profits. That is one reason why fewer women than men attend meetings in political organisations. There are few women who can participate in politics without taking leave or imposing a massive burden on their families. Many women political activists suffer from depression and are women supposed to be able to do this with the same energy that they should put into their families?

Meetings don’t understand labour power and how it is vulgarised by capitalism. The reality is that major functions of reproducing the working class take place outside the workplace. Capitalism understands this. That is why it focuses on fighting and guarding social reproduction. That is why it attacks public services, pushes the burden of care on to individual families, cuts social care, to make the entire working class vulnerable and less able to resist its attacks on the shop-floor or in their living surroundings.

Some of the major struggles in working-class history began outside the sphere of production. The two most significant revolutions of the modern world, in France and Russia, began as bread riots, led by women. They were not in meetings. Allow us to unite the meeting and the non-meeting without labelling.

Gender is being used by capital as the weapon of class struggle. If we don’t recognise this, we make ourselves – the working class – vulnerable. Understanding social reproductive theory had made me want to fight for socialism more because it offers an understanding of everyday life under capitalism. The daily experiences of humans and of the generational renewal of life constantly includes the renewal of labour power. This is essential in understanding the persistence of inequality and the aggressiveness of capitalism. How is the wage labourer created and maintained as a wage labourer? It prompts us to examine labour not simply as a component of value creation, but as a living, concrete relation that is situated within a multiply inflected sociality.

In Volume I of Capital, in the chapter titled Simple Reproduction, Marx states: “viewed ... as a connected, and as flowing on with incessant renewal, every social process of production is, at the same time, a process of reproduction”. In essence and more importantly, he shows us that capitalist production reproduces the wage-labourer, and this is the essential condition to further capitalist production. What then is this “reproduction”? What exactly is being reproduced? How does this labour reproduction look in our day-to-day lives? Is this statement by Marx a descriptive statement or one that urges us to analyse better? Once we understand how labour power is created, we are better able to organise.

What does this mean for the woman comrade who genuinely fights against capitalism and yet has the larger burden of the being the sustainer of capitalist reproduction. Her labour power does not begin and end on the shop floor (workplace) but goes beyond it. We may say that now she can openly learn, she can participate and even contest. However these gains don’t happen in isolation of constraints by the conditions of possibility that capitalism prescribes particularly on the women. There are some social practices and institutions – such as fully socialised childcare and adult care – that capitalism cannot bear.

We must remember that “capitalists need human labour power, an essential condition of value production which they do not produce themselves. And workers the ‘bearers’ of labour power), of course, need the wages and social services through which they can meet their basic subsistence needs. It is contradictory because capitalists must, to remain competitive, create conditions whereby meeting human needs is subordinated to accumulation. They must constrain and control the wages and social spend-
ing that pay for the renewal of the workforce, and of life itself.”

So, while gender relations are shaped by patriarchal dynamics, and are not simply functions of capitalism’s class-driven imperatives, they are also always concretely interconnected in the ongoing maintenance and reproduction of an overall capitalist social formation. Capitalism does not only rely on organised and formalised labour for its existence. It also relies on social reproduction. This is disregarded and even degraded labour that even the progressives miss regularly. The alienated labour unfortunately cannot be robotised or supplemented by machines. It exists outside of these inventions.

Party meetings are interested not analysing the social relations that are drawn into that reproduction – treating the process of reproduction rather technically, as a matter of skill transmission, or immigration policies, or biological regeneration. Therefore, when meetings are called, an expectation is set for the patriarchal “revolutionary”. There seems to be no acknowledgement of the non-economic oppressions that we experience.

Oppressive relations are part of the very nature of capitalist society. They are also there in the assumption that weekend meetings accommodate all. The male worker is more likely to be free on weekends than his female counterpart who prepares him and the family for the reproduction of labour power that is used on Monday. He attends meetings and is seen as revolutionary with a great record.

Labour power, in the main, is reproduced by three interconnected processes, as Bhattacharya writes:

- By activities that regenerate the worker outside the production process and allow her to return to it. These include, among a host of others, food, a bed to sleep in, but also care in psychological ways that keep a person whole (sex);
- By activities that maintain and regenerate non-workers outside the production process – i.e. those who are future or past workers, such as children, adults out of the workforce for whatever reason, be it old age, disability or unemployment; and
- By reproducing fresh workers, meaning childbirth. Women in South Africa (yes, even in Soweto), hold the brunt of these domestic duties that leave little dents to capitalism, recreate it but consume a lot from capitalism. They are free of charge; don’t have working hours and definitely no leave.

