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AFRICAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC UNION  
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

*The Interests Of The Workers And Landless Peasants Shall Be Paramount*

## THE MARIKANA MASSACRE – ORGANISING FOR AN ALTERNATIVE

### **WORKERS DEMONSTRATE POWER IN ONGOING CLASS WAR**

The abominable Marikana massacre clearly demonstrates the fraud of the so-called South African anti-apartheid victory that was so gloriously portrayed before the world in 1992.

The events before and on 16 August had a long run-up from the Impala Platinum strike that started on 20 January 2012. There were strong similarities between the two disputes which involved labour, social and more importantly, broader political issues. The extreme levels of exploitation and workplace oppression in the mining industry have once again been inescapably highlighted in the mainstream media.

Striking workers and the communities in which they live have had to face up to the full might of the state. Faced with the deadly, sophisticated, automatic weapons of the police force, ordered by an openly hostile, anti-worker command, as well as the "legally" armed security guards of Lonmin, the workers had no alternative but to defend themselves in whatever way they could, with sticks and spears. For this they were condemned as the chief culprits and hooligans by the self-same police and the liberal press (owned by the mine bosses and their big business partners), as well as the clergy and trade union bureaucrats who 'talk left but walk right'.

All manner of apologists for the ruling class have found it impossible to justify the premeditated attack on the striking workers. They talk of 'a failure of leadership'. It is instead, but one sign of failure of the capitalist system. APDUSA condemns these actions in the strongest terms. We have pledged our full organisational support to the workers of Lonmin/Marikana.

Workers in the platinum belt, and now the gold mining industry, struck out on an independent course of organisational action in support of their more than reasonable wage demands. Wide scale support and solidarity actions have been forthcoming from progressive quarters, locally and internationally. While the strike was branded as illegal and workers faced imminent dismissal, the oppressive labour relations system of the

government and the bosses has been unceremoniously rejected.

In spite of all odds and with great sacrifice the workers have won a signal victory. It sends a clear message of workers' power to the spreading worker resistance in the mining industry. For the time being, the workers of Lonmin may now rest on their short-term, cruelly won gains. But at least, the class struggle between workers and the capitalist bosses in the mining industry, supported by the state, has now become more clearly defined. Workers on the mines are no longer deceived by self-serving, trade union bureaucrats. This reveals the urgent need to organise towards both political and economic alternatives. The parliament that makes anti-worker laws must be rejected, together with the constitution that gave rise to it. It is this constitution which protects big business and their obscene profits and lavish lifestyles.

The demand for fair labour practices and decent salaries and wages, propagated by worker organisations involved in the platinum and gold mines strikes and disputes represent an important step forward. The demand for freedom of speech and association, presently being denied to striking workers by mining bosses and the Zuma government must be defended through self-organisation of the working class and their allies. This defence includes organising to defend workers' physical security. In these struggles, raising the political demand for the convening of a Constituent Assembly gains greater importance. This CA must have the task of drawing up a new constitution, governed by the interests of the oppressed and exploited working class and peasantry. ●

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## **MARIKANA WORKERS SPEAK OUT**

*(This is an edited version of the speeches that were delivered at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) memorial meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 2012 following the massacre of the Lonmin workers by the state)*

A delegation of 30 Marikana mine workers arrived into a highly packed University of Johannesburg hall. The Marikana delegation saluted the awaiting crowd which responded with great enthusiasm.

Kicking off the evening, Professor Peter Alexandra welcomed everybody with the Vice Chancellor's message of condolences which stated that, "the University of JHB is a safe place for critical discussions". Rea Desai welcomed the various organizations which attended the meeting.. His message was that all "other organizations have to help your struggle (the Marikana) forward and to see that justice is done...". Cde Noord was the chair for the evening and in his opening, remarked that the "main purpose was to show solidarity with workers and various organisations. Give them an opportunity through the media to speak to us directly. This is the basis of solidarity"

**M. Madiba** was the first to speak on behalf of mine workers. He began: In Lonmin workers decided to gather because they earn starvation wage of R4000.00. They were demanding R12 500. Workers of Marikana said if the company is not prepared to give them R12 500 they are not going back. Those who killed mine workers were appointed by the S.A. government. They had a lot of instruments to disperse striking workers but the bullets! Mining is a backbone of our economy but how much are we earning? People went to exile to get shares in mines. We have a General Secretary and Vice President of the ANC knowing what we go through (in the mines). Are these the gains of our liberation? Will those people come and say vote for me? "Noooo!" roared the crowd. "Are you still going to vote for them?" "Noooo!" thundered the response. The change of this country is in your hands. The people we trusted have shares in these companies. These companies are not ploughing back. We have seen how we live in shacks. *Phantsi ngoo Ngxowala!*

**Primrose Sonti of Wonderkop** was the second guest speaker.

I am mourning, I should not have been here; I never slept since the massacre; I no longer know about my children; I come home to sleep and go back to the mountain. What happened in Wonderkop I have never seen since I was born when our brothers are killed for their rights. Why the management did not just fire them? If you are not happy with my labour, why don't you take another stupid who can take your pennies. They talk about 34 who died, as from Friday (17 August). There are more. Why the government did not come before this disaster? Which means that this disaster was planned, organized by management and government. Mr Ramaphosa wants to donate R2m but he bought a buffalo for R18.5m.

**Chris Marukane**, a researcher in the area outlined blatant racism in the mines: "but the mining industry must account for contamination of water, environment; lack of sanitation, toilets, roads etc. We need to support our brothers. The mentality planted by the mine bosses is that the people are paid what they deserve; but they are not! The people are the rightful owners of the land in which these mining corporations are. The minerals being taken out are those of the South African people. Let us not allow them to take our minerals away.

### **Manelo Rorwana**

Thanks to find this time to speak about the pain I saw in Lonmin. I am 11 years working in the mines and I am only earning R4000.00. I am here to express why workers stayed in the Mountain and as a result they were killed. We ask for support from relevant people. Our grievances on many things are put under the table; we suspect that there is a game being played by certain people around the government; On Friday (10 August) when workers were marching peacefully to their employer, the employer said "go to your union", workers went to NUM (the National Union of Mineworkers) and a worker was shot and killed from NUM offices. Then the workers retreated to the mountain. More than 34 people have died. A 5 year old was killed by live ammunition around that mountain in a location called Kanini. The Police belong to the government. Why are the police killing people? Are they still protecting our lives? That massacre must be investigated and whoever is responsible must be arrested. We need a private, independent inquiry which must expose to the whole world the truth of what happened.

