



***THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS AND LANDLESS PEASANTS
SHALL BE PARAMOUNT !***

LEADERSHIP CRISIS IN WORKERS' MOVEMENT

In the face of growing dissatisfaction from its membership the COSATU leadership was pushed to appoint a commission, headed by its second deputy president Connie September, to look at the future role of the trade union movement within the tri-partite alliance of COSATU, the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Workers have been asking serious questions about the GEAR strategy of the ANC government and the role of NEDLAC which has been forced down their throats under the banner of this alliance.

In its report the September Commission correctly labeled the ANC GEAR strategy as right wing and a major threat to the labour movement. It went further to propose that if the ANC cannot be brought back to the left then serious consideration must be given to the establishment of a new workers party. Activists who helped to build the ANC would have to play a key role in building this party. The findings of the September Commission and the future of the tripartite alliance were key items on the agenda of the COSATU National Congress which was held last month.

It is significant to see the senior leadership of COSATU coming up with the idea of a new workers party while they are already in alliance with the SACP. It shows that they can no longer convince the workers that the SACP is their party. It has been exposed as nothing but a puppet front of the ANC.

In this situation the worker members of COSATU were keen to see what their leaders were going to do.

In spite of a stinging attack on the ANC Government's GEAR policy by COSATU President John Gomomo in his address to the Congress, the workers were once again disappointed. President Mandela was brought in to tell the workers that the ANC GEAR policy was really good for them after all and he was not challenged on this by the leadership.

It is of no surprise that at the end of the Congress the leadership bureaucracy once again bound their worker membership to the fraudulent tripartite alliance and NEDLAC, on the basis of

vague promises coming from the ANC that it will take greater note of COSATU's views in future. The idea of a new left-wing Workers' party has also proved to be just so much talk, amounting to nothing.

APDUSA has consistently pointed out that the trade union bureaucracy is unable to give the revolutionary leadership demanded by the workers in this epoch of our struggle. While the September Commission and the COSATU Congress reveals the growing disillusionment of workers on the factory floor with their leadership and the ANC government, in response to this pressure the bureaucracy can come up with nothing better than deceitful strategies. The workers are told that COSATU is committed to a socialist programme but at the same time they are called upon to give full backing to the ANC programme which their leadership attacks as pro-capitalist and against the interests of the workers!

It is becoming urgent for all politically conscious workers to work together to wrest the leadership of the trade union movement from the control of the bureaucracy and to work towards the building of a true and revolutionary workers party. Its chief objective must be the liquidation of class exploitation. This objective cannot be achieved within bourgeois democracy of the South African kind or any other kind. It can only be won in a struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the existing system and the building of a socialist foundation on its ruins.

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JACKBOOT ARREST OF UWC LECTURER

The hollowness of our grand South African democracy was ruthlessly exposed with the fascist style arrest of UWC Philosophy lecturer Mr. Aaron Amaral in August this year. While lecturing to a class of students, he was arrested by two state officials, supposedly from the Department of Home Affairs. These government officials were not in the least concerned about democratic freedom or freedom of speech. The arrest of Mr. Amaral was too urgent for them to wait until the end of the lecture!

It might be imagined that Mr. Amaral was guilty of some very serious crime to warrant this jackboot arrest., but all that he is accused of is being in South Africa illegally. According to a report in the Weekly Mail and Guardian 29/8/97) Mr. Amaral does not believe that this is the real reason and he says that these officials appeared to be more

interested in the Marxist ideas that he was a putting across to students and their main interest was to get him off the campus.

It is notable that there has been no outcry from our great liberal defenders of freedom of speech and academic freedom. In fact, the silence of the bourgeois press and the official political parties, who all claim to defend these rights, is absolutely deafening. That Mr Amaral was performing an academic duty as an employee of the University of the Western Cape appears to count for nothing. But of course, Mr Amaral upholds the ideas of socialism which opposes the capitalist exploitation suffered by the working class.

APDUSA declares its full solidarity with Mr Aaron Amaral. His fascist style arrest shows that only the workers and their allies can defend their demand for real equality and freedom. ●

SAFM INTERVIEW WITH NOAM CHOMSKY

Around the beginning of June this year SAFM, broadcast an interview with Noam Chomsky on its AM Live program. Noam Chomsky is a world renowned linguist and writer but more importantly he is a foremost proponent of socialism.

The interviewer went about the business of posing to the professor all the stock arguments against socialism and those in favour of capitalism. How is it, he was asked, in the face of overwhelming evidence of the failure of socialism in the USSR and the success story of Bourgeois democracy in the USA, that a man of his obvious intelligence could espouse socialism?

Mr. Chomsky did not start quaking in his boots. He gently pointed out that nowhere in the world has socialism been properly implemented. In fact the system which governed the USSR was a gross Stalinist distortion of socialism. But even under the Stalinist caricature, on an average the Russian people were much better off than under

Yeltsin's free market transformation.

As for the United States, he pointed out, such is the disillusionment of the average American citizen with the Capitalist system and their two main political parties, that less than fifty percent of them even bothered to cast their vote in the election primaries. As for propounding socialism he suggested that one study the election manifestos of every political party during every election campaign. In order to catch votes all of their arguments and proposals have a socialist flavour. The only problem is that once elected they show their true colours by reverting to the Capitalist Agenda.

The final argument in defence of capitalism that Mr. Chomsky had to face was the role of the United Nations - it is a body accepted by all capitalist countries and its role is to ensure that all governments follow democratic and humanitarian policies. Mr. Chomsky answered by going on to show that the program of the United

Nations was in fact based on socialism. He asked how one would interpret its mission of ridding the world of oppression, poverty and starvation, disease, child labour exploitation, human rights abuses and war, to name but a few.

We can safely leave those who still accept these hollow arguments in favour of the capitalist system, to wallow happily in their little mental cocoons. But the millions who suffer the injustices of the capitalist free market system will see that we need to take every utterance of spokespersons of the ruling class with a massive pinch of salt. We must realise that the very first step in liberating our ourselves is to liberate our minds from the paralysing poisons of ruling class propaganda and indoctrination. It is only then that we will begin to see our objectives clearly and that will enable us to work out our independent tactics and strategies for their attainment. ●

LABOUR PARTY'S VICTORY IN BRITISH ELECTIONS

What was surprising about the British parliamentary election results held in May of this year was not that the Labour Party won the election, but the size of its overall majority, of 179 seats, which surpassed any previously obtained in history. An analysis of the figures showed that it was not a big increase in votes to Labour but a collapse in the Conservative Party vote that was responsible for the massive Labour majority. While Labour's share of the vote was 43.2% (lower than every single election between 1945 and 1966) that of the Conservatives fell to 30.79%, (down from 41.9% in 1992) and the smallest since 1832. The Conservative Party did not win a single seat in Scotland and Wales, was badly beaten in the big English cities and today is reduced to a party of the English countryside and suburbs.

The electorate were fed up with the policies of the Conservative government carried out over a period of seventeen years, which led to large scale unemployment and poverty, those below the poverty line, tripling from 5 million in 1979 to over 14 million in 1992-93. The rise in unemployment coupled with the anti trade union legislation, created a climate of fear among the work-force, who were not able to defend their living standards. The neo-liberal policies of privatisation, deregulation and "flexibility of the labour market" together with the reduction in social and welfare benefits were relentlessly pursued by Mrs. Thatcher and her successor, Mr. Major, and wreaked havoc on the workers, the unemployed, the poor and needy.

Mr. Blair, leader of the Labour Party and the new Prime Minister, triumphantly declared " We ran for office as New Labour and we will govern as New Labour." The trouble is that the policies of "New Labour" are in essence the neo-liberal policies pursued by the former Conservative government and rejected by most of the electorate, whose expectations have been aroused by the election of a Labour government and who are demanding a redistribution of wealth and are opposed to any further privatisation. But "New Labour" have carried out their promise to the business community of not increasing the taxes to

the rich in their first budget in office and apart from making some minor concessions, have ignored the key demands of the majority of the electorate. The surrender by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, of the power to set interest rates to the Bank of England will enable the banks to sabotage any economic policies not in their interests.

The big bourgeoisie are determined to tie Britain even closer to Europe and the plan for a single European currency. Central to this plan is a single European Central Bank, which will have the power to decide the economic policies of Europe and will not be accountable to the democratically elected parliaments of the member states. Harsh measures to cut the, living standards of the workers can then be imposed.

"Old Labour" had a policy which supported the welfare state. It had the trade union movement at its base, which had a voice in determining its policies. This was not acceptable to the bourgeoisie. "New Labour" is committed to retaining the anti-trade union legislation introduced by the Conservatives. It was to be expected that at the September Labour Party conference the leadership would attempt to steamroller through changes for it to take control of the agenda at party conferences away from the membership and place it in the hands of a committee controlled by the government. By handing over control of interest rates to the Bank of England "New Labour" is preparing the ground towards the acceptance of a European Central Bank.

These policies of " New Labour" are acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Following a honeymoon period at the beginning of its term in office, the Labour leadership is likely to come increasingly into conflict with its constituency. The move on the part of the leadership to use the rank and file members to rubber stamp Labour Party policy is already being resisted by the Labour constituency parties. The matter will be further debated at the Labour Party conference when the leadership can be expected to draw on its considerable resources to try and crush the opposition to its policies in the party

TGWU SUPPORTS LIVERPOOL DOCK WORKERS

On September 9 - National Port Action day, dock workers of the Transport and General Workers Union held a mass demonstration in Durban, despite threats of legal action. In the demonstration, the workers expressed their solidarity with the struggles of dock workers in Liverpool, Australia, and Brazil, which they linked to their own struggles here in South Africa. The TGWU is implementing a boycott of all trade involving Mersey Docks, including Liverpool and Sheerness. This is in

support of the ongoing struggle of the Liverpool dock workers against the casualisation of their jobs. (See the APDUSAN February 1997). Workers now face threats of dismissals under the Labour Relations Act APDUSA salutes the TGWU workers for their stand. International working class unity and solidarity is a key requirement in the fight against international capitalist exploitation.

KARRIEM ESSACK

It was with some shock that we learnt on April 29th this year that Karriem Essack had died in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that day.

He will be remembered for his enthusiastic association with the Unity Movement since his student days in the Progressive Forum which he helped to establish in Johannesburg. There was no abatement in his speaking, writing or organisational activities when he took up teaching before qualifying as a lawyer in Natal, where he lived and worked, he carried out some of his most notable work in the early sixties when liberation organisations were reeling from increasingly vicious blows from the herrenvolk. APDUSA had just been launched and he was in the forefront of forging a network of links with peasant committees in the then Transkei, Zululand and beyond. In 1964 when widespread restrictive action was taken against APDUSA members, he was banned. Shortly thereafter he was arrested and charged under the terrorism Act; He skipped bail and joined the Unity Movement members and leadership in exile in Botswana and Zambia.