Our solution as Marxist revolutionaries is not to simply talk about the importance of class struggle, but to link the struggles of the formal economy to those outside of it. Meetings must take this into account. They cannot be the describing factors of revolutionaries; they cannot even be bars of checking our commitment to the fight against capitalism.

Cde Sithole is an SACP member working for Nehawu

Sources

We must link the class struggles of the formal economy to struggles outside it – including the struggle against patriarchy.
Unpacking the EFF’s ‘left’ rhetoric

Chris Matlhako unpicks the EFF’s claims to ideological affinity with Castro’s July 26 Movement – and finds it has more in common with India’s far-right Hindu nationalist RSS paramilitary organisation

Political formations revolve around a set of principal tenets, which they consider to be central, and describe the core ideas that inspired their founding. However, in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall and erstwhile Eastern European socialism (Cold War era), there was a mushrooming of political outfits in the 1990s: mostly right-wing, conservative, anti-people and espousing anti-communist tendencies in the main. These emerged after neoliberal promissory legitimacy failed dismally in its goals and resulted in general disillusionment, anxieties and disengagement from politics by large sections of the population. The ascent and crisis of neoliberalism as a policy paradigm that has shaped the world like no other over the last 40 years, is an issue of deep study today, and its consequences are responsible for the rise in populist demagogy and neofascism, as much of the developed and developing world drift towards a dangerous political tendency that espouses hatred, intolerance and consider the use of force as legitimate – within the context of a bourgeois democratic dispensation.

The so-called ‘colour revolutions’ figured centrally in the outpouring of distress and anxieties of the people, involving large masses of people, especially marginalised sections of society, occupying mayor city squares and downtown areas. This coincided with the rise of rightwing politics, and a xenophobic backlash against immigrants and multiculturalism, which has propelled their upsurge and winning of elections by exploiting the deep anxieties within much of society. The rise of rightwing populism in the West is said to be ‘a response to political failures of historic proportions, but it’s most conspicuous casualties have been liberal and centre-left parties’. In the developing world, the nascent democratic dispensation has not addressed the goals of national liberation struggle but instead resulted in elites usurping the power and authority of the state to pursue a private accumulation trajectory and perpetuate the fissures of the past – only now on a terrain of a democratic dispensation. These conditions, together with the crisis of the neoliberal trajectory embarked upon by these newly independent states, nurtured the disillusionment that has characterised much of the post-colonial politics, in particular in Africa.

Indeed, these are dangerous times for democracy generally, but not unconnected to the intensification of the crisis of capitalism and the neoliberal globalisation project. Many of these outfits were elected, and/or gained traction in their societies, because of generalised anxieties of the populace and related to declining material conditions, despite the promise of a better life. It was, among other things, a rejection of technocratic approaches to politics and the disempowerment of people.

The EFF wants us to believe the fantasy that they are heirs to the July 26 Movement of Cuba’s legendary Fidel Castro

Various shades of political formation (some claiming to be left-wing, democratic, anti-Stalin, etc), including the re-fashioning of former communist parties in Europe in particular, proliferated – the ‘colour revolutions’ flourished across much of the world in the post-Berlin Wall era. This resulted in the creation of set-ups such as Lech Walesa’s Solidarity trade union-turned-political party and Frederick Chiluba’s Zambian Movement for Multi-Party Democracy, whose rhetoric and posture sought to undermine the achievements gained prior to the rise of neoliberalism and globalisation. This movement has gone into crisis and the West-inspired democracy hope is in tatters in these countries with dangerous rightwing populism and demagogy, overwhelming every aspect of life and leading to the floundering of the promised democracy hope.