**General Secretary of Amcu, Jeff Mphahlele:** Let me greet all of you. You will understand the gravity of the 16 August 2012. My comrades are locked in serious meetings. The life I am living is not mine anymore. I must be grateful that I am still alive. I was involved with President Joseph Matunjwa and one organizer. All this began 4 weeks back (i.e. towards the end of July).

On Sunday (12 August), before the massacre we received a phone call from the HR Specialist of Lonmill requesting assistance. He said there is an illegal strike because of the drillers who were to march to management to give a memorandum. The President said he must convene a meeting of all unions because if he addresses only those workers he will be creating a bad precedent. My task was to find out what happened to workers on strike. I said to management we will interact with our members on the mountain and then meet management thereafter.

We agreed on Wednesday (15 August) to meet with management on the Thursday (16 August) morning and speak about logistics of how to settle the matter and when workers are to come back. To our surprise on that Thursday management and South African Police Services were locked in serious discussion until 10:30. We requested to meet with management as per the arrangement the day ➡

➡ before. Management somersaulted, and with hardened attitude said people must just come down from the mountain and resume their duties and they left.

We were alone now, no NUM (National Union of Mine Workers), no management, no police. The president suggested we go to the workers and speak to them. So we went to the mountain. Once we got there we had long and difficult discussions with workers, persuading them to leave the mountain. At some point workers said "comrade Mphahlele we request you to leave this place. If we are going to die here, it must then be so but we would like you to leave."

There was an electric atmosphere coming around closer and closer. President said to us "comrades are we failing to beg these people to disperse because they will be killed if we leave." Finally we decided to heed the workers' insistence and used the 'backdoor' on our way.

As we drove out of Marikana we came across 15 police vehicles armed to the teeth. They stopped and detained us for 20 minutes and after they made some phone calls they left us. President said "let us go back and die with those people." We reasoned if we perish with these people no one will live to tell the story. Soon thereafter the media phoned the President and said the people are dying. Those people seen on TV running towards the police were actually being attacked and killed from behind. Huge police vehicles manoeuvred to prevent them from going to their Mkhukhus (shacks). People were sprayed with bullets.

We are not vilifying anybody but the union that has been at the forefront (*a clear reference to the National Union of Mine Workers*), I do not know what is happening to them, they are failing workers, they have a Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) component, they sit on boards of these mining companies and have lost direction. As AMCU

(Association of Mine Workers and Construction Union) we are calling for an independent commission of inquiry because the terms of reference will come from those who killed our people. How can you be a player and referee at the same time? In the midst of this we welcome your support.

A NUM representative was given a platform and began expressing NUM's condolences and stated that his portfolio in the NUM is that of health and safety. He stated that it is so sad that workers should be killed this way. For us it does not matter of which union you are a member of. Unfortunately the NUM speaker could not finish his address as a commotion began and he was booed with shouts of 'Phantsi with NUM!.' When he was escorted out the crowd chanted: 'yahamb'inja' meaning 'there leaves the dog'.

Another specialist researcher drew attention to the maps of the Marikana massacre. He investigated the scene on Monday (20 August) and picked up some items on the ground and had interviews with workers. He described a horrifying pre-meditated, military style massacre. He stated that workers on the mountain were surrounded below by the police. A razor wire was put in front of where workers were gathering which allowed a small opening through which workers were forced to run through leading to an area where many were cold bloodedly murdered. He said workers were then fired on from behind so that cameras could capture them as if they were moving forward to attack the police. He posed the question "What happened to the 3000 who had gathered when they mention only 34 who died?"

The meeting agreed on the establishment of the independent commission of inquiry. On the night, donations to the mine workers' fund amounting to R3050.00 were collected. ●

## **BURNING AND LOOTING IN JOHN TAOLO GAITSEWE DISTRICT, NORTHERN CAPE**

Service delivery protests in several areas, which include Olifantshoek (Gamagara Municipality), Joe Morolong Municipality, Mothethelesi, Cassel, Loopeng, Laxey, Bothitong and Bendel, has brought the whole district municipality to a halt. These protests have been going for about 4 months now. The leadership does not allow students to attend classes.

The service delivery protest is reported to be about a number of issues: the building of a tarred road that will connect the outlying areas with Kuruman including the N14, running water, job creation, etc. In Gamagara residents are demanding the recalling of the Mayor and for an unfinished community hall to be completed. Residents are of the opinion that the funds for this project have been mismanaged. People residing in the municipality are not given job opportunities, but companies that have operations in the area use imported labour.

Members of the Gamagara Development Forum have been forced to resign from their positions. Three houses belonging to the Gamagara Executive Mayor, the John Taolo Gaitsewe District Executive Mayor, a Board member of the Development Forum, were burnt down and a number of others were stoned. The police have failed dismally to contain the violent outburst of the communities and a delegation consisting of the Minister of Police, the National spokesperson of Basic Education, and the Northern Cape Provincial cabinet was not given a hearing. The leadership of the community is adamant that no schooling will resume before their demands are met but the Provincial Government is in no position to respond positively to these demands.

This situation is impacting negatively on students in the area in the same way it has affected students in Barkly West in the Dikgatlong Municipality. ➡

➡ The Olifantshoek community leadership, which is preventing students from going back to school, fortunately does not have children in the local schools. Their children are attending school in Kathu.

The ANC leadership has absolutely no control over the local leadership. What this means is that their so-called reformist policies are a far cry from meeting the needs of the oppressed. The Northern Cape Province, and indeed South Africa as a whole is having a serious challenge with regard to skills development. But in spite of this students are not being allowed to attend classes.

It is now emerging that the lack of political understanding in the area is slowly being reversed and the stranglehold that the Congress Movement has had on the people is loosening. It is true that you can fool some of the people sometimes, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. The celebration of the arrival of the Centenary torch could not be held openly without tempers of the community rising. For as long as the ANC rules the

issue of cadre deployment will be with us. It goes even further to include token appointments, where people are appointed to very important positions minus the power that goes with it. This means the governing of the Province is done remotely.

A serious intervention is required at this moment especially regarding reopening of schools, because this situation will become our worst nightmare. The prevailing situation can be likened to a situation where we cut our noses to spite our faces. All spheres of government are infected with a dangerous virus called greed. They intentionally mislead communities with a view to enriching themselves. Some community members own pieces of land and have interests in companies only on paper and not in reality. We call upon the leadership to stop using school children for their own selfish and narrow interests. It is actually time for the community to regroup because there is no bonafide branch of the ANC operating in these areas and one cannot help but wonder where the mandate has been coming from. ●

## THE E-TOLLING DEBACLE

In its Declaration of Intent (2009- 2012) the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral) stated that it will “...Undertake research and development to enhance the quality of life of all South African citizens, with particular emphasis on their social and economic well-being.” This is hardly the case. With the widespread opposition to its plans to have toll roads constructed across the nation, it becomes clearly evident that this body has not met its own mandate to take the views of affected parties into account. The latest case of the Gauteng Tolling scheme highlights this fact. In the court action against the e-tolling scheme brought by the Opposition to Urban Tolling Alliance (Outa) it was stated that over the next 20 year about R70 billion would be collected in tolls over and above the actual cost of road improvements and most of this money would leave the country. Sanral has not disputed this. Then there was the notorious case of the proposed R300 toll road in urban Cape Town which would have adversely affected a number of impoverished communities along this road while also causing serious potential damage to the False Bay Ecology Park. Besides this, we have had the outcry against the longstanding Wild Coast Toll Road project, which for the most, ignores the needs and desires of the people of the area.

Sanral was established by the government in 1998 as a private company, with the government being the sole share holder. Since the ANC government decided to diligently follow the economic policy of neo-liberalism, Sanral followed suit. In extreme cases it has accepted unsolicited proposals from private companies for the construction of toll roads, such as the case of the R300. An unsolicited proposal means that that project has not been put out to tender and the sole

intention of the company making the proposal is to make money – the more the better. There is little concern for the needs and wants of the end users and affected parties.

We have landed in this mess because of a general failure of the government to deal with the problem of public transport in its entirety. This is a problem that dates back to the bad old days of apartheid. The rail transport system progressively fell into disarray resulting in more and more businesses resorting to road transport. With a growing number of heavy trucks using the roads it was inevitable that abnormal damage would occur. So what was saved on minimal investment in rail services had to be paid for via a deteriorating road system. As with the electricity supply crisis, the Government consciously or unconsciously turned a blind eye to the growing problem.

At present, we are subject to a fuel levy that is supposed to be used for road maintenance and improvement but this is hardly the case. Yet this levy was increased by 20c per litre in April this year. On top of this Sanral expects us to pay ever increasing tolls. It now appears that the future of heavy tolling is in question and that it may be substituted with a special fuel levy. All is in the balance, with the government trying to extricate itself from this mess with a new law by which tolling could be enforced. But what is needed is a comprehensive transport system with affordable public rail and bus transport, and an efficient freight rail system which will lessen the impact on roads. The most economic solutions are needed and not money making capitalist schemes. ●

# **BANTUSTANISM LIVES!**

The ANC's attempt to rationalize the institution of tribalism and so-called traditional leaders via its latest Traditional Courts Bill has met with widespread opposition. It has now conceded that the bill discriminates against women and must be redrafted. Yes, they say, it must be redrafted only on the question of the rights of women, but it must not be scrapped altogether, as it should be, along with all other laws on the statute book that preserves outmoded and reactionary bantustanism. To examine this question we need to go back to the negotiations around the proposed new constitution for a "new" South Africa in 1993. In the negotiations the Congress of Traditional Leaders (Contralesa) argued that all traditional leaders should be formally recognized in the constitution, which entailed that all legislation on bantustanism, enacted by the former regime should essentially be retained. Contralesa received a sympathetic ear and not the least, from the ANC. The notorious Black Administration Act of 1927 was kept on the statute book, along with the Boputhatswana Traditional Courts Act of 1979, the KwaNdebele Traditional Authorities Act of 1984 and later, we have had the KwaZulu Amakhosi and Iziphanyiswa Act of 1990. According to the South African constitution, adopted in 1993, a Council of Traditional Leaders was set up, giving powers and privileges to traditional leaders, contrary to all standards of democracy. Since then we have had a string of laws validating this outmoded and divisive brand of tribalism: The National House of Traditional Leaders Act 10 of 1997, updated in 1998; The House of Traditional Leaders for the Province of the North West Act 12 of 1994; The KwaZulu-Natal Act on the House of Traditional Leaders Act 7 of 1994; The Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders Act 4 of 1994, amended in 1998; The Northern Province House of Traditional Leaders Act 6 of 1994 and the general House of Traditional Leaders Act 6 of 1994. In Mpumalanga the "traditional leaders" have the sole right to nominate other traditional leaders to the House. Then again, according to law, in Kwazulu-Natal and the North West Province, the functions and powers of traditional leaders, as defined by the old apartheid regime remain in tact.

## **Book Review: A History of Agrarian Revolts**

**Kepe, Thembela and Lungisile Ntsebeza, 2012. *Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years*. Claremont, South Africa: UCT Press**

This book brings together thirteen chapters to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Mpondo revolts and underscores vital lessons for agrarian struggles today. Like any volume dedicated to the

The ANC puts forward a facile argument that it has acted so as to preserve these undemocratic institutions that have been tainted by history, because people still believe in them. Well, there are people that still believe in apartheid, but this has not stopped the ANC and its partners, past and present, from abolishing the apartheid laws. One can only conclude that the ANC once again deferred to political opportunism, seeking to gain the partnership of these so-called traditional leaders to strengthen their ability to hold on to political power. While former president Thabo Mbeki obsequiously proclaimed "I am an African", neglecting to preface this with the obvious and necessary "I am a human being", the poverty stricken members of the mass of South Africa are expected to say: "I am an Ndebele. I am different to the Sothos and Tswanas". Or I am a Venda. I am not the same as a Xhosa. Or "I am a Zulu. I am superior to all of you tribes". And President Zuma revels in his leopard skins which adorns his pot belly and which defines his right to a state paid, modern tribal kraal at Nkandla, with passageways for any one of his four wives to visit his bed chamber at his command. All of this, while xenophobia prevails and "Amakwerere" (foreigners) are being brutally attacked and even massacred. This Nkandla tribal village is to be upgraded to the cost of R2 billion rand. In the mean time the people of the nation, not tribes, struggle to win their fundamental right to clean water through taps and not polluted rivers, a modern sewerage system and not the bush, electricity and not dried wood that has to be collected by hand at a distance from their crude shacks and most of all LAND, which in many cases is under the control of these traditional leaders who obviously utilise their authority to their own advantage. Yet, it is boasted that South Africa has the most progressive constitution in the world. While the ANC claims it is the "Spear of the Nation" and Zuma calls for "Umshini Wam" (bring me my machine gun), the ethos of long gone tribal valour can no longer prevail. The voice of the people of the nation of South Africa, striving to be born, must still be heard. ●

memory of an unprecedented battle in history of an arduous and protracted freedom struggle, it recounts decisive phases in the unfolding protest movement and celebrates the heroic efforts of outstanding activists who rebelled against the injustices of a brutally repressive and racist state. In popular histories that pay tribute to the struggle of the 1960s, political protests in Sharpeville and Langa feature ➡

➔ prominently whereas the Eastern Mpondoland uprising rarely gets a footnote or paragraph. Chapter after chapter sets out to end this widespread sidelining of the Mpondoland rebellion in mainstream liberation struggle history. Collectively, authors achieve their laudable aim to help elevate the rightful importance of this brutally repressed rural battle for land and liberty. The slim volume is packed with informative facts and brings to wider public attention several untold and spellbinding stories of anti-apartheid resistance from the early-1950s to mid-1960s and identifies knowledge gaps for future historians to fill.

Lungisile Ntsebeza explains in his chapter that the immediate triggers of the revolt were two repressive instruments that the apartheid state foisted on people inhumanely crowded into the Bantustans. According to the misleading rhetoric of the white supremacist regime, one of these policies set out to improve the failed land tenure and farm management system. Popularly known as the 'Rehabilitation or Betterment Scheme', this deceptive plan in effect amounted to starving peasants of productive farmland and reinforced land dispossession and inequalities that the 1913 and 1936 land laws entrenched. Another draconian law they introduced, the infamous Bantu Authorities Act, aimed to consolidate inferior political structures created to police the flows of cheap and docile labour to fuel the South African economy, maintain landlessness in the Bantustans and violently repress resistance. The apartheid state employed the chiefs and headmen, resuscitating and overhauling an outmoded tribal autocracy, to operate this system of 'indirect rule'.

Almost all contributors acknowledge the tireless activities of currents of South Africa's liberation movement to inject divergent politics of agrarian change into this militant rural protest. At face value and with rare exceptions, authors uphold an even handed and balanced treatment of the varied roles the main formations played. One chapter, for example, surveys how the so-called 'anti-apartheid movement' newspapers, among other media archives, covered the rural revolts in Mpondoland. The review restricts itself to informative press cuttings from the Congress of Democrats and ANC (especially Ben Turok's journalistic reports for the *New Age*) publications. No mention is made of the extensive coverage and in-depth political analyses of this agrarian struggle in *The Torch*, *Ikwezi Llomso* and *The SOYAN*. Yet these radical left newspapers were regularly published and widely distributed in the countryside and towns by Unity Movement activists as a reading of accessible official organizational archives at two South African universities- Fort Hare and the University of Cape

Town- ought to reveal. Does the selective writing of history displayed in this chapter not violate the basic rule of so-called academic objectivity? Honest archival research will easily show that while both the ANC and Unity Movement of South Africa had helped to build and radicalize the Mpondoland protest movement, they did so to advance vastly different political visions.

Many chapters showcase the concrete daily actions of political activists as the revolt unfolded, but only two chapters interrogate the political substance driving the practices of the two main national liberation traditions. In their separate articles, Ntsebeza and Drew, pose tough yet compelling questions about the political content and programmatic visions of these movements. Since its inception, the ANC has subscribed to the policy of compromise and inferior political representation. It operated the discredited Native Representative Councils and *Bhunga* long after the oppressed majority had turned their backs on all institutions crafted to oppress black people. Forty years after its establishment this organization adopted its Freedom Charter, which is basically a vague set of political promises, including an eclectic clause on land ownership. It fell well short of a demand for thoroughgoing agrarian change to advance the interests of poor landless classes working and living on the land.

Alison Drew's chapter, which is an in-depth critical review of Govan Mbeki's book on the uprising, exposes deep-seated and enduring tensions in the ideological edifice of the ANC. A case in point is the party's mechanistic and shallow stance on armed struggle spearheaded by the peasantry in a national liberation movement- which is clinically dissected in Leonard Nikani's autobiography, (*My Life Under White Supremacy And In Exile*). It evidently took a long time for the party's urban intelligentsia to fully comprehend the significance of this rural rebellion in the struggle for full democratic rights and a resolution to the agrarian problem. Ntsebeza places the rival perspectives on the Mpondoland revolt in boarder historical context, grounding the debate in the big agrarian and national question controversies among radical socialists in the early 1930s, before the formation of the All African Convention. He uncovers the ideological roots of peasant mobilization spearheaded by a leading AAC organizer in Mpondoland, I.B.Tabata, from the late 1940s onwards. ●

## NEVILLE ALEXANDER 22.10.1936 - 27.09.2012

We pay tribute to the lifelong contribution of Neville Alexander to the South African Liberatory movement and indeed, his vision and commitment to international struggle.

Neville, born in Cradock, came to Cape Town to further his studies at the University of Cape Town in the mid fifties and soon after joined the Society of Young Africa (SOYA). One was struck by his effervescent and infectious personality and his enthusiasm for everything he engaged in. He belonged to a new layer of serious young intellectuals determined to make their own contribution to the political struggle and he played a leading role in the establishment and building of the vibrant and influential Cape Peninsula Students Union.