He subsequently left the Unity Movement in 1969 to become a free-lance writer and exponent of the cause of liberation struggles in Africa and elsewhere. He also became an adherent of the Pan-Africanist Movement and took up leading positions in its committees. Among his comrades in the PAM were men who today head their countries, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda. The members of PAM particularly regretted that he did not live to see the creation of the Democratic Republic of Congo. From the personal tribute of Tanzanian President Mkapa, published on the front page of the "Tanzanian Daily News" on 2/5/97, one gathers that

when he made his final base in Dar es Salaam, he was acting on a suggestion made 30 years ago when the two met in India.

His widow, Elma Carolissen-Essack, in a message of thanks published in the same paper after his funeral, said it was through radio broadcasts, feature articles, letters to the press, pamphlets and books, that his ideas were manifested. By her courtesy the following is extracted from the obituary message sent by Rwandese President Bizimungu, "As a Pan-Africanist Comrade Kariem Essack distinguished himself in the defence of the right causes.." Echoes of similar sentiments in different contexts could be found in the published tributes of newspaper colleagues, or messages received from members of the PLO, groups in the Philippines and Latin America. The English paper "Outlook" placed high value on his dispatches from the front in Central Africa.

It is clear that he was utterly convinced of the importance of the written word in the process of liberation. In a note to a novelist friend a few days before his death, he expressed the belief that Africa was undergoing a second liberation - that of the mind - which can only be achieved by the might of the pen." His "Protracted Struggle for Democracy in Congo-Zaire" was put together and published in April, after his return from Uganda and Goma where he met Laurent Kabila in December 1996. This despite the fact that he was overtaken by illness on the way back.

In the words of his widow "He never relented. That was the hallmark of Karriem Essack." His burial took place in Tanzania. His epitaph, one feels, will be found in his writings.

MAKING A LIVING FROM DEATH

The 11 January 1997 edition of the "New Scientist" carried an article on a report drawn up by some of the world's major aid charities - amongst them Medecins Sans Frontiers, the World Council of Churches and a Dutch group called Health Action International.

What the report says is that international aid and disaster relief efforts, e.g. in Rwanda, in the form of drug donations (by major drug manufacturing companies) have a far more sinister and diabolical side to it. Some of the criticisms that are levelled are:

1) the drug donations are in many

cases not requested, with the result that the recipient country is then burdened with the cost of getting rid of it;

2) the drugs are of no use to those who require medical help.

3) the medicine comes packaged with instructions written in languages not spoken in the recipient country

4) when sent to disaster regions, these donated drugs have already reached, or are nearing their expiry date, and are therefore dangerous to use.

To prove the first two points, the article mentions that appetite stimulants have turned up in famine-

hit Sudan, and indigestion tablets have been shipped to Rwanda!

Profit-hunting mongers parading under the respectable name of humanitarian aid givers? Yes indeed! These capitalist enterprises don't give a hoot about the well being of the Rwandese or Sudanese. They are simply off-loading waste products that they cannot sell for a profit! But it is more than a cynical tactic to paint themselves with a humanitarian face. In many cases there are also useful tax concessions and incentives on offer from their governments if they donate these waste medicines. ●

STRIKING WORKERS CALLED “BOLSHEVIK”!

The ruling class of Israel is determined to privatise government owned utilities. Benjamin Netanyahu's government, heavily armed and financed by world capitalism, already decided to auction shares in the telephone company to an American multi-national conglomerate. This caused the anger of Israeli public sector workers to explode. 60 000 government sector workers held a one-day general strike on July 24, 1997. A week long strike at the end of July by 6 000 Telecom workers shut the Stock Exchange down. Workers refused to accept the lies from Ministers that privatisation would not hit at worker's rights and benefits.

In the war-of-words flowing from these protest actions, prime minister Netanyahu labeled the Histadrut labour federation leaders “Bolshevik dinosaurs”. Amir Perez, Histadrut president, retaliated by saying that the government was acting like a “Bolshevik regime”. Class enemies calling each other by the same name? Strange and confusing! Those systematically brainwashed by constant slander and distortions today use Bolshevism as a swearword - a curse no worker wants to be associated with. We workers can only be victorious in our struggle if we firstly free ourselves from this mental enslavement. Every worker must uncover the rich tradition of Bolshevism. This is inseparable from the protracted history of heroic struggles fought by the labouring classes. Let us briefly recap some of the key phases in the history of the Bolsheviks.

WHO WERE THE BOLSHEVIKS?

The Bolshevik (meaning, *majority* in Russian) Party was born just before the 1905 revolution in Russia. This socialist party led the great proletarian revolution of October 1917. In Russia of that time, capitalism was co-existing with feudalism. The working class was small while the peasantry constituted the overwhelming majority of the population in this vast land. Bolshevik revolutionaries applied the ideology of the international proletariat - Marxism or scientific socialism - to their situation. With the aid of this tool, they developed the suitable political programmes and organisational weapons to defeat Czarism and capitalism!

While fighting towards victory in Russia, the Bolsheviks continued with the tasks of assisting the workers and oppressed peoples in other countries to liberate themselves. Faced with the First Imperialist World War, a backward domestic economy crippled by civil war, with traitors and opportunists in the International workers

movement, the Bolsheviks heroically fought for the defence and advancement of the gains of October 1917. Under the fierce attacks from many hostile forces, these comrades succeeded in establishing the basis of a planned economy governed by the labouring classes through SOVIETS (workers' councils).

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION BETRAYED

Nothing was left untouched by the sweep of this social revolution. In the same way the phase of decline in the revolutionary upsurge amidst the hostile environment made itself felt inside the Bolshevik Party. It was reflected in dynamic and fierce struggles between different factions in the Party leadership. A few years after the revolution, Joseph Stalin with his gang of careerists and opportunists seized control of the Party apparatus through a vile conspiracy campaign. Thus, the Great October Revolution was betrayed and the workers state became deformed!

This Stalinist bureaucracy expelled, hunted, imprisoned and murdered almost all leading Bolsheviks who advocated the program for defending and advancing the gains of the Proletarian Revolution of 1917, not to mention the smear campaigns and distortions of history to frame and eventually slaughter militants. Leon Trotsky, a vanguard Bolshevik fighter in the international proletarian movement, was assassinated by Stalin's henchman in August 1940 in Mexico. Bolsheviks who escaped this Stalinist witchhunt, relentlessly knuckled down to the main task of assisting workers and oppressed peoples worldwide to eradicate all forms oppression and exploitation, including the counter-revolutionary bureaucratic monster of Stalinism, to BUILD SOCIALISM.

LONG LIVE BOLSHEVISM!

Stalin's spurious idea of “Socialism in One Country” showed its disastrous results in an economic program which impoverished the poor Russian peasantry. His policies contributed to the crushing of the Chinese Revolution of the 1920's and expressed themselves in many other horrific crimes.

Despite all the counter-revolutionary tactics of imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy, the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917 inspired many revolutionary struggles throughout the 20th Century. We in the APDUSA proudly continue to uphold the Bolshevik tradition in the struggle for socialist democracy. ●

EDITORIAL

CENSUS '96 RESULTS AND APDUSA'S PROGRAM

The first version of the 1996 Census has been released. Every revolutionary movement, interested in the liberation of the labouring classes, will study its results carefully. The key question of course is: What do the results mean for the program and policy of a revolutionary organisation?

Some organisations will chop and change their politics to suit the new situation, while others will jump to the sky, shouting that their views have been confirmed. How has our program stood up in the face of these "facts and figures"? APDUSA can declare that the Census results in every way bears out its approach to the LAND QUESTION which lies at the heart of its programme and policy.

According to the preliminary results:

1. About 37,9 million people live in our country - previously overestimated by about 5 million (i.e. 42 million);
2. 55% of South Africans have been urbanised;
3. The breakdown for some areas are: 20% live in KwaZulu-Natal, 15,5 % in the Eastern Cape, 10,9% in the Northern Province, 18,9% live in Gauteng, 2% in the Northern Cape, etc. (Business Day, July 2, 1997)

These initial results may change by about 2% when the census count is finalised. People generally expressed great confidence in the accuracy of the Census statistics. Far reaching conclusions have already been reached about the extent of urbanisation in SA and how the budget can be further reduced here and there.

Some groups without any program will, on the basis of the statistics, try to ridicule us: " Drop your outdated views about the peasantry!... There are no longer peasants in SA... the Land Question is not important!... Only the working class will be a force in the revolution!!!" etc. Thus, so many intellectuals write off APDUSA's program, rip it to pieces and throw it to the wind.

But wait a second! It is interesting to note that the overwhelming majority of South Africans live in provinces which are predominantly rural. For example, did that hated IFP not win the local elections in KwaZulu through their rural vote? We agree, compared to the 1970's and 80's we have a larger percentage of 'city dwellers' today. Let us face the facts. Where in these holy urban centres do the people live? More importantly, what are their living conditions like? Yes, the squatter camps are the main growth points in the glorified

urban areas. Visit the squatter camps and hostels in that industrial heartland, Gauteng! Who do you meet there? Mainly migrant workers. Study the Amplats strike and the eventual deportation of workers to the Transkei. Is this not enough to show that the migrant labour system is alive and kicking?

Who can best judge whether the estimated 45% of the population in rural areas will be of any significance to the revolution in SA? The new government recognises the importance of the Land Question through the string of laws with which they are strangling the poor peasants. These measures and commissions spell further impoverishment and the ultimate destruction of the poor peasants! Strange socialists they are, who conveniently dream that 45% of the population with their demands do not exist! Others prefer to leave this thorn-in-the-flesh to the eve of the revolution, reserving their final decisions for the moment when the landless peasants seize and occupy the land en masse.

APDUSA's program is based neither on fiction nor fantasy. It does not leave the all important AGRARIAN QUESTION to chance! Our demand for land is an attack on the basis of capitalist property as well as all social relations attached to it. We want an end to the stock thefts and violence foisted upon the poor peasants especially in the Transkei and KwaZulu. This means an end to the migrant labour system and all its evils, burying tribalism with its chiefs and headmen still oppressing the poor peasants. Today these outmoded tribal leaders are given protected seats at various levels of government. What is expected from the poor peasant? To build and strengthen their independent organisations and unite these with the workers in the towns. Our demand for LAND furthermore gives expression to the demand for a democratic unitary South African state with majority rule!

For those critics who still need to study our program, we quote the central demand under attack:

"The 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." (Apdusa Program for Socialist Democracy, 1995)

The Census '96 results, when not looked at superficially, clearly confirms rather than contradicts APDUSA's ideology. Our program summarises in a concrete fashion the basic demands of the workers and peasants in the current epoch. ●

THESIS ON HISTORY OF S.A. REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

A recently published dissertation for an Honours degree at the University of Cape Town by Mr. Robin Kayser, deserves attention. Entitled "*The struggle for Land and Liberty in South Africa: The Revolutionary Path of the Non-European Unity Movement/Unity Movement of South Africa. 1933-1970*", it relates the history of the Unity Movement from its first days until about 10 years after it gave birth to Apdusa. In just more than 100 pages the author succeeds in capturing the essence of this long and rich period very well.

Content - to tell what happened

In his introduction the writer protests against the inclination of previous academic historians to distort the history of the Unity Movement and present their own prejudices as the truth. He will have nothing to do with this. Instead, he sets himself the goal of telling what really happened and of letting the Movement speak for itself through its publications and internal documents. In the nine chapters and the five appendixes he does just that.

The thesis traces the origin of the Unity Movement right back to the Lenin Club - an association of Marxists in the 1930's. The Lenin Club gave birth to the Workers Party of South Africa which studied South African social conditions and concluded that the National question and the Land question were going to be the issues over which the people would fight the revolution. Events proved them right very soon.

In 1936 the organisations of the oppressed came together in the All African Convention to fight for precisely land and political freedom. The Marxists joined this struggle and from that day on strove to organise and educate the people for a revolution. The combination of the spontaneous struggles of the people and the conscious efforts of the Marxist militants such as I.B. Tabata and Jane Gool shaped the Unity Movement as we came to know it. Mr Kayser sketches the development of this process under the following headings: (1) From 'Land to the Natives' to 'Land and Liberty'. (2) Defining 'The Problem' in South Africa: The Agrarian Problem and the National Problem. (3) The Awakening of a People: The Birth of the Non-European Unity Movement. (4) The Basis and Building of Unity: The Programme, Policy and Structure of the NEUM. (5) The Battle for Unity: The Anti-Imperialist Struggle Counterposes the Anti-Apartheid Struggle (6) The NEUM Penetrates the Countryside. (7) Linking Town and Country. (8) The Birth of the African People's Democratic Union of Southern Africa 9. The NEUM/Unity Movement of South Africa Prepares for Revolution.

He manages to tell the story in clear, uncluttered language and also avoids that sickening pretentiousness most academic writings adopt. (They always want to 'teach' and 'correct' the pioneers of our revolution instead of learning from them.) Mr Kayser's

account is not free of mistakes. But these are secondary, even minor. It does not detract a single grain from the value of his work, especially the last two chapters which cover a period that has not been documented before. It shows the Movement at its peak, preparing to confront the state, arms in hand. It will probably be the highlight of the thesis for most members.

Context-lessons of history

These days the history of the liberation struggle is becoming part of the school syllabus. However, the content has more to do with praising the ANC than with studying history. This is no accident. The ANC and its allies know that if they want to protect the capitalist system from the masses, they must suppress the lessons of history.

The struggle of the working masses cannot move forward without basing itself on the achievements of the past. In other words, the current generation of working class fighters cannot improve on the efforts of those who went before if they do not study and absorb the real history of the struggle for socialist revolution. They must inherit the effective methods and avoid the mistakes. In this process Mr. Kayser's concise, accessible and above all *truthful* account of the history of the Unity Movement of South Africa can and will play a valuable role.

THE PARTY THAT NEVER WAS !

The bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games in Cape Town came to a climax with a huge free-for-all "mother of all parties" organised on 5 September in the centre of the city to celebrate the victory. The celebrations came to an abrupt end at 7 o'clock that evening when it was announced that the 2004 Games was awarded to Athens. What did this party amount to? People were offered the freedom of the city on that night. But as "free citizens" they were herded onto the Grand Parade where they were guarded and kept in check by a huge police and military forces with scores of dog handlers. We were all supposed to be united in this bid. But the upper classes did not see fit to join the masses on the parade. They watched the proceedings from the safe distance of Van Riebeeck's castle and later chose to drown their

sorrows in the comfort of the Waterfront where the poor cannot afford to go.

This lame party was all that the workers received out of the millions of rands wasted on this fraudulent bid which was never intended for their benefit in the first place. It was nothing but a bright dream of the bosses of industry and commerce to rake in huge profits for themselves alone.

Workers should remember the lesson that when the bosses offer them free parties there is always something dirty afoot. APDUSA says that workers must not allow themselves to be distracted from their independent goals by such gimmicks of the agents of capitalism. The struggle for socialism can never take second place to the parties of the bosses.

ELECTION PROMISES IN FRANCE

French voters recently threw out the conservative Gaullist government of prime minister Alain Juppe. In its place they installed Lionel Jospin, the leader of a socialist communist alliance. We can remember how, in December 1995, the workers of France fought strike battles against the Juppe government and received support from almost the entire nation. The people did not want the government to continue with its programme of taking away unemployment grants, pensions, housing assistance and other social benefits which partly protected the lower classes against the effects of poverty. Juppe and his friends campaigned for this very programme during the elections. The voters left them in no doubt where they stood and gave the socialist-communist alliance and their left-wing partners 319 out of 577 seats in parliament.

What did Jospin's party promise the people of France? A reduction in taxes on basic commodities such as food, a shorter workweek for the same money, the creation of 350 000 jobs for young people, a \$85 per month increase in the minimum wage and lastly a re-negotiation of the conditions for European Union.

The last item actually includes all the others. The Maastricht treaty spells out the conditions for European Union. It demands precisely that governments reduce spending on such projects which aim at creating jobs for the working class and raising their standard of living. The capitalists argue that this is necessary in order to reduce the deficits in the budgets of the various countries and pave the way for a single currency for the whole of Europe.

The workers of France reject this argument. They reject the idea that Europe can only unite by increasing the suffering of the working masses. It is nothing but a scheme to further enrich the capitalist bosses of Europe, to increase their exploitation and control of the working class. By voting the left-wing alliance into power the French workers are trying to stop this process. It is a continuation of their December 1995 strikes.

However, almost the first thing Jospin did after assuming power was to reassure the bosses of the stock market, currency traders and the rest of the capitalist class. He was not going to tamper with the Maastricht treaty. He was going to maintain good relations with conservative president Jacques Chirac. He was not going to implement one of the measures his party campaigned for during the elections. In other words, he was going to break each and every promise he made to the people who voted for him. He and his colleagues stated this so

bluntly that nobody can fail to see the trick they have played on the French electorate.

Michel Rocard, former prime minister and close ally of Jospin put it this way: "The historic project is to promote free enterprise, but its not so easy because we try to do that with people who have no economic education, ... The people believe there is so much unemployment because of Europe, when in fact there is not enough Europe". His alliance partner, Michel Laurent, a member of the national committee of the Communist Party of France adds: "The problem is that the politicians promise one thing, and do another". The French workers might just want to add that it is precisely the party of Monsieur Laurent and their allies that is the problem.

Jospin and his allies once again prove two things. Firstly they are not really socialists and communists but capitalist politicians who disguise themselves in order to deceive the masses. Secondly the working class can never safeguard their interests by winning the majority of seats in a capitalist parliament. Let us look a little bit more closely at the second point first. Surely this is not the first time politicians break election promises? It will be hard to recall one instance when they did fulfill their promises to the working people. Throughout the world the lying and dishonesty of capitalist politicians has become part of life. It has entered the consciousness of the masses. They stand exposed for all to see. Nobody really trusts them.

The question now confronts us: Why does this kind of thing happen wherever the system of capitalist democracy operates? The reason lies first and foremost in the nature of the system itself and not primarily in the corrupt character of the politicians. Under this system the government does not own the means of production and exchange, the factories, farms, mines, banks, fishing boats etc. These things belong to private citizens called capitalists. As long as these capitalists own and control the economy the government cannot act against them in any fundamental way because the whole country depends on that same economy for food, clothes, housing and other necessities. The capitalist class can hold the government to ransom. They have thousands of ways to force the government to do their bidding even if the politicians had other ideas. This does not mean that on each and every issue the capitalist tells the minister what to do. It does mean that in the final analysis, in the long run, the government will not do anything that endangers the interests of the

Continued on next page

FRENCH ELECTIONS (Continued)

capitalist class. Herein lies the reason for all the broken promises.

What follows is that the real socialists and communists are those who organise and train the working class for a determined struggle to take over the ownership of the economy. Those who know that the only use the proletariat has for a capitalist parliament is as a platform from which to spread the ideas of this take-over, this revolution. If the French workers show their disgust at the broken election promises and dishonesty of the politicians by going back to their strike weapon, the revolutionaries will get new chances to move forward.

UNEMPLOYMENT GROWS

The Business Times of 1 August 1997 reveals figures released by the Central Statistical Service on the current and projected end of year state of the labour force: " ... the rate of job losses had accelerated at an alarming rate - if they continued at this rate, nearly 170 000 workers could be laid off this year compared with 71 000 last year." Also: "hardest hit was the manufacturing sector, which shed 14 000 jobs during the first quarter." Let it be said that "the GEAR strategy had projected the creation of 126 000 jobs last year and 252 000 this year - none of which have materialised."

Besides providing more evidence that for the workers, the promises of GEAR are nothing but a fraud, these figures again show that workers will have to intensify their organisational efforts to defend themselves and those who have already lost their jobs, against the government and the bosses who are responsible for their dismal situation. ●

"WE ARE NOT AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT"

The recent series of protest actions undertaken by workers against the proposed Basic Conditions of Employment has revealed the rather uneasy position in which many of the leadership figures in COSATU find themselves. According to a report in The Cape Times of 19/8/1997 we are told that "the strike action was directed against business, not against government, another Cosatu official, Mr Randy Pieterse, emphasised yesterday". The report then quotes Mr Pieterse as having said that "It is not aimed at damaging the economy." Why Mr Pieterse would want us to

believe that the government is neutral in this fight between business and the labour movement, only he will know. The fact is that the workers in Cosatu are today forced to defend themselves against the labour policies of this government. The same situation exists in the fields of education, land affairs, health and welfare, etc.

Because of the tri-partite alliance union, officials like Mr Pieterse are more and more forced to resort to this kind of double talk - and downright dishonesty. Who controls this economy and who benefits from the economic policies of the government? Is it the millions of unemployed or the underpaid and exploited workers or the land starved peasants? Or is it the bosses of commerce and industry and their hangers-on? If the oppressed and exploited masses don't benefit, why should they not remove this government that they put into power, by whatever means that is necessary?

Mr Pieterse sounds almost apologetic for being involved in the strike action. Perhaps his aim in life is eventually also to benefit from this exploitative economy "which must not be damaged" from the labour of those workers he now claims to represent.

MANDELA CANNOT MAKE MISTAKES ?

Our much praised president seems to think that he cannot make mistakes. Of course, he who believes that he does not make mistakes cannot learn from mistakes. We noted that in the Congo issue Mandela made the stupid blunder of praising the tyrant Mobuto Sese Seko as one of Africa's greatest sons. Now he has gone even further.

On his recent visit to Indonesia he set up an agreement for the sale of South African arms to the dictatorial regime there. Not long ago we reported how a couple of brave women sparked off a widespread protest against the sale of British arms to Indonesia. The main reason for this protest was the bloody repressive campaign that the Indonesian rulers were waging against the people of East Timor. There is widespread condemnation of the Indonesian government's suppression of the East Timorese and all people who believe in freedom can do nothing else. But not our grand president. Now he pretends to be negotiating a settlement between the Indonesian oppressors and the Timorese liberation movement. What sense is there in this after agreeing to arm the enemies of liberation? ●

BACKGROUND TO IRA CEASEFIRE AND SETTLEMENT TALKS

The logjam in organising talks between the various parties involved in trying to reach a settlement in Northern Ireland, was broken when the British Government gave up its insistence on weapons being decommissioned concurrent with the talks. The IRA (Irish Republican Army) promptly declared a cease-fire and it is fairly certain that its political wing, Sinn Fein, will soon be invited to the talks.

The talks are between the British state and its loyalist majority (mainly Protestant) who support the sectarian state of Northern Ireland and the oppressed nationalist (mainly Catholic) minority and its Republican movement, who favour the creation of a united Ireland. In the early 1920's, in the face of a revolt by the nationalists, who demanded independence from Britain, British imperialism devised a plan to maintain control of Ireland by artificially dividing it into Northern Ireland, which remained part of Britain, and the Irish Free State, which territorially was the largest part of the island and later became the Republic of Ireland.

Once the sectarian state of Northern Ireland had been established British imperialism promoted further division between the loyalist majority and the nationalist minority by discriminatory policies against the latter. By 1971, Catholic unemployment was over twice that of Protestants and the Catholics were concentrated in poorly paid occupations. Disadvantage in employment was reinforced by

discrimination against Catholics in allocation of houses. The state used its repressive apparatus of the Protestant police force to enforce its oppressive policies. The leadership of the workers in the trade union movement, instead of defending the Catholic workers against discrimination by employers and attacks by the government, de facto supported the sectarian state and the privileges enjoyed by the Protestant workers.

A strong Civil Rights movement was organised by the nationalists in the late 60's and early 70's to fight against the discrimination suffered by the Catholics. The British army was brought in to crush this opposition, which the Protestant police could not accomplish on their own. The brutal tactics employed by the army and police, the killing of large numbers of people and the internment and torture of political activists led to a campaign by the IRA to defend the Catholic minority.

As well as attacking army and police personnel, the IRA was also involved in the bombing of buildings in city and town centres with the loss of many lives.

The IRA operating clandestinely and by its very nature confined to a small section of the nationalist community could never defeat the British army. The Republican movement therefore sought to move forward by achieving a more subtle balance between the "Armalite" (gun) and the "ballot paper". This involved a greater emphasis on campaigning

around political issues, such as elections in both South and North and community involvement in the North. This did produce results, particularly in the North, where Sinn Fein members were returned to both the Westminster Parliament in Britain and to city councils all over Northern Ireland.

The nationalists grew in self confidence as a result of these successes and their cause was bolstered by the Irish diaspora, particularly in the USA. The latter used their influence with the government of the USA to intercede with the British Government on behalf of the nationalists. The combination of pressure from outside, including from the government of the Irish Republic and primarily the internal situation itself, forced the British Government, first under the Conservatives and now under Labour to arrange settlement talks.

The governments of the USA and the Irish Republic have brought pressure to bear on the Republican Movement to give up its demand for a united Ireland and instead accept reforms within the Northern Ireland state. This, coupled with the British Government ruling out a united Ireland on the agenda for the talks has led to the nationalists downplaying this goal. However, even if the British Government succeeds in its plans for the immediate future, the issue of a united Ireland will not go away.

THE NEW 'OFFICIAL OPPOSITION' ?

The Democratic Party, the National Consultative Forum and the New Movement Process held a trilateral meeting in Johannesburg on 13 August 1997. The leadership figures in these political groupings, Bantu Holomisa, Roelf Meyer and Tony Leon, are well known to us. The one thing this former Bantustan dictator, Afrikaner nationalist and white liberal have in common is that they are not happy with the style of government of the ANC and they are not satisfied with the performance of the Nationalist Party as the official opposition of the day. For this very reason, the likelihood exists

that as a collective political opposition, they will grow in stature. But let us not be fooled by their anti-ANC rhetoric or their criticisms of the NP. There is hardly any difference between their political program and that of the ANC or the NP. They hold the same pro-capitalist beliefs and they can offer the long suffering working masses nothing better. This 'new opposition' is nothing but an effort to strengthen the combined opposition of the ruling capitalist class to the aims and aspirations of the oppressed and exploited. ●

BUTHELEZI'S NEW TRIBALISM

When you try to entrench tribalism in a modern, industrially based society, you are bound to come up with some peculiar ideas. In a speech at the recent Shaka Day celebrations Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi said that the recognition of the Zulu nation should remain one of the most important items on the national agenda and that the Zulu nation should be given autonomy and home rule within which it could provide its essential contribution to southern Africa and the whole continent. (The Mercury 29/09/97).

With this outright demand for a Zulu bantustan Buthelezi went on to say: "Our nation remains bound by the sacred covenant into which we entered a mere two years ago when we held our last imbizo, in which our nation was for the first time convened irrespective of race colour or creed." We leave it to our readers to try and understand what it means to have a Zulu nation irrespective of race colour or creed.



Letters

WHERE WAS APDUSA ALL THESE YEARS?

I met a worker from the National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA) at a COSATU May Day rally held in Newtown, Johannesburg. On my inquiry about the presentation which NUMSA invited APDUSA to give at its Policy Workshop held on 21 April 1997, he answered that he liked the angle from which the APDUSA approached the question. He added that it is a good thing nowadays to request speakers from organisations not linked to COSATU because it has become difficult to present a dissenting view without being attacked. He then said that he still wanted to ask the question: "where was APDUSA all these years?" as he felt that this question was not adequately answered.

I then said to him that it is good that workers still have questions about the APDUSA that need answers because APDUSA is an organisation through which workers should forge their struggle ahead. We agreed that more time would be needed to answer his question. I have therefore decided to try and answer some of his questions in this letter.

The political programme and ideology of the APDUSA is clearly stated in its literature. That APDUSA places the interests of the workers and the landless peasants above everything else is well known to readers of the APDUSA. But its history is not so well known to the younger generations.

APDUSA was established in 1961 on the initiative of the leadership of the Unity Movement of South Africa. This was in response to the growing militancy of the working class. This was foreseen as an indication that this class was becoming ready to assume the leadership of the struggle. As an affiliate of the UMSA, APDUSA inherited its revolutionary approach with a principled programme and the policy of non-collaboration with the ruling class.

Immediately after its birth APDUSA grew amongst the migrant labourers and the peasantry. Like its mother body, APDUSA incurred the wrath of the ruling class. Its activities were therefore shrouded with a blanket of silence by the bourgeois press. In exile, the UMSA never received much support from the OAU. The OAU argued that the aims and objectives went beyond the scope of fighting colonialism. Cadres of APDUSA and the UMSA were thrown into prison and others were forced into inactivity. The Terrorism trials of the 70's revealed that the ruling class had been keeping a sharp eye on the leadership of the APDUSA and the UMSA. To it the UMSA was not just an ordinary national movement. It was against great odds that the APDUSA had to set about rebuilding itself.

THE NEW PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE

When the struggle reached the negotiation phase in the mid eighties it was no surprise that overtures were made to the APDUSA to accept a negotiated settlement. But when it was seen that the APDUSA was maintaining the banner of its principled programme and the policy of non-collaboration, these overtures quickly fell away. APDUSA has constantly criticised the negotiated settlement as a process of co-opting the black petit-bourgeois in running the selfsame bourgeois machinery of state which was previously the monopoly of the Afrikaner nationalists with their apartheid policy.

I hope that this contribution will lay some basis for further examination of the programme and policy of the APDUSA by workers and peasants.

Yours sincerely

An APDUSAN

WHO IS TO CONTROL OUR SCHOOLS?

Comrades

Of late I have noticed that school management boards and/or authorities are feverishly working towards the establishment of governing bodies for their respective institutions - as the Schools Act stipulates should be done. One explanation for the rather indifferent attitude of parents towards these structures is perhaps tied to our recent political history.

At a time during the late 1980's when the drive for the establishment of PTSA's was gaining momentum, an equally loud voice was saying that student struggles and worker struggles should remain apart. This was the voice of the UDF, in concert with the SACP and ANC. What however do we sit with today? The educational authorities are trying to ensure - by means of regulations contained in the Schools Act - that they have and keep organisational control over the governance of schools. For this to be achieved, and for democracy to prevail, the involvement of the parents, and at high schools the students, is deemed necessary.. However, the involvement of the parents and students is not aimed at giving them effective say in how the schools should be run, but for the government to control the nature of their involvement in the affairs of the schools. Under the political conditions of the 80's the PTSA form of organisation had the potential to greatly advance

the struggle, and to build truly democratic organisations capable of governing the schools which the workers built themselves. The need for truly independent, democratic organisations such as PTSA's therefore still exists - and must be taken up by all parents and students.

Concerned Parent.

It is the aim of The APDUSAN to publicise the efforts of the long-suffering workers and peasants of South Africa, to unite in struggles for a better life and equality for all. If you are involved in a struggle that you believe others should know about, please write to us at the above address.

FOR SALE

APDUSA:

- 1995 Conference Speeches and Resolutions
- 1996 Conference Speeches and Resolutions

By I. B. TABATA :

- Education For Barbarism In South Africa
- Imperialist Conspiracy In South Africa
- The Boycott As Weapon Of Struggle
- Letter To Mandela (1948)
- Apartheid : Cosmetics Exposed

UMSA :

- The Revolutionary Road for South Africa
- A Clarion Call to Unity

IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE APDUSA AND IF YOU WISH TO BE PLACED ON OUR MAILING LIST FOR PAMPHLETS, ETC. , PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND POST TO :

A P D U S A
1 A P A L A C E H O U S E
M A L T A R O A D
S A L T R I V E R
7 9 2 5

SURNAME :

FIRST NAMES :

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