



# THE APDUSAN

Vol 10 No 1  
April  
2004

AFRICAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC UNION  
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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

## **A new chapter in the liberation struggle**

A new book dealing with the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa during the 1960s is due for publication in June this year. Originally commissioned by Thabo Mbeki, this book will form part of a series tracking South Africa's path to democracy. Though most of the book focuses on the ANC and deals with well-known political developments, there is one chapter that makes a new contribution to our understanding of the liberation struggle in the '60s. This is a chapter by Robin Kayser and Mohamed Adhikari and is titled: 'Land and Liberty!: the African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa during the 1960s'. The chapter will enlighten many on how Apdusa built a mass support base among the African peasantry in the former Bantustans. Through scrupulous research Kayser and Adhikari demonstrate the significant contribution made by the peasantry in the liberation struggle.

This work certainly has great significance for South Africa today. As we strive for greater unity and co-operation an understanding of our past, with an awareness of the sacrifice and achievements will lead to a mutual understanding among people. It will inculcate in everyone a pride in our historical heritage that does not centre only on one organization, the ANC. It is hoped that the chapter will provide encouragement and stimulation for future historians to continue with the unfinished task of research in this facet of our development.

## **The Airport Workers' Strike**

Airport workers of SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied workers' union) has been on strike since October 2003. The duration of the strike is rather striking., given the fact that very few recent strikes have been as protracted.

An official of the South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union (SATAWU) is quoted in the Mail & Guardian of 23 January as saying that the union did 'not put a huge resistance to this particular privatisation'. This seems odd since the national Cosatu has officially been campaigning for an end to

privatisation of state assets; in this case of the state owned Apron Services, run by Transnet. As with other privatisation initiatives, this privatisation effort has resulted in retrenchments, decreases in wages and a lowering of conditions of employment. So why the apparent contradiction between what is resolved at congresses and what happens in practise? The Cosatu leadership who are part and parcel of the political consensus which is the bureaucratic tri-partite alliance, has to answer the workers who are getting all these mixed messages from their organisation's leadership.

Workers out on strike gets paid a minimum wage of R2850 by Equity Aviation Services, which bought a 51% share of the previously state-owned Apron Services. The strike has been going on for close to five months. Workers are resisting the demand by management that they work an extra five hours a week. without compensation, the abolition of the general shift allowance and the reduction of overtime pay. According to a Cosatu spokesperson, the extra working hours will in effect be done for free and that if calculations are done these new measures will in effect mean a reduction in pay.

This is an example of exactly what present and future labour practices here and elsewhere in the world amount to: more work by fewer people at lower costs to the bosses. This is a recipe for growing unemployment and social hardship. The government's GEAR policy lies at the heart of the matter.

It is notable that the creation of the company Equity Aviation, was a Black Economic Empowerment exercise. The actions of the bosses of Equity Aviation exposes the myth that black economic empowerment will bring about an improvement in the lives of the all blacks who were exploited and oppressed under the former regime. It simply means empowerment for an emerging black elite and the disempowerment of the working class.

The trade union leadership has a stark choice to make: continued gentlemanly engagements and agreements with the ruling elite or striking

out on a politically independent path, against the destructive neo-liberal GEAR policies. The resilience displayed by the airport workers and the solidarity shown by fraternal organisations shows the way forward for all progressives campaigning against the privatisation programme of the state.

### **Land Reform, Private Property and GEAR**

Ten years after the first democratic elections the unsolved land question looms large on the political landscape of our country. The Landless Peoples Movement (LPM), voicing the demands of its members and millions of other landless people across the breadth of our country, is calling for 'no land no vote' in the April 2004 elections. When hundreds of its members recently marched on government offices in Bisho they declared 14 April as a day of occupation of unused land. A tribunal against landlessness and rural poverty, held in Port Elizabeth towards the end of 2003 and attended by more than 300 representatives of landless peasants, concluded from the solid evidence it had heard that the property rights clause in the Constitution is a colossal barrier to land reform. The tribunal consequently appealed to government to scrap the property rights clause.

In government's reply to these appeals from our countryside it has argued that land reform is on track and that the process will follow the letter of the law. South Africa, President Mbeki and other government officials tell us, will not descend into lawlessness and economic chaos like Zimbabwe. Last year, government passed an "Expropriation Amendment" to the Land Restitution Act, which ostensibly demonstrates a genuine intention to speed-up land delivery.

This amendment empowers the Minister of Land Affairs to expropriate land for the purposes of land restitution, thus causing some jitters among local and foreign landowners. Government moved swiftly to calm the fears of the property owners. While the state complained about the inadequacies of an expropriation law inherited from the apartheid state, it reiterated its faith in private property and markets with a declaration that there will be no large-scale confiscation of productive farmland. But this amendment allows a farmer to dispute the state's claim on his land and lock government into lengthy and expensive court battles. If the state crosses over this legal hurdle then it *must* pay a market-dictated price for the land earmarked for expropriation. Will the state use this amendment to expropriate land owned and used by the SANDF, an arm of the state, that has been blocking communities in the Northern

Cape and Limpopo province from getting back to their land for many years?

It is not only the internal inconsistencies that run counter to the stated purpose of this expropriation amendment. Landless activists say that GEAR, the government's macroeconomic policy, also undermines land reform. GEAR does this by limiting state intervention in land markets even for the purposes of land reform. Furthermore, the state cannot afford to buy land, and pay compensation for expropriated land, because GEAR restricts all social spending in the budget to a minimum. Each year since 1994, the land reform budget has been pegged at less than half of one percent of the total national budget, which is indicative of the low priority the austere state has placed on land reform. Reality contradicts the government's lofty claims in the area of land reform. Land reform based on neo-liberal rules will leave the old patterns of land inequality and the master-serf relations in our countryside untouched.

### **Remembering Frikkie Janeke: a great freedom fighter**

APDUSA, friends, family and community members said their final farewell to a leading member of the national organisation, Frikkie Janeke during late 2003. In his long career as community and political activist Mr J was at one a mentor, friend and a Marxist revolutionary at heart. He instilled in all those he shared organisational objectives and ideals with, a sense of self-worth and determination to overcome the evils of the system of capitalism-imperialism that affect the majority of the world's population. He carried in him an intense hatred for the injustices perpetrated by the forces and agents of reaction.

Mr J re-ignited his political activism during the early 1980's when the APDUSA resumed its tasks of rebuilding and seeking to establish a national organisational presence. He became involved in community organisations in Valhalla Park and Manenberg where, as a seasoned politician, he provided inspirational leadership to the youth who was only then becoming politically awakened. The consistency with which he organised (doing house visits, pamphleteering, addressing meetings, selling newsletters etc) set an example to others.

Realising the need for younger members to become politically educated, he wrote on a regular basis to stimulate discussion and to motivate members to write as well. He was able to unearth the rich history of the liberation struggle and apply it to the new conditions that the working class and peasantry faced. Apart from this he realised the need for younger members to develop organisational skills and to develop leadership qualities. In numerous long-distance travels to meetings and conferences Mr J would share many of his personal experiences with other members - experiences that members could draw on at a personal and organisational level. Many comradely anecdotes and lighter moments were shared which created a stronger bond between members.

Mr Janeke represented the organisation on a number of levels. He served as treasurer on the national executive of APDUSA in addition to being the chairperson of the Western Cape branch. These positions he held for lengthy periods of time. In 1992 he was elected as vice-president of UMSA. He conscientiously administered the national office of the organisation in Cape Town for close to four years. He was very influential in community organisations such as COCO and the Manenberg Disaster Community that rallied the people of Manenberg at the time of the August 2001 tornado. His central role in the MDC was testimony to the unselfish and principled contribution he made to the struggles of oppressed and exploited communities. We will all draw inspiration from this remarkable revolutionary freedom fighter and continue with the incomplete tasks that lie ahead.

## **CAPE TOWN SQUATTER CAMP FIRES HIGHLIGHT GOVERNMENT FAILURES**

The fires which devastated two squatter camps in the Cape Town metropole in recent weeks have served to highlight the desperate plight of millions of people in this country while a minority lives in great luxury.

Squatters in Cape Town come mainly from rural areas in the Eastern Cape, reputedly the most poverty stricken region in the country. By comparison, the W.Cape is relatively wealthy even though workers living there have to contend with a 30% unemployment rate. But the chances of handouts at street corners or casual jobs now and then are higher than in the E.Cape so the desperate poor keep flocking in to Cape Town.

Squatters make homes for themselves wherever they can find a place. Inevitably their settlements become disease-ridden, human cesspits, facing floods in winter and fires in summer. Social services, especially sanitation is at minimum, after all they are considered by the state as illegal land invaders.

The state response to these none too infrequent fires in squatter camps is pathetic to say the least. The most obvious solution to overcrowded squatter camps, with uncontrolled urban development is providing people with a means of making a living in the area which they come from and where their forbears were dispossessed in the past.. Land for the landless!. Progressive state-assisted co-operative farming on land provided freely by the state will knock the bottom out of the squatter camp problem and the costly social problems that they bring.

---

### **Struggles in the United Kingdom : The Socialist Alliance in Perspective**

The Socialist Alliance (SA) is an integral part of the process taking place in Europe of the creation of broad

based parties to the left of social democracy. Social democracy has undergone a social liberal transformation of reformism “without reform”. This , together with the decline of the Stalinist parties and the social resistance to neo-liberalism have led to the formation of parties, which represent a challenge to social democracy. The initiative for the formation of the SA came from the small far left groups. In spite of campaigning in parliamentary and local elections and taking up the fight against neo-liberalism, its membership has remained small although its influence is out of proportion to its size

The response of US imperialism to the terrorist attacks on the twin towers in New York and on the Pentagon on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, by launching wars against Afghanistan and Iraq have led to the formation of vibrant anti-war movements not only in the imperialist countries but throughout the world. The SA has played an important part in the anti-war movement in Britain. In recognition of the political opportunities that have opened up as a result of the anti-war movement as well as those that resulted from the resistance of trade unions to the neo-liberal policies of the government, the SA has resolved to campaign for a broader alliance. It has adopted an open attitude to the organisational framework of such a realignment. It has affirmed however that whatever form the realignment takes it has to be inclusive, democratic and socialist.

The war and the occupation of Iraq moved to the centre stage of British politics following the decision by Britain to support the US, it being the only major imperialist power to do so. The failure of the imperialists to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, which they had alleged Iraq possessed and was preparing to use against them, created a crisis of credibility of the Blair government. The heroic resistance of the Iraqi people to occupation and the opposition to Blair's neo-liberal policies on health and education compounded this crisis. It was in this atmosphere that the Labour Party expelled George Galloway, one of their MP's, who was one of the fiercest critics of the government for attacking Afghanistan and Iraq. He has since toured the country together with speakers from the anti-war coalition attacking both the government's foreign and internal policies and succeeded in attracting large audiences.

Following these successes, George Galloway and the anti-war activists held discussions with members of the Muslim community, trade union leaders, representatives of the SA and environmentalists about the formation of a new political coalition. A draft declaration was drawn up and a national convention of the left to discuss the draft and practical issues such as membership and finance was held at the end of January and attended by 1500 people. The coalition will challenge New Labour at the European and Greater London Assembly elections in June 2004 and will hold a national conference in the autumn to discuss a formal constitution and a more detailed programme. The current working title for the coalition is RESPECT-The Unity Coalition. RESPECT is an acronym standing for Respect, Equality, Socialism, Peace, Environmentalism, Community, Trade Unionism. The founding declaration of RESPECT highlights the “crisis of representation, a democratic deficit, at the heart of politics in Britain. We aim to offer a solution to this crisis”. Among its demands are an end to the war and occupation of Iraq, an end to all privatisation and the bringing back into democratic public

ownership of the railways and other public services. It is pledged to repeal of all anti-union laws and to fight for a world based on need not profit.

The representatives of the SA have been fully involved in the formation of RESPECT. It will be holding a special conference in March to discuss the Unity Coalition when support for RESPECT is expected to be endorsed. On the trade union front, the SA initiated a successful Convention of the Trade Union Left in February, attended by 700 trade unionists. The question of political representation for the trade unions, what to do with their political funds and the need to build resistance to New Labour's pro-business agenda were discussed.

### **Developments on the Left in Britain**

The opposition in Britain to imperialist wars in recent years, firstly against Yugoslavia and later against Afghanistan and Iraq have led to the formation of a big anti-war movement. At the same time resistance has been developing to the neo-liberal policies of the government embracing privatisation, deregulation and flexibility of labour. A qualitative change in the level of political consciousness has occurred. Whereas up to a few years ago it was not possible to get much audience participation in discussions on imperialism, today, people readily link the war in Iraq to the US's aim to grab the oil wealth there for its own multinational companies.

In the town Southend, an anti-war movement has been built which initiates local activities, which often gain wide publicity and it takes part in the national demonstrations in London. The minority groups, such as the Muslim community have become involved in a big way in the anti-war movement. In Birmingham at the beginning of the war against Afghanistan, a young Muslim woman born in Britain was spat upon in a public place. She was incensed and she got in touch with the anti-war movement there. She helped to organise one of the largest contingents from outside London to attend a national demonstration there and has since become a leader of the anti-war movement. The anti-war movement has developed a breadth and diversity in a relatively short space of time. Young schoolchildren have defied their teachers and marched out of their schools to support the demonstrations against the war. Trade unions are affiliated to the anti-war movement and large numbers of their members have joined in the protests against the war.

With Blair's New Labour implementing neo-liberal policies, a space was created to the left of social democracy for the formation of a party a few years ago, the Socialist Alliance. It contested national and local elections and fought against neo-liberalism. However its membership remained small. As a result of the political opportunities that have opened up as a result of the anti-war movement and the opposition to the policies of privatisation, the

basis for a broader alliance arose. When George Galloway, a Labour MP, who was one of the fiercest critics of the government's policies on Afghanistan and Iraq was expelled, he toured the country and at packed meetings, the formation of a broad based coalition to the left of New Labour consisting of trade unionists, anti-war activists, political parties, members of the Muslim community and environmentalists, was canvassed. Out of these meetings grew RESPECT- The Unity Coalition. RESPECT is an acronym for Respect, Equality, Socialism, Peace, Environmentalism, Community, Trade Unionism. Representatives of Socialist Alliance have been involved in its formation from its inception. It held a national convention at the end of January and is to contest the European and Greater London assembly elections in June 2004. It is not a vanguard party and the spirit underlying the coalition is that if there is agreement among the groups constituting the coalition on 80% of the issues and disagreement on 20%, the project should go ahead. The coalition is busy forming branches throughout the country and is gearing up to challenge the capitalist parties of the establishment.

### **The State Of The Anti-War Movement in the USA - open discussion held in Cape Town, 8 February 2004**

A refreshing input was made in Cape Town recently by a participant in the anti-war movement in the USA. The introducer was also involved in the anti-Vietnam war protests of the 1970's.

A significant development in the anti-war, anti-occupation protests is the emergence of organisations of soldiers' families. The soldiers fighting and dying in the war are mostly the sons and daughters of poor black American families. The 'poverty draft' ensures that the class and racial stratification that permeates American society is reflected in the military structure operative in Iraq. Contrary to what the CNN wishes people to believe then, there is a significant internal opposition to the continued occupation of Iraq. The unfortunate aspect of the opposition is that political groupings to the left are by and large fragmented; and so is the mainstream opposition movement. This fragmentation however has not stopped two national groupings from organising massive protests during late 2003 and early 2004. A peculiar aspect of the protests is that it is presently dovetailing with presidential electioneering, meaning that people get drawn into the electioneering agenda of particularly the Democratic Party. This is done at the expense of independent organisational efforts to build political alternatives to the parties of the American ruling class. The speaker noted however that there are a multitude of struggles e.g. strikes occurring in the US, but that the ability or capacity of left organisations tend to be limited due to,

amongst others the scourge of sectarianism and factionalism.

The point was also made that the present recovery of the US economy is to a considerable extent a result of the growth in the armaments industry, meaning the war and occupation of Iraq - amongst others. The illegal occupation of Palestine by the Zionists must also be seen in the context of the Iraqi occupation and vice versa. These twin occupations is meant to secure a foothold for US imperialism in the Middle East; a foothold to ensure that it can act militarily and economically against powers such as China and Russia - if and when required .

The PNAC, run by the neo-conservatives in the Bush government such as P. Wolfowitz and others is a programme whose proponents and defenders are hell-bent on pursuing - at any cost. In the absence of what they perceive to be a 'present and credible peer competitor' they consider themselves at liberty to rape and pillage the world through military invasions., corporate looting, trade dictatorship and downright economic and political sabotage. For the progressive forces opposing them, there are huge battles that lie awaiting. In order for us to be effective in this fight, the need for international solidarity is becoming more urgent by the day. During discussion the efforts of the Stop the War campaign in the UK were revealed in the meeting. The discussion concluded with a firm commitment to strengthen the continental solidarity and organisational exchanges that already exist.

### **The Fourth World Social Forum in India**

For three years in a row the annual assembly of the World Social Forum (WSF) took place in Porto Alegre, a city in southern Brazil that has become a worldwide symbol of participatory local government. The numbers of participants from across the world grew from about 16,000 at WSF I in 2001 to over 1000,000 activists at WSF III in 2003. What certainly boosted this six-fold leap in attendance was the creation of regional forums in places like Europe, Asia and Africa.

Another factor that helped to build the WSF is the fact that it is a space where activists from diverse organizations fighting against neo-liberal globalisation can come together to debate and draft action plans on issues at the core of this movement. The WSF gave one voice to the disparate anti-capitalist protests of the 1990s, ranging from landless Zapatistas fighting in rural Mexico to the anti-WTO protests in Seattle. In the 15 February 2003 anti-war demonstration, the largest opposition to war before the first shot was fired or bomb dropped in history, the WSF played an indispensable role.

Repeating the success the WSF has had in Brazil in any other third world city remained an open question. Shortly after WSF II in 2002 the International Council of the WSF accepted the proposal from the Asian Social Forum to hold WSF IV in India. This event took place in Mumbai, a

poverty stricken Indian city, from January 16-21 this year with all assessments declaring it a major success, thus paving the way for other cities to host the WSF in future.

Attendance at the WSF IV exceeded expectations despite the warmongering Indian government's refusal to issue visas to scores of activists. Eighty thousand people from 132 countries representing about 2700 different organizations participated in WSF events in Mumbai. While participants flocked from all corners of the world to India, significantly larger delegations came from Asia meaning that the WSF platform is expressing what the oppressed and exploited in that region are fighting for. More than 300 activists came from South Korea, while only 800 activists from Pakistan received visas from the Indian government, which is less than half of over 2000 people who wanted to be in Mumbai and applied for visas.

Every year countless demonstrations and meetings linked to the WSF take place in different parts of the world and this lays the ground for bigger annual assemblies. In the run up to WSF IV, the Asian Social Forum and the International Council staged several events in Asia that attracted thousands of activists. In November last year in Paris, 50,000 people took part in the second European Social Forum. There were meetings in South and North America, as well as meetings in Africa, where the African Social Forum met in Maputo in December last year and the Southern African Social Forum came together in Zambia in November, shortly after the gathering of the Zimbabwe Social Forum. Now that the building of the WSF takes place simultaneously across the planet, millions radicalised by imperialism and war will be won over to the battle cry that "Another World Is Possible".

When the Bush regime in Washington started pounding the drumbeat of war after the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the WSF embraced the anti-war movement to resist this onslaught. It described neo-liberalism and war as two sides of the ugly face of capitalist globalisation. The overarching theme of the Mumbai meeting read: "Against neo-liberalism, imperialist war and militarism". Underneath this the debates were organized around 4 sub-themes:

- Globalisation, global governance and the nation state
- Political parties and social movements
- Globalisation and its alternatives
- The future of the WSF

So, although the debates on the US-led war and the occupation of Iraq took centre stage from day one, it did not exclude other campaigns, like solidarity with Cuba. In its resolutions, WSF IV called upon all anti-capitalist activists to stage another day of international anti-war demonstrations on 20 March, the day when the US invasion of Iraq started.

Between WSF IV and WSF V several important events will take place. In June this year the Social Forum of the Americas will convene in the Ecuadorian capital, Quito, with huge delegations expected from the US where headway has been made in setting up forums in many states and cities. The WSF will return to Porto Alegre in 2005. Maybe at its next meeting the IC will resolve the venue for the 2006 WSF, with an African country a likely host.

## APDUSA

APDUSA was established in 1961 by the Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) to raise the interests of the working class and landless peasantry as paramount in the national liberatory struggle. Despite the gain of political rights for all, the compromise of 1992 has not fulfilled the national 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. We have therefore adopted a programme of transitional demands for the completion of the unfinished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution in an uninterrupted struggle for socialism.

APDUSA calls for the self-organisation and united independent struggle of the labouring masses. We further 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

We 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.
  - 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.

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