At UCT, he achieved his master's degree with distinction and went on to take up his doctoral studies in Germany. In 1961, while he was still abroad the APDUSA was established and when he returned he immediately joined the organisation. But he had become influenced to think of the struggle in South Africa in new terms. Impatient for change, he began organising clandestinely for his approach, which inevitably brought him into conflict with the organisation. He was subsequently suspended from Soya which effectively meant that he could not, under the terms of his suspension, work in any affiliate of the Unity Movement. But this did not deter him. With those who he had won over to his views, he established the Yu Chi Chan Club whose first purpose was to study guerrilla warfare. Not long after, a number of them were detained by the security police and then sentenced to prison for varying terms ranging from five to ten years. Some may believe that they were sentenced for taking a foolish risk but that is not true. They were sentenced because they were perceived to present a serious threat to the ruling establishment and they either had to be crushed or taken out of commission for the longest possible time.

In prison inmates immediately learnt that they had to unite to defend themselves from persecution and to fight for a dignified existence, irrespective of the political organisations to which they belonged. Moreover, in the single cells where Neville was detained, numbers seldom rose above thirty. Living cheek by jowl, day in and day out, inmates became akin to one big family and in such circumstances it would be impossible not to become tolerant of other political views. This would not necessarily affect your own political outlook but it was a big contribution to Neville's adoption of total non-sectarianism. Later, Neville was greatly excited with the arrival of the APDUSA contingent on Robben Island and spoke approvingly of the organisation's approach to armed struggle.

After his release from prison, and later, the release of the Apdusans, Neville initiated an attempt at a close collaboration with Apdusa. But bannings made effective communication an insurmountable obstacle at the time. Later, Neville was a key figure in the establishment of the Workers Organisation For Socialist Action (WOSA) In December 1997, WOSA took a bold step to host the first international socialist conference in South Africa to which APDUSA gave its full solidarity. Though this conference did not achieve its' hoped for objectives it made a major contribution to the understanding that our struggle is not merely a national one but that it is part of an international movement. Then, when the Anti-Privatisation Forum was established in Cape Town, WOSA and APDUSA worked closely together to promote a socialist outlook in the forum. Later, in 2005, when APDUSA promoted the establishment of the Radical Left Network, as part of the initiative to build an international Radical Parties Network. Neville and WOSA avidly supported this project. This brought about a fruitful collaboration between a number of leftist groupings. Though the RLN failed to survive, it held many important public seminars and it broke the barriers of suspicion and disdain that had previously existed between imagined rival organisations.

While our political paths had diverged from 1962/3 onwards, they were never separated. In the immediate, Neville believed strongly in the necessity for the formation of a mass workers party to carry the struggle forward, for full political liberation and full equality for all human beings, here at home and internationally. It is a task that confronts all of us.

A Luta Continua.

### *Letter*

#### **SCHOOL CLOSURES IN THE WESTERN CAPE**

Of the 27 schools targeted for closure, 19 are leased -; they are on private land. This private land in many cases belongs to commercial farmers in the Western Cape. A report by Human Rights Watch published in October 2011 commented on a steady stream of farm workers who are evicted from farms or whose lives are made as difficult as possible by farmers, virtually harassing them off their farms. No doubt these farmers are dedicated

members of the Democratic Alliance who rules in the Western Cape province. They and their political representatives have decided that they have no more places for the education of farm workers' children. The WCED says that they will be placed in better resourced schools, where they will ostensibly have access to 'quality education'. Students will now be expected to agree to move from one hellhole to another. The same argument is advanced by the DBE. We need not dwell here on the disaster which is the DBE. This political conspiracy and deception has gone too far. Alternatives need to be sought. In these struggles we do not stand alone. Internationally, intense educational struggles have in recent months been fought in Chicago (against school ➡

➤ closures and teacher evaluations), in Chile (against gutter education), in Kenya (against poor salaries) and in Canada, against rising class fees. Neo-liberal capitalism is hitting out against the labouring masses worldwide. Opposition to it has been equally swift and intense.

The privatisation of education in South Africa is being implemented through all manner of means. Back in the 1990s it was the 'rationalisation of teacher posts'; there was talk of overhauling the system in its entirety. Then came the savaging of the school curriculum.; Accompanying this was the introduction of school governing bodies whose main brief was to oversee the introduction of neo-liberal educational principles. The present nation-wide school closure programme is part and parcel of this process. It does not help to argue that 81 new schools are to be built in the Western Cape over the next three years. According to Western Cape education minister Donald Grant each school will cost approximately R31 million. They are well versed in the price of everything but don't care about the value of anything – in this case all students receiving high quality,, progressive education that will help them become active

participants in society. First teachers are retrenched, and then new schools are built that will require more teachers. The irrationality of the system boggles the mind.

The emergence of private companies like Curro Holdings in the provision of what they call ' quality , low-fee education' to working class families shows a trend actively supported by the likes of the WCED and the DBE. The notion that only or mostly private educational providers are capable of providing 'quality education' reinforces the idea that the working class must pay for the education of their children. If not, they are doomed to failure. The Meridian Independent Schools (run by Curro) proposes a monthly fee of R900 to R1300; and it is targeting families earning up to R200 000 per annum. These schools will form part of the operational capacity of the neo-liberal order to secure sufficient skilled labour for industry and state administration. The rest of the student population is being told to go to hell.

*Concerned Educator*



## *From Around the World*

### **VENEZUELA'S 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: RESURGENT RIGHTWING?**

Venezuelans go to the polls on October 7 to elect a new president. Municipal elections are scheduled to take place in April 2013. President Hugo Chavez is widely expected to win the presidential elections. But Chavez's margin of victory is uncertain and likely to be influenced by surprise factors even though it is impossible to ignore the effects of a decade of anti-neoliberal political and socio-economic changes on the population.

For example, it is hard to accurately forecast how concerns surrounding Hugo Chavez's health (diagnosed with cancer and treated in Cuba on a number of occasions) will impact on voter consciousness. *The Economist* speculated that Chavez's 'illness will probably hinder his campaign, undermining his image of invincibility.' (*The Economist*, 11 Feb 2012, p11) This opinion reinforces the superficial assertion that the Bolivarian revolution lacks a leadership beyond Hugo Chavez, a decisive question that must be thoroughly examined in future articles. In their electoral campaign, rightwing parties have tried to capitalize on this situation to their own advantage. They have also used the deadly explosion at a major oil refinery to win votes alleging that this tragic accident was an inevitable consequence of general government inefficiencies and failures. Venezuela's old elites still wield considerable political influence, especially through their solid control over the media,

and remain steadfast in their bitter fight to reverse the gains of the movement to build 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism. This first article in our two part series on Venezuela's national elections looks at how the rightwing opposition has been preparing itself to recapture state power.

Political spokespersons of the indigenous bourgeoisie and imperialism in Venezuela have joined forces in a coalition called the Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD) to contest the 2012 presidential elections. It would be a mistake to define the MUD as merely an electoral coalition. It was born in 2008 by a dozen of rightwing parties-including Democratic Action (AD) and COPEI that had ruled Venezuela before 1998. From the outset the MUD was striving to overcome a leadership crisis that the fractured rightwing slumped into in the aftermath of the failed April 2002 coup d'etat. With hindsight, their decision to boycott the 2005 legislative elections is widely regarded as a silly tactical error which had left them without lawmakers for a few years. But in the 2010 mid-term elections, the MUD won 67 out of 165 congressional seats. Today the MUD brings together 30 parties, but the dominant coalition members are Justice First (PJ), People's Will (VP) and New Era (UNT).

The MUD elected its presidential candidate in primaries on 13 February 2012 with roughly 3 million voters choosing between two contenders: ➤



➤ Henrique Capriles Radonski versus Pablo Pérez. Three weeks before the primaries, Mr Leopoldo López, a former mayor of Caracas, withdrew from the race and decided to back Mr Capriles, the frontrunner. In fact, Mr López co-founded *Primero Justicia* with Mr Capriles and actually served in the short-lived coup regime under Pedro Carmona and signed the decree to abolish the General Assembly, the Supreme Court, and the Constitution. After his split from *Primero Justicia* in 2007 López became the leader of the People's Will (VP) party. Pablo Pérez, from the New Era party and governor of Zulia state, was roundly defeated. What tainted his campaign and worked against him was the open support from Democratic Action and COPEI-discredited pre-1998 ruling parties viewed as counterproductive to desperate efforts to reinvent the rightwing.

Henrique Capriles Radonski, a young and wealthy politician, won the primaries to be the MUD presidential candidate. With at least a decade of political experience in the Justice First (*Primero Justicia*) party, he was the former mayor of Baruta, a municipality in Caracas, and ex-governor of the state of Miranda. Since the kick-off of his presidential campaign in Caracas on 10 June 2012, Capriles has energetically marketed himself as an admirer of former Brazilian president Lula da Silva. Whilst Lula expanded Brazil's social programmes during his two terms in office, these are far below the interventions initiated by the Bolivarian social missions in Venezuela. Capriles' promise to copy Brazilian-style social programmes would amount to rolling back more than a decade of gains for Venezuela's poor and working people.

The MUD election platform, limited to 18 pages, is thin on details. But its nine themes display a heavy dosage of populist rhetoric: maternal-infant care, housing and its environment, training and development, employment and entrepreneurship, health and social security, citizenry, tranquility, justice, and social protection. *The Economist* magazine published a profile of the MUD in February 2012. It summarises the economic policy in the coalition's election manifesto as a 'gradualist approach to restoring confiscated property, undoing currency controls and abolishing unconstitutional laws' (11 Feb 2012, p45). Private bankers and members of Venezuela's business association, *FEDECAMARAS*, broadly agree with the substance of the MUD economic policy. Turning to specific elements of the MUD vision, *the Economist* further reports that the central bank's autonomy will be restored in addition to shifting 'control of social welfare schemes to the ministries' and 'relieve the state oil company, PDVSA, of its role as a welfare agency...'. (ibid) The economic actions of an envisaged national unity government include a 60% cut in government food subsidies over 3 years and, within 2 years, to return all expropriated land and property to their previous owners.

How to privatize healthcare, education, food provision and housing, delivered through a many social missions and community councils, sits at the heart of the MUD platform. This is one of its toughest obstacles. It is bound to erupt in a social confrontation with millions of mobilized beneficiaries of the Bolivarian social missions. How prepared are anti-capitalist forces in Venezuela to defeat a full-scale onslaught from the resurgent rightwing? ●

## THE ONGOING CRISIS IN SPAIN

The spotlight in the crisis affecting the eurozone shifts from one country to the other, from Greece to Spain to Italy and Portugal and then back to Greece. As the crisis deepens, the efforts of the EU, European Central Bank and the IMF (troika) to contain it appear increasingly more desperate. The markets are focusing on Spain as the next country in the eurozone requiring a bailout. Spain's economy is more than four times the size of that of Greece and is the fourth largest in the sixteen nation eurozone. What the hierarchy in the EU and IMF fear is the Spanish economy failing and defaulting on its debts. This would cause shockwaves that would be felt not only in the eurozone but in every corner of the globe. Resistance to the drastic austerity measures of both the social democratic and conservative governments imposed on the Spanish people, is continuing.

The Spanish economy is in recession with an unemployment rate of 23.6%, youth unemployment rate of over 50% and 5 million people unemployed.

Hundreds of thousands of families have had their homes repossessed while hundreds of thousands of finished newly-built homes lay idle on the balance sheets of banks, which cannot sell them in the market. This housing bubble burst on the eve of the global economic crisis in 2007. The bubble had been made possible in large part by huge loans from German banks to their Spanish counterparts. When the bubble burst the Spanish economy went into rapid decline. Under pressure from the financial markets and the institutions of the EU the Spanish social democratic government, PSOE imposed austerity measures in May 2010. These included freezing of pensions, wage reductions in the civil service, labour legislation making it easier to hire and fire workers and budget cuts.

In the elections that took place in November 2011, the right wing Popular Party (PP) emerged as the winner, the PSOE was punished by its supporters for its neoliberal policies, losing 4 million votes. United Left, the Communist Party made ➤

➔ significant gains, increasing its deputies from 2 to 11 in parliament.

The EU imposed a target on Spain of deficit reduction from 8.5% in 2011 to 3% in 2013. On the basis of this target the right wing government passed a budget, which included massive austerity cuts and tax increases worth 27 billion euros, the biggest attack on the working class for 3 decades. Just after the 2012 budget was passed, Prime Minister Rajoy announced an additional 10 billion euro cuts in the healthcare and education budgets. The Financial Times warned "Spain's effort at deficit reduction is not just bad economics, it is physically impossible, so something else will have to give.....the result will be political insurrection".

Spain's troubled economy was to be shaken next by its banks, rotten with bad loans from the housing boom and bust. The EU agreed to extend 100 billion euro to rescue Spanish banks. While the money is to go directly to the banks, the EU has made clear that the Spanish state will be responsible for the loans. Within 5 days, the markets pronounced the rescue package of the banks a failure when Spain's borrowing costs soared to their highest level since the birth of the euro.

Cyprus is the next country in the eurozone which is having to be bailed out and the feeling is that other nations will be "landing up in the euro sick bay". With the survival of the eurozone itself in question, there is a call for deeper fiscal integration with mutualisation of debt. While some small steps have been taken in this direction, full fiscal integration would require a political union of states. A move in this direction would soon be quashed. The savage austerity cuts that are being imposed in Spain and other eurozone countries are a pathway to a vicious circle of worsening recession and higher levels of debt.

Resistance to the austerity cuts have taken place on the labour front and by social movements. Wave after wave of strikes, including 24 hour general strikes have been mounted. The latest general strike in March was against the "labour law reform", called reluctantly by trade union leaders, who only weeks before had signed a national wage restraint agreement with the bosses confederation.

There have been mobilisations on the education front affecting Madrid's schools and a strike in Barcelona's universities. A significant development in the resistance to the austerity cuts was the emergence in May 2010 of a movement of anger at the Spanish State. Its participants came to be labelled as the indignados and their movement M15. Thousands of people took to the streets week by week and occupied squares challenging the state with civil disobedience. The indignados were inspired by the occupations in Tahrir Square in Egypt and other cities in the Arab world, constituting "the Arab Spring". In the eurozone itself, the resistance of the Greek people to cuts served as an example to people in the EU and globally. The M15 movement went beyond its activist core and awakened a new young generation of militants. The indignados took big political leaps forward, from questioning the role of banks to supporting the call for expropriation and nationalisation of the banks and for "non-payment of unjust, illegitimate and illegal debts". M15 continues to mobilise its supporters to the chagrin of the government, which had hoped it would disappear.

An explosive situation is developing in Spain, economically, socially and politically. The idea that the only alternative is to do away with the capitalist system is gaining ground. The forces of the left face a huge challenge if they going to make an impact in the emerging situation. ●

## ***GREECE IN TURMOIL***

Greece is at the epicentre of a political, economic and social crisis, affecting the whole eurozone and threatening to engulf it. The eurozone crisis is part of the global capitalist crisis, which exploded on the world scene in 2007. The banking system in the US and Europe at the time was rescued through the frenzied efforts of the bourgeois governments and financiers there. Their policy is to socialise debt and privatise profit. They do this by imposing austerity on their workers, thereby transferring payment for the debt from those who were responsible for the crisis, the financiers and bankers, to the working class. The banks have resumed making profits from loans to the governments, whose treasuries have been depleted. The transference of the debt to the workers in the EU is being resisted by them, spearheaded by the workers in Greece. It is posing a challenge to the policies of neoliberalism and capitalism.

Having had to endure the cruel austerity plan as a condition of the first bailout in 2010, the Greek

people are now faced with even worse conditions in the second bailout. The Troika (the EU, the European Central Bank and the IMF) have imposed their plan on the Greek people, to guarantee the payment of the debt by the Greek state to the banks. Wages have been cut by 22 per cent, pensions by 15 to 25 percent and there has been a whole wave of destruction in social services, affecting access to hospitals, doctors and childcare. According to NGOs, 25,000 people are sleeping rough on the streets of Athens. There has been a huge rise in unemployment, which already affects over 21% of the population, nearly 30 per cent of women and 50 per cent of young people. The recession is on the scale of the 1930s with a drop in GDP of 6.9% in 2011, with an estimated further drop of 5.3% in 2012.

The second bailout, which the Greek government claims will wipe out 100 million euro of Greek debt, thanks to the participation of the private sector, will involve Greece in a further 130 billion Euro debt. ➔

➡ This will further embroil the country in the debt trap. The legitimacy and legality of Greece's debt has been questioned by significant social forces inside and outside the Greek parliament, who in 2010 were calling for an audit commission "so that we know which part of the debt is odious, illegitimate and illegal" (Alexis Tsipras, leader of Syriza, which is a Coalition of the Radical Left).

There has been a wave of resistance to the austerity measures during the past two years in Greece. There have been 17 general strikes since the general election in 2009, which works out at one every six or seven weeks. There were mass meetings in workplaces and strike committees were set up by the rank and file. The demands in demonstrations became more radical as the struggle intensified. The struggle from below had its effects politically. It pushed Syriza further to the left, which decisively rejected the bailout conditions imposed in March by the Troika. In the May election Syriza was the only party/coalition to call for a united anti-austerity platform and an anti-austerity government if the left won.

Syriza had a radical anti-capitalist action programme for the elections in June, which was called because of a hung parliament following the May election. Its programme to tackle the crisis included

- 1 Abolition of the memoranda, of all measures of austerity and of counter-reforms of the labour laws which are destroying the country
- 2 Nationalisation of the banks and their integration into a public banking system
- 3 A moratorium on payment of the debt and an audit which will make it possible to denounce and abolish the illegitimate debt.

Syriza advocates Greece remaining in the eurozone, placing the onus of responsibility for its expulsion on the other member countries, should it be successful in forming an anti-austerity government. Such a government will then be faced with the decision to devalue its currency. A re-introduction of the drachma will allow Greece to have some control of exchange rates. An important part of the crisis stems from the fixed Euro. Weaker economies in the eurozone such as Greece, inheriting a stronger currency, are unable to compete

with a strong economy such as Germany, leading to industrial decline and unemployment. At the same time, cheap credit from Germany has encouraged a massive growth of public and private debt in Greece.

Worrying to left circles in Greece and internationally, was the decision of two other left parties, KKE a Stalinist party and Antarsya, an anti-capitalist party/ coalition not to commit their support to Syriza in the event of the latter being able to form a government. They bear the responsibility for Syriza not having been able to form a left wing government after the May elections. In the June elections, New Democracy won the most support, just 2% ahead of Syriza, which gained nearly 600,000 more votes. Although the total number of votes cast for the anti-austerity parties just exceeded those of the pro-austerity parties, New Democracy, by virtue of gaining the largest number of seats, was asked to form a government. It entered into a coalition with two other pro-austerity parties, Pasok and Democratic Left. New Democracy owed some of its success not only to bourgeois circles in Greece but also to those in the EU and the US, who conducted a campaign of intense propaganda against Syriza. A disturbing feature of both elections was the rise of a fascist party, Golden Dawn, which for the first time gained parliamentary seats.

Following the election results, there was a rally on the financial markets, which lasted barely an hour amid growing fears that Europe's worsening debt crisis was about to engulf Spain. The financial sector is increasingly aware that the austerity programmes in the eurozone are causing a vicious circle of recession and higher levels of debt. It is being predicted that a new pro-austerity government will not last till the end of the year and that Syriza, conducting anti-austerity campaigns in the streets and propaganda in parliament, will win the support of the majority of the people and be successful in forming a government in fresh elections. Syriza as an anti-capitalist party, carries the hopes not only of the Greek people but of left wing and progressive forces in the EU and internationally, of a breakthrough in the struggle against the neoliberal policies being imposed by pro-capitalist governments globally. ●

## ***From The Archives***

### **V.I. Lenin "What is to be Done?":**

*All those who talk about "overrating the importance of ideology",\* about exaggerating the role of the conscious element,\*\* etc., imagine that the labour movement pure and simple can elaborate, and will elaborate, an independent ideology for itself, if only the workers "wrest their fate from the hands of the leaders". But this is a profound mistake. To supplement what has been said above, we shall quote the following profoundly true and important words of Karl Kautsky on the new draft programme of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party.\*\*\**

"Many of our revisionist critics believe that Marx asserted that economic development and the class struggle create, not only the conditions for socialist production, but also, and directly, the *consciousness* [K. K.'s italics] of its necessity. And these critics assert that England, the country most highly developed capitalistically, is more remote than any other from this consciousness. Judging by the draft, one might assume that this allegedly orthodox-Marxist view, which is thus refuted, was shared by the committee that drafted the Austrian programme. In the draft programme it is stated: 'The more capitalist ➡

➔ development increases the numbers of the proletariat, the more the proletariat is compelled and becomes fit to fight against capitalism. The proletariat becomes conscious of the possibility and of the necessity for socialism. In this connection socialist consciousness appears to be a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue. Of course, socialism, as a doctrine, has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and, like the latter, emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for socialist production as, say, modern technology, and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire

to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicle of science is not the proletariat, but the *bourgeois intelligentsia* [K. K.'s italics]: it was in the minds of individual members of this stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletarian class struggle where conditions allow that to be done. Thus, socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without [*von Aussen Hineingetragen*] and not something that arose within it spontaneously [*urwuchsig*]. Accordingly, the old Hainfeld programme quite rightly stated that the task of Social-Democracy is to imbue the proletariat [literally: saturate the proletariat] with the *consciousness* of its position and the consciousness of its task. There would be no need for this if consciousness arose of itself from the class struggle.”

## APDUSA

### ***THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES***

Despite the gain of political rights for all, the compromise of 1992 has not fulfilled the democratic aspirations of the labouring majority and they continue to suffer in conditions of abject poverty and subjugation to the will of the rich who command the economic resources of the country. In the ongoing struggle we therefore demand:

- The convening of a democratically elected **Constituent Assembly**, charged with the task of drawing up a new constitution, governed by the interests of the oppressed and exploited working class and peasantry, based on the demand for full, unfettered political rights for all with majority rule in a unitary state, the removal of all artificially created regional political boundaries, the liquidation of all special minority rights and privileges which militate against the interests of the majority. The Constituent Assembly must have full powers to discharge these duties, untrammelled by any directions and constraints designed to serve self-interested minorities.
- A resolution of the **land question** in accordance with the needs of those who work and live off the land. This means the destruction of all existing tribal and feudal relations in the rural areas and the nationalisation of the land, without compensation. A new division of the land and its management, which excludes forced collectivisation, the payment of rent and the expropriation of small peasant farmers, must be undertaken by committees that are democratically elected by and answerable to the people.
- The **expropriation** of all major industries, banks and institutions of credit and their management by the state and representatives of the workers in the interests of the population as a whole.
- The revision of labour legislation for the liquidation of all discrimination against the worker. This also means:
- The **right to work**, which must be implemented both via the institution of necessary adjustments to the length of the working week to provide employment for all, without a reduction in wages, as well as by the institution of a progressive **public works program** with the full representation of the unemployed in its management.
- The fixing of a living **minimum wage** as well as a sliding scale to compensate for any price increases.
- The unconditional right to **strike** which includes the right of occupation of the workplace.
- Free and **compulsory education** for all up to matric with free books for the needy.
- Free **health services** for the needy.
- A single, progressive **tax system**, the abolition of vat and all indirect taxes that fall so heavily on the poor.
- The elected representatives of the people, at organisational level or in the local, regional or national political institutions of state, must be fully **accountable** to those who elect them and they must be fully bound by the demands and aspirations of the working class and its allies, the landless peasantry.

APDUSA calls for the self-organisation and united independent struggle of the labouring masses. We believe that the struggle can only advance decisively via the greatest ideological and organisational unity between the workers in the urban centres and the peasants in the rural areas under the leadership of the working class

The democratic demands and aspirations of the oppressed workers and peasants shall be paramount.

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