It may be useful to begin analysis of whether the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) fits into this pattern by assessing what it claims to be but clearly isn’t. Though the EFF wants us to believe they are the heirs of the July 26 Movement of Cuba’s legendary Fidel Castro, there are hardly any ideological or political similarities between the July 26 Movement and the EFF, except maybe the berets the EFF appropriated from the Cuban movement, which was a broad-based armed guerrilla uprising. At its recent 6th anniversary, EFF Julius Malema went as far as, saying that “EFF draws its inception and inspiration from the Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro’s July 26 Movement”. Malema, known in EFF ranks as the Commander in Chief, said; “It’s from this movement that the EFF draws in-
spiration and ideological guidance ... this influential, no impactful move-
ment, entrenched itself in the history of socialistic struggle by celebrating its sixth
anniversary in existence”. But since
its inception the EFF has hogged the
headlines through strategies and tactics
based on threats, violence and anarchy
and in some key moments flip-flopping
on key strategic questions of policy, and
has committed the cardinal sin of go-
ing to bed with class enemy. The very
basis of the EFF has been anarchy, and
this can be traced to the chaotic 2008
African National Congress (ANC) Youth
League conference in Bloemfontein,
and the disciplinary processes involving
Malema and Floyd Shivambu (currently
EFF president and vice-president re-
spectively) underwent and subsequent
expulsion from the ANC.

The July 26 Movement – Cuba’s historic struggle for independence
On the other hand, the July 26 Move-
ment understood that it was building on
a legacy and history bequeathed by earli-
er generations of independence fighters,
and as such embraced the teachings and
status of José Martí. Claiming inspiration
from the July 26 Movement without ac-
knowledging the preceding processes
of revolutionary experiences in Cuba,
is to misrepresent Cuba’s revolutionary
process and historic influences, of such
important figures of such as Manuel Ces-
pedes, Martí, Julio Antonio Mella, Frank
Pais and many others. The path taken
by Martí contributed enormously to the
ideas espoused by Castro and others who
organised the attack on Moncada and Cespedes military garrisons on 26 July,
1953 (from which the July 26 Movement
adopted its name) as an expression of
the continuation of the revolutionary
ideals of Martí.

Castro’s October 1953 speech made
in his defence in court against charges
brought after the failed attacks on Mon-
cada Barracks became the manifesto of
the July 26 Movement.

Castro’s speech contained numerous

ON THE MARCH: Members of the EFF look-alike, the Indian paramilitary RSS, march through Kolkata, capital of West Bengal, armed with swords

Since its inception the EFF has hogged the headlines through strategies and tactics based on threats, violence and anarchy

Martí’s first 15 years coincided with
the final years of the preparation stage
that preceded the events of 10 October,
1868. On that day Carlos Manuel de Ces-
pedes, who deservedly would become
known as the Father of the Country, gave
the Cry of Independence at his sugar mill,
Demajagua. According to Martí, he per-
formed an even greater act when on that
same occasion he freed those who had
been his slaves and called on them to
struggle in brotherhood against Spanish
colonial system.

Martí is also known to have written
volumes on the key importance of the
unity of the progressive forces in Cuba
(regional integration) to shed the tyrann-
ny of imperialism on the Latin American
subcontinent. The historical significance
of Martí to the July 26 Movement and its
objectives was an overriding characteris-
tic of the movement’s political strategy.
The July 26 Movement also elevated the
political strategy (together with armed
insurrection from the Sierra Maestra
mountains) of building widest possible forces in support of independence and the ultimate overthrow the corrupt and illegitimate regime of Fulgencio Batista, and United States’ dominance on the island.

After Castro’s victory, the July 26 Movement joined other formations in the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations (ORI), which reorganised itself in October 1965 into the Communist Party of Cuba. This was part of the project of realising the goal of maximum unity of the progressive forces and building a vanguard party – the principal formation for and of both the people and goals for an alternative society to the one they were living in at the time.

These key organisational and political factors, together with related considerations, are nowhere to be found in the political strategy and tactics of the EFF and are obviously of no significance or importance in their political programme – which is largely based on adventurism and conjecture. The EFF characterises itself as “a radical and militant economic emancipation movement”, formed in 2013 with the aim of bringing together revolutionary, militant activists, community-based organisations and lobby groups under the umbrella of the political party pursuing the struggle of economic emancipation. It lacks a clear ideological-political line.

There are glaring contradictions between its public rhetoric and posture. In practice it tends to collaborate with outright self-declared right and centre-right formations, in furtherance of neoliberalism and capitalist globalisation. The EFF’s proto-fascist tendencies have all the hallmarks of Mussolini and Hitler’s programme of mobilisation and intent. Mussolini had a penchant for violence as a young man. He also flip-flopped on many key societal questions, such as being anti-church today and tomorrow changing to be pro-church. Fascism as a form of radical right-wing, authoritarian ultra-nationalism is characterised by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition and strong regimentation of society and economy.

Is the EFF a local version of India’s RSS?

However, there seem to be recognisable convergences, if not similarities between the EFF and the Indian Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – at least in (organisational) practice and populist demagoguery. Though the EFF claims to be left-wing, its rhetoric and populist demagoguery finds resonance with such outfits as RSS in India. That which they attribute to militancy, is in reality apolitical thuggery and misdirected anarchic behaviour, which can be traced to an earlier period as former leaders of the ANC Youth League. Anarchy and proto-fascist tendencies are presented and couched as militancy.

RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh – National Patriotic Organisation), is an Indian rightwing Hindu nationalist, paramilitary volunteer organisation widely regarded as the parent organisation of the ruling party of India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The RSS presents itself as a cultural, not a political, organisation that nevertheless advocates a Hindu nationalistic agenda under the banner of Hindutva.

The current Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi has been a full member of the RSS – for a long time. The primary motive force of the RSS is to make India Hindu Rashtra (a Hindu nation). It’s also reported that during the 2nd World War, RSS openly supported the ideology of Adolf Hitler.

The RSS considers Muslims as “outsiders”, not Indians at all, who need to be sent away from the country. It argues that Muslims have forcefully converted some Hindus. In fact, according to the RSS, Muslims are considered “second-class citizens”, who should be reconverted to Hinduism. Hindutva is a concept spelt out by VD Savarkar, who wanted to politicise and militarise the religion. It is ‘political Hindutva’ intent on capturing state power and hegemonising all religious minorities.

After independence, the Indian government banned the RSS for its involvement in the 1948 assassination of Mohandas Gandhi (known as Mahatma – “great soul”). Lately, RSS and Modi has waged a vicious campaign against Kashmir. The Modi government’s policies are about converting the Muslims-majority Kashmir region into a Hindu-majority region. They have run a genocidal campaign in Gujarat, when Modi was the chief minister of the province in 2002. The Modi government’s policy towards Kashmir can be broadly compared to Israel’s policy to Palestine, where the Palestinians are forcibly displaced by encouraging Israeli settlements expansions in Palestinian lands.

Over its history the RSS has run a murderous campaign against Indian Muslims and held an antagonistic posture against Pakistan, whose population is predominantly Muslim. Underpinning all of this is a belief in the ranks of RSS that violence is an acceptable tactic against those RSS characterises as nemesis of their Hindu nationalism project in India. RSS has been progressively transforming India into a violent society of deep fatal fissures between Muslims and Hindus, against Dalits and opposing a secular India.

Official and other documents endorsed by the RSS articulate the unambiguous view of the RSS’ blind hatred of other religious communities and exposes their viewpoint that ‘Muslims, Christians and other minorities are not part of this country’. Earlier leaders of the RSS had also interacted with the fascist dictator Mussolini and were greatly inspired by him.

The basis of all this is that the RSS thrives on mobilising around a narrow politics and its rhetoric of violence and murder. It has also acted with impunity, especially since the election of Modi as prime minister of India. Modi has in the recent past also forged closer ties with
Zionist Israel, thereby undoing a legacy and history of progressive positions previous Indian leaders took to stand side by side with the Palestinians. The Modi government's policy on Kashmir can be broadly compared to Israel's policy on Palestine, where the Palestinians are forcibly displaced by encouraging Israeli settlement expansions on Palestinian territory.

Over the last decades, the RSS has basically terrorised Indian society and threatened, intimidated and organised lynch mobs in much of the country. It has acted with impunity and engaged in extra judicial murders and killings of innocent people only because of their religious beliefs or political affiliations. Its annexation campaign in Kashmir is currently responsible for killing thousands of women and children and is a violation of all precepts of international and human rights codes.

Through its role and presence among sadhus the RSS has turned a certain section of sadhus (Hindu holy men or ascetics) into 'spiritual machines', foot soldiers to ensure the emergence of 'political Hinduism' in place of a secular India. This 'spiritual machine' was a key factor in the election and re-election of BJP government. RSS is using all kinds of religious symbols, festivals and gatherings to promote its ideology. The animosity and hatred spread by these organisations in the garb of religion is well documented.

Writing in the Time magazine (May, 2019) just before the important election where Modi was re-elected, Aatish Taseer, says: “the advent of Modi is at once extraordinary and ordinary—an economic liberal, a political Hindu and the personification of modern India. The country offers a unique glimpse into the future of the world. As a political Hinduism, Modi is both the arrival of a new kind of leadership and an old one. He stands for both a new India and a new Asian age. He is a creature of the modern world—a populist who is also a conservative. He is a man of many contradictions.”

The EFF makes violence a principal tactic of engagement and threatening all and sundry with violence. The EFF's strategy has all the hallmarks of converging and revolving around similar ground—making violence a principal tactic of engagement and threatening all and sundry with violence. Examples of these tactics abound and include threatening journalists, ransacking private sector stores and stoking violence in legitimate struggles in communities. Its brinksmanship in legislatures vividly demonstrates that violence underpins its strategy.

Recent, unwarranted attacks on some members of judiciary adds to the broader strategy of the EFF. Above all the EFF’s rhetoric and mobilisation seeks to entrenched racial and divisive fissures in the South African polity. It attacks sympathies from across the divides – class and social.

Rogue and delinquent so-called entrepreneurs find comfort and support materially the EFF as part of their own strategy of “taking cover from the law”. Marginalised youth and depressed communities buy into the rhetoric largely due to the failures of the ruling party and its mistakes in certain aspects of policy.

In the main, the EFF’s opposition politics and electoral growth is based on rhetoric and demagogic postures in the context of the declining world economy and the rise of right-wing politics across the world—in a sense in the context of the crisis of capitalism and neoliberal globalising project and the militarising of politics.

Ultimately, through this politics, the EFF undermines the cultivation of agency and rational analysis based on ideals and perspective. It is therefore a direct threat to advancing democracy (outside of the regular voting cycle), which should be key for developing a paradigm for an alternative society based on the will of the people.

At the heart of an alternative society to capitalism and neoliberal globalisation should the broadening and deepening of the democracy based on the will of the people. We will need to work on the political super-structure of the (future) socialist society so that optimal decisions can be made and people's participation ascertained. Political freedom to decide the use of surpluses distinctly places a socialist economy on higher plane of development. This theorisation and perspective is glaringly absent from the theory and politics of the EFF.

Cde Mathlako is SACP Second Deputy Secretary General
His year has been declared the Year of Elijah Barayi by Cosatu Gauteng. As we salute the memory of this revolutionary trade unionist, we face many events and trends that would have horrified Cde Elijah Barayi. We face leadership failure in the form of corporate capture of the state and factionalism and dishonesty that seem to know no ends. We are faced with a divided trade union movement and a significantly weakened federation and affiliates.

We face repeated assaults by the neoliberal wolf masquerading in the sheep’s clothing of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). And this results in 38.5% unemployment, retrenchments, austerity measures, social reproduction distress to working class, urban and rural poor and middle-class families, half of our nation living in abject poverty, widespread drug and alcohol abuse, and violence, including gender-based violence, ripping apart the fabric of our society. Our nation so desperately needs our Alliance to be reconfigured and to be the strategic centre to lead society and guide us through all of these challenges.

It is appropriate that we celebrate Cde Barayi, the first Cosatu president. We must learn from his leadership style and values. We must re-commit to building on the foundations he and others laid, and we must strengthen the revolutionary trade union movement. We must re dedicate ourselves to defend and take forward the NDR. We must deepen our political education and continue to learn through commemorating our heroes and our history. And most importantly we must realise that no revolution is possible without revolutionary organisers!

Cde Barayi was born in Lingelihle, (Craddock) in the Eastern Cape, on 15 June 1930. He was one of eight children of working-class parents. He matriculated at Healdtown Institute in 1949. He was married to Nontobeko and they had four children. He passed away on 24 January 1994 just months before we stood in long winding queues to cast our votes for the first time.

Cde Ramaphosa, who served with Cde Barayi in the NUM leadership said: “It is telling that Elijah Barayi was never recruited into the NUM. He recruited himself. He was one of the most vocal delegates at the first NUM Congress in 1982. His contributions were very forthright. He had a manner of speaking which made everyone sit up and listen. He often started his contributions very softly and gently, but to make his point his voice would rise to a crescendo as he made a point of great revolutionary significance. At that conference it became clear to everyone that in Barayi we had a true working-class leader, but much more that, we had a leader who was deeply immersed in the politics of the Congress movement, its values, principles and very rich traditions.”

Cde Barayi never campaigned for leadership, and never expected people to serve him as a leader – he saw his responsibilities as a leader to serve the members and the people.

Cde Kgalema Motlanthe who also served with Barayi in NUM says: “Cde Barayi is an exemplar of the kind of leader who rose at a time when we in the liberation movement held ourselves to a higher standard of leadership and service. When he was President of Cosatu, he was surrounded by a team of individuals of the highest calibre of leadership such as Cde Chris Dlamini who was the Deputy President, Cde Jay Naidoo who was the General Secretary, Cde Makhulu Ledwaba, Cde Sydney Mufamadi and leaders of the affiliates.

“This was a time when activism was the central thrust that drove the execution of a clear programme of action that was derived from a command structure that championed thought leadership. This was back in the day when the movement was led with plural thought and unity of command.”

Cde Barayi grew up under the leadership of Rev James Calata in Craddock and joined the ANC Youth League in 1952 as
a teenager, becoming an efficient organiser and an able speaker. He was arrested in the early 1950s for his participation in the Defiance Campaign. Such was his principled political stand that he worked briefly for the Department of Native Affairs but resigned as he felt it was in the forefront of administering apartheid. Cde Barayi found his niche as an organising secretary for the ANC and was detained during the 1960 state of emergency and held for six months. It was in this role as organiser that his strength lay, and where the foundations were built of organisations in which he was involved.

Elijah Barayi lived his life guided by clear principles:

- Patriotism that was based on a genuine love for the people of this country and the continent;
- A love for freedom that was backed up by conscious activism; and
- Solidarity based on the principle: An injury to one is an injury to all!

Cde Barayi was number 35 of the ANC national list of parliamentary nominees. Our first Parliament was poorer for having lost this giant.

Revolutionary trade unionist

In 1960, as with so many Eastern Cape men, Barayi migrated to take a job as a clerk at State Mines, Brakpan. In May 1973, Cde Barayi moved to Carletonville, a place now so deeply intertwined with his life and memory. In 1976 he became a personnel assistant on the mine and experienced first-hand the conditions that miners experienced underground. He was soon elected on to the liaison committee. The report of the Wiehahn Commission in 1979 opened a new era of trade union organisation and Cde Barayi wasted no time in establishing the trade union movement in the mines. In 1981 he became a shaft steward at Blyvooruitzicht for NUM, and in 1982 he was elected vice-president. In May 1985, he led 9 000 miners at Blyvooruitzicht on strike against the dismissal of two shaft stewards.

At the launch of Cosatu in December 1985 Cde Barayi was elected president, a position he held until 1991. In his first speech as Cosatu president, he gave the government six months to abolish the pass laws or Cosatu would embark on a pass burning campaign. He warned the apartheid regime it was on its way out, and that it should release Cde Mandela and other political prisoners or face action from Cosatu. He called for disinvestment by foreign companies.

This speech shaped the revolutionary content of the federation – that trade unions never stand aside from the political and community issues that affect their members, but rather join hands with organisations in solidarity action to ensure freedom for the working class. It was a speech that was met with unhappiness by the economistic-workerist elements within Cosatu, but his leadership enabled Cosatu to build the unity of these diverse tendencies.

During the second state of emergency, in 1986, Cde Barayi was detained for two weeks and released with orders restricting him to Carletonville. He defied this and was arrested and the police broke his arm. True to his indomitable spirit of defiance, he emerged from prison with Hands off Cosatu written on the white cast on his arm!

It was under his leadership that Cosatu unions stood in close solidarity with the struggle for students and communities, and equally during the time these organisations stood in solidarity with worker action. There was no strike that went without community-based solidarity – be it boycotts of products, political education, cultural programmes, material support for the strikers and their families. Cde Barayi retired from Cosatu in 1991 and 1993 from mine work, but his political life continued.

Barayi & the NDR

Cde Barayi lived the Alliance and lived the principles of our NDR. He was one of the motivating voices in getting the NUM
to be the first union in Cosatu to adopt the Freedom Charter. After the Freedom Charter had been adopted by a few more Cosatu unions, Barayi led the federation in adopting the Freedom Charter.

We remember the importance of the Alliance in 1985, and reflect on the importance at this time of a reconfigured Alliance in which the integrity and contribution of each partner in the Alliance is fully respected. The Alliance has to engage in finding the strategy that can turn our economy around. Our industrial strategy must urgently be enriched by a digital industrial revolution policy, with an innovation, research and development master plan and a skills development plan appropriate to the digital industrial revolution. Our financial sector transformation campaign must be intensified to ensure that solutions other than those imposed by the OECD, World Bank, IMF and rating agencies put forward, including the development of a not-for-profit banking sector that can generate the money to reduce our debt burden and to fund investment in our productive economy. The impact of austerity measures cannot be at the expense of the working class.

As we close the SACP Red October month, with the overarching objective of our 2019-2020 campaign to build work-

![Jay Naidoo (with Elijah Barayi on his left), addresses the closing session of Cosatu’s 1985 founding congress in Durban](image)

ing-class leadership in the community as a key site of struggle and significant centre of power, we should also not forget other key sites of struggle including:

- Fixing and turning around our economy, to systematically eliminate inequality, create employment and eradicate poverty;
- Defending workers’ rights and hard-won achievements, through workplace struggles, and driving the decent work agenda to improve workers’ conditions, struggles, and driving the decent work agenda to improve workers’ conditions;
- Protecting our environment, to reduce the dangerous trend of global warming and ‘natural’ disasters;
- Engaging in freedom of expression, exchange and the battle of ideas; and
- Building a capable democratic developmental state.

In this Red October Campaign, the principles of unity in action that were so dear to Cde Elijah Barayi’s life must be taken forward. The district model of development that the government is rolling out requires our mass organisations to be strong and actively involved in shaping our development plans from the bottom and not from the top down. Without the organised motive forces, the community based social and economic infrastructure, the eradication of substance abuse, human trafficking and sexual slavery, the prevention of inter-personal, political and gender-based violence, the achievement of a national health insurance system will not be achieved.

Across the world, and across our continent we witness the impact of forced migration, migration away from war, away from economic deprivation, away from oppressive and dictatorial regimes and we host in our communities many who have been forced to leave their homes and seek refuge. In the name of Elijah Barayi, we must ensure that workers unite regardless of nationality, and that we wage a relentless struggle against exploitation and divide and rule by the greedy exploiters and political elites.

**Recognising Cde Barayi’s contribution**

We see Cde Barayi’s life, rightly, being commemorated through:

- Cosatu’s prestigious Elijah Barayi Award given to leading cadres of the trade union movement;
- The Elijah Barayi Memorial Training Centre as an accredited NUM training institution which has in its 25 years empowered over 19 000 NUM shop stewards;
- In February 2019, Cosatu in partnership with the Gauteng government launched The Year of Elijah Barayi by declaring his gravesite a heritage site and renaming the R501 road in Carletonville as Elijah Barayi road;
- Elijah Barayi Village, a mega city in Carletonville has created economic opportunities for residents and businesses. Since it was launched on 14 February 2018, it has created close to 1 000 jobs and more than 100 sub-contracting companies were hired during its development.

We are excited to be part of the Cosatu Gauteng Inaugural Elijah Barayi Memorial Games over these five weeks. We wish all competitors well.

A luta continua!

Long live the undying spirit of Elijah Barayi! Long live!

*Cde Schreiner is an SACP Politburo member, Umsebenzi Deputy editor and former MK combatant*
We all performed our roles as well as we could, but it is not without pain and anxiety. Many errors were committed by the administrative section of the executive. Enormous mistakes were made by the new administrators of enterprises who had overwhelming responsibilities on their hands, and we committed great and costly errors in the political apparatus, an apparatus which little by little began to fall into the hands of a contented and carefree bureaucracy, totally separated from the masses, and which became recognised as a springboard for promotions and for bureaucratic posts of major or minor importance.

The main cause of our errors was our lack of a sense of reality; but the tool that we lacked, which blunted our ability to perceive, which was converting the party into a bureaucratic entity, and was endangering administration and production, was the lack of developed cadres at the intermediate level.

From this vantage point, we can ask: what is a cadre?

A cadre is an individual who has achieved sufficient political development to be able to interpret the extensive directives emanating from the central power, make them his, and convey them as orientation to the masses, a person who at the same time also perceives the signs manifested by the masses of their own desires and their innermost motivations.

A cadre is an individual of ideological and administrative discipline, who knows and practices democratic centralism and who knows how to evaluate the existing contradictions in this method and to utilise fully its many facets; who knows how to practice the principle of collective discussion and to make decisions on his own and take responsibility in production; whose loyalty is tested, and whose physical and moral courage has developed along with his ideological development in such a way that he is always willing to confront any conflict and to give his life for the good of the revolution.

Therefore the cadre is creative, a leader of high standing, a technician with a good political level, who by reasoning dialectically can advance his sector of production, or develop the masses from his position of political leadership.

This exemplary human being, apparently cloaked in difficult-to-achieve virtues, is nonetheless present among the people of Cuba. The essential thing is to grasp all the opportunities that there are for developing him to the maximum, for educating him, for drawing from each personality the greatest usefulness and converting it into the greatest advantage for the nation.

The development of a cadre is achieved in performing everyday tasks, but the tasks must be undertaken in a systematic manner, in special schools where competent professors - examples in their turn to the student body - will encourage the most rapid ideological advancement.

We have been finding a multitude of new cadres who have developed during these years; but their development has not been an even one, since the young comrades have had to face the reality of revolutionary creation without the adequate orientation of a party. Some have succeeded fully, but there were others who could not completely make it and were left midway, or were simply lost in the bureaucratic labyrinth, or in the temptations that power brings.

It is necessary to work with the professionals, urging the youth to follow one of the more important technical careers in an effort to give science that tone of ideological enthusiasm which will guarantee accelerated development. And, it is imperative to create an administrative team, which will know how to take advantage of the specific technical knowledge of others and to co-ordinate and guide the enterprises and other organisations of the state to bring them into step with the powerful rhythm of...
The common denominator for all is political clarity. This does not consist of unthinking support to the postulates of the revolution, but a reasoned support; it requires a great capacity for sacrifice and a capacity for dialectical analysis which will enhance the making of continuous contributions on all levels to the rich theory and practice of the revolution. These compañeros should be selected from the masses solely by application of the principle that the best will come to the fore and that the best should be given the greatest opportunities for development.

In all these situations, the function of the cadre, in spite of its being on different fronts, is the same. The cadre is the major part of the ideological motor which is the United Party of the Revolution. The cadre has the important mission of seeing to it that the great spirit of the revolution is not dissipated, that it will not become dormant nor let up its rhythm. It is a sensitive position; it transmits what comes from the masses and infuses in the masses the orientation of the party.

Therefore, the development of cadres is now a task that cannot be postponed. The development of the cadres has been undertaken with great eagerness by the revolutionary government with its programs of scholarships based on selective principles; with its programs of study for workers, offering various opportunities for technological development; with the development of the special technical schools; with the development of the secondary schools and the universities, opening new careers; with the development finally of our slogans of study, work and revolutionary vigilance for our entire country, fundamentally based on the Union of Young Communists from which all types of cadres should emerge, even the leading cadres in the future of the revolution.

Intimately tied to the concept of cadre is the capacity for sacrifice, for demonstrating through personal example the truths and watchwords of the revolution. The cadres, as political leaders, should gain the respect of the workers by their actions. It is absolutely imperative that they count on the respect and affection of their comrades, whom they should guide along the vanguard paths.

Overall, there are no better cadres than those elected by the masses in the assemblies that select exemplary workers. With the intermediate leaders of this category, the difficult tasks that we have before us will be accomplished with fewer errors. After a period of confusion and poor methods, we have arrived at a just policy which will never be abandoned. We must be successful in the effort.

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