



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

EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK

Parents, teachers and students are up in arms after the government moved to dismiss 12 000 temporary teachers at the beginning of the school year. For most schools serving the poor majority, the effect has been disastrous. A large number of schools now find themselves without enough teachers and no teachers at all in key subjects. Yet this is only the start as thousands more temporary teachers will be pushed out at the end of the first quarter. Mass protests have taken place across the country. In KwaZulu-Natal, parents have taken the radical step of keeping their children out of school in an effort to force the governments hand. In the Western Cape the Parent, Teacher Student Forum is planning to challenge the action of the Education Department in court.

People are shocked that the ANC, which promised to provide and improve education for the millions who were denied in the past, is now imposing measures which have exactly the opposite effect. Last year the Education Department embarked on a so-called redeployment drive, which was supposed to provide deprived schools with much needed teachers. The ham-fisted and crass way in which this was done resulted in total failure. All that it succeeded in was to drive large numbers of experienced and highly trained teachers completely out of the profession. In response to this failure the Education department is now simply sacking teachers from schools that it deems to have too many. If this is supposed to force teachers to find employment in the most deprived schools, it is simply not happening. In fact, these are the very schools that have been hit the hardest.

There is hardly a squeak of protest from the privileged former model C schools as they have enough money to employ extra teachers out of their own resources. People are also asking how the government is going to build more schools where they are urgently needed when it claims it does not have any money to pay teachers in overcrowded schools today. What is most shocking is that these

ill-considered, totally unscientific and irrational schemes are the product of those who are supposed to be the most educated and leaders in education. And these are the people who govern our country.

The financial limits that the government has placed on education shows that it is acting more in the interests of the local and international business class than the poor South African majority. These big bosses don't want to be taxed or to bear the cost in any way, for the education of workers that they don't need. To improve their own profits they are sacking more and more workers and they are not in the least interested in providing jobs for the unemployed and those leaving school. As far as they are concerned the privileged former model C schools provide them with all the skilled labour they need. For the rest, all they need is unskilled, labour with a large body of unemployed to keep wages down.

The struggles against the attacks on the education of the youth of our nation demands the fullest support of every member of the oppressed and exploited majority. The present crisis shows only too clearly how the 1992 negotiated political settlement could never satisfy the demands of the majority. We need a total change in the entire socio-political and economic system in South Africa with power truly in the hands of the working masses who are the majority. This is the demand that the APDUSA holds above everything else. It is the only way in which the crisis in education and all other crises facing the oppressed and exploited masses can be tackled and resolved once and for all.

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TROUBLES IN GOLD MINING

When the gold price plummeted through the floor the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) went to England to call for solidarity and support from other trade unions. At the same time negotiations were taking place that will have serious repercussions for workers in the gold mine industry.

Two gold mining companies signed an agreement with the NUM to work continuous shifts (BUSINESS DAY 28/01/98), while 30 000 workers are facing dismissal. This is to raise productivity, according to the wishes of the bosses of business. We all know how 'Business South Africa' perceives productivity - more work for lower wages. This is a foregone conclusion for the mineworkers, because more workers will lose

their jobs and mineworkers will work more hours without any increase in the workforce. For example where workers usually worked 5 days per week with a 2-day rest period, they will now be forced to work 7 days per week with a 2-day rest period. This means that the working week has been lengthened by two days. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act has been negated by this shopfloor agreement between the mining houses and the bosses of labour. In no way is business prepared to employ more workers, because this will cut into their profit margin.

A further plan is to restructure "THEBA", the recruiting centre of the mining companies in the former bantustans, to provide cross-training for workers to

enable them to be employed in other sectors. This is an indication that the NUM has already admitted that the workers will be just statistics of the structural unemployment figures. We in the APDUSA say this plan will not succeed. It is another symptom of a sick system that is in decline. APDUSA says that to combat unemployment it is necessary to drastically reduce the working week, to enable more workers to be to be employed without a reduction in salaries and wages. This will give workers more time for recreational activities and to spend quality time with their families. The technological revolution should be used to free the working class from wage slavery.

THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BILL

The present session of parliament will consider the Employment Equity Bill sponsored by Tito Mboweni. This Bill stipulates that businesses must employ certain numbers of blacks, women, disabled persons and other oppressed groups at all levels of management. It puts down specific targets for the policy of affirmative action.

Will the worker benefit in any way? Certainly not. The bill is not concerned about quotas in the areas of semi-skilled and unskilled work where in any case, most of the workers are Black. It focuses mainly on management positions. The aim is that there should be more opportunities for members of the Black middle class (petty bourgeoisie) to get taken up in management to enjoy better salaries and perks. But they will continue with the same job as the white managers. This job consists of driving the workers to produce bigger profits for the capitalist class.

Very little changes. The capitalist still collects his profits. The worker still suffers from exploitation. Only members of the Black petty bourgeoisie get a chance to "take a step up in life" and will now share in the exploitation of the working class.

APDUSA rejects the Employment Equity Bill. Our task is not to change the colour and sex of those

who exploit us. We must break down the control of the capitalist class over economic activity. We demand:

1. The scrapping of the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and all other laws which discriminate against the worker.
2. The right to work. This must be implemented through two main measures. Firstly the working week must be shortened without reducing wages. In other words, jobs must be shared among all. Secondly, the government must institute a progressive public works programme to build schools, hospitals, roads, etc. The unemployed must have full representation in the management of this programme.
3. Government must fix a living minimum wage coupled with a sliding scale. This means wages must increase automatically as prices rise.
4. The unconditional right to strike which includes the right of occupying the workplace. Government must ban lockouts immediately.

"Employment Equity" can only have meaning to the working class in this form. The ANC government must implement these demands immediately. Or it must make way for a government of the workers, through the workers, by the workers - a revolutionary socialist government. ●

REPAIRING THE FAILED GEAR-PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS

Dr Johan Nel, an academic at Port Elizabeth Technikon, is among the many voices disturbed by the failure of GEAR to eradicate poverty in SA. Appalled by increasing unemployment (40% in April 1997) and land hunger, he suggested: "Policy support and public resources must turn decisively towards sectors and processes that employ large numbers of relatively unskilled workers and semi-skilled operatives and machinists per rand of fixed investment." (Mail & Guardian, 5/12/97) The doctor is simply saying: "Shift from a *capital-intensive* to a *labour-intensive* economic strategy !"

While the doctor's diagnosis is spot on, his cure for moving SA towards "*growth and redistribution*" smacks of quackery. With his outlook infected by all the rubbish contained in GEAR, he prescribes amongst other remedies, that a "...well-managed public works program can..., at an extremely low cost,... generate productive infrastructure and prevent environmental deterioration." Is Dr Nel seeking a remedy for the problems of the working people or our enemies, the capitalists? An "extremely low wage" for the unemployed can only split the employed and unemployed sectors of the workers; suppress the general wage level and peddle increased suffering to the labouring poor. Only APDUSA's program demands a public works program in the interest of the working people! ●

LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO THE IMF/WORLD BANK

Early in December last year a special conference was convened in Gauteng. It aimed to campaign vigorously against the Apartheid debt and all interest incurred on it.

The foreign debt is R90 billion. Compare this The campaigners consist of various NGO's, trade unions, civics, women's and youth organisations. They suggested that the money saved from debt cancellation should be placed in a community controlled development fund. This fund would be directed to "putting the RDP at the centre stage of our efforts to free our nation from poverty and the misery brought by Apartheid".

Surprisingly the conference convenors (Alternative Information and Development Centre-AIDC) through their newsletter "Alternatives" claim to provide a socialist alternative. But practically they came out with a bourgeois reformist position. In their paper we are called upon to free Mandela from Apartheid debt, as our vigorous action freed him from Robben Island prison.

It is tragic to see that Mandela, who has joined the capitalist camp, is still promoted as a beacon of hope, and that under the label of "socialist alternative". Not so long ago his colleagues, Trevor Manuel and Gill Marcus, joined IMF/World Bank representatives and laughingly endorsed the drive to impose 'structural adjustment' measures. They even accepted a loan on top of the Apartheid debt. They say we have no choice because of 'globalisation', etc.

As champions of the oppressed and exploited we cannot be fooled by such phrases. For what they call globalisation is not new; it is imperialism on the attack. Imperialism installed a neo-colonial puppet regime of bourgeois parliamentarism here in 1994. Similar governments were installed throughout Southern Africa to keep a brake on the people's revolutions there. This happened only as a result of the weakness of revolutionary forces in the Southern African region.

These self-styled socialists want the masses to tail a capitalist nationalist movement. It will weaken the revolutionary forces further. Have they forgotten the disasters caused by the Stalinist Third International for instance in China 1927? By calling on us to give unconditional support to the African National Congress in South Africa, AIDC exposed its own position as petty bourgeois reformist and not revolutionary. Such a position would take the revolution halfway and not threaten the capitalist status quo. The only relevant aspect mentioned in their paper is that it is immoral to make victims of Apartheid pay for the racist schemes of the old National Party regime. But here too, they denounce the NP and give credibility to the bourgeois ANC.

Can one imagine socialists speaking this crude language of capitalist reformism? Their so-called left reformism leaves much to be desired in the interests of socio-economic emancipation of the working class and the poor peasantry in the countryside. When AIDC took a resolution on Apartheid debt calling an alliance of NGO's, environmental groups, trade unions, etc. to protest, they completely ignored the fact that the Apartheid debt, the miserable living standards and poverty of the majority is integrally linked to the social questions of landlessness and lack of political and economic power. Which brings the issues of a transitional revolutionary programme, political leadership and revolutionary organisation to the fore.

The fight against the IMF/World Bank and Apartheid's debt is vital. Except the fight must be anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and lead from a decaying capitalism to socialism - a planned collectivised economy in the interests of humanity ●

THE BUSINESS OF UNIVERSITIES TO BECOME BUSINESS

A Business Report article on 27/01/98 entitled "Educor plans private university" adds an interesting dimension to the current debate on South African universities - their role, function and future. According to this report a spokesman for Educor, Mark Rohald had the following to say on the matter: 1. "universities were clamouring to forge alliances with the private sector to prevent the demise of their own institutions as the government was cutting their subsidies." 2. "... universities would no longer be the domain of the government". And then a direct quote "if we don't establish our own private-sector initiatives, foreign companies will take the niche." With present university fees as high as they are, who will be able to go and study at these privately run institutions? Businesses will obviously be inclined

to offer employment to graduates from these institutions. Aren't we daily told by the liberals and via the news media that tertiary education is a privilege, not a right? How convenient then for those who do not understand the first thing as to what a university should be and should represent. The closure of universities and the general inaccessibility of institutions of higher learning to the majority of students can only translate into more calls for the complete overhaul of the entire educational system - in the interests of all students and of society as a whole. The plight of the students and of the labouring masses and their common interest in destroying a system which deliberately deprives them day after day, must be brought to the fore. Their struggle must be made one struggle.



INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

The first international socialist conference to be held on South African soil took place in Cape Town during December last year. The conference was hosted by the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA), which also played a leading role in its organisation. In attendance were delegates representing various socialist organisations from Brazil, Italy, America, Mauritius and New Zealand. Besides WOSA, there were also delegates from a number of local organisations, including the APDUSA, who were invited to participate.

For those who were fortunate to attend this conference and the two public meetings that were held during its duration, it was an exhilarating experience to meet and exchange views and ideas with members of the international socialist struggle from various parts of the world.

The main purpose of the conference was however, disappointing to many. The organisers had set themselves the limited goal of establishing an international network of like-minded organisations to collaborate in giving support to specific struggles of the oppressed and exploited peoples in different parts of the world, as they may occur. The principle objection to this objective was that it fell far short of the essential task of raising these limited struggles to a political level and to promote international working class solidarity and unity on a revolutionary political basis. This objection was fully supported by the

APDUSA. In the end only a very few of the organisations represented accepted the resolution to establish an international network on such a limited basis.

Despite all criticisms of its basis, this conference must nevertheless be counted as a significant step forward in breaking our isolation from the international socialist movement, and WOSA deserves credit for the tremendous effort it made in bringing it to fruition. In informal discussion most of the foreign delegates expressed a keen interest in the APDUSA and expressed the wish for further communication to exchange information and ideas between ourselves.

FORWARD TO A UNITED WORKING CLASS SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL!

PLAYING WITH WORDS

There is seemingly no end to the originality of word usage employed by the capitalist bosses. A certain Mr. Ben Nel, the project director of Saldanha Steel, is reported as having told 20 workers at the plant that they were to be "demobilised" (Cape Times 6/2/98). It would appear that these vultures are nowadays too scared to tell workers to their face that they have been "fired" - "sacked". The violent response of the workers may very well force Mr. Nel to yet again go back to his chambers to devise other devilish plans aimed at undermining worker solidarity. Let it also be said that while for him it may be a case of playing around with euphemisms, for the workers involved it is literally a matter of life or death.

GOVERNMENT TO SPEND R10 BILLION ON WEAPONS.

The 6 February 1998 edition of the Cape Times carried an article outlining the government's plans to purchase weapons - under the guise of overcoming "severe equipment constraints" and to "achieving industrial counter-trade deals that will fuel its economic transformation campaign" - a way of saying that jobs will be created in this sector of the economy. Fancy economic terminology no doubt, but what are the real issues involved here?

A Special Defence Account exists, for what purpose, the article does not mention. South Africa is, as reported in the media, the tenth largest manufacturer of weapons in the world. The article does state that the government would prefer to see announcements on the type of deals referred to earlier, made "before the national election next year".

Taken together, one is bound to ask why all the political pretence? Why not tell the people that the entrenched military officialdom and military-industrial companies are the ones who sit behind these grand deals.

In time the real intent behind the procurement of these weapons will dawn upon the working class and peasants - when "in defence of political and economic stability", these very weapons will be turned against them. ●

MANDELA HONOURS FREEDOM FIGHTER AND OPPRESSOR

South Africa's ceremonial president, Nelson Mandela, will certainly be remembered as a great reconciliator in word and deed. Towards the end of 1997 Mandela honoured Steve Biko. At a special ceremony he unveiled a 2.2m Biko statue at the City Hall in East London. Before this event, Mandela had a meeting with a British business tycoon at Tuynhuis in Cape Town. During that meeting he spelt out his vision for F W De Klerk, ex-NP leader, as a "roving ambassador". Mandela stated: " It would be a good thing from the point of view of nation-building - for a man who has made a contribution such as he has done - not to allow him to fade away Whatever mistakes he has made - and all of us have made mistakes- he has made a contribution; he has a place." (Business day, September 15, 1997).

Steve Biko, with other fighters of his time, before and after him, gave their lives to our liberation struggle. These martyrs remained committed to the *goals* of our cause. Following upon the brutal crackdown on the liberatory movement in the 1960's, Biko and his generation

held the banners of freedom aloft. Biko's fighting spirit inspired many generations to destroy inequality, exploitation and poverty. We call upon militants to critically study Steve Biko's political ideas with the aim of adopting a political program answering the fundamental *needs of our struggle* today.

FW De Klerk will be remembered by the oppressed labouring majority as a representative of Afrikaner Nationalism - an upholder of Apartheid. In April 1994 the poor and exploited majority struck the final nails in the coffin of the hated Apartheid system and their upholders. Why is Mandela contemplating a special place for this oppressor? Why does he want to resuscitate Afrikaner Nationalism and prevent it from fading away? Is Mandela's reconciliation act aimed at building a single SA nation in a unitary state or the Verwoerdian dream of multinationalism in a federal state? Has one amnesty seeker at the circus headed by the Bishop "Weeping" Tutu not confirmed that they murdered Steve Biko at the instruction of the Afrikaner ruling class? De Klerk only contributed towards our oppression and exploitation! He belongs in a museum symbolising our victory over Herrenvolkism and racism. ●

SPORT THAT ISN'T

Those that deserted the ranks of SACOS to rush into 'sports unity' refused to accept the warnings that it would turn out to be nothing but a deception. Now these opportunists are crying, with the realisation forced upon them that this "unity" only meant that they would get a back room in the house of ruling class sport.

The masses are not impressed. All these arguments and accusations about the deliberate exclusion of blacks from the national rugby and cricket teams is just about the ill-treatment of a precious few individuals. It would mean very little if all national teams were made up of a privileged few highly paid professionals, black or white, while the majority are still denied any adequate facilities and opportunities for participating in sport, not to become filthy rich, but simply for its recreational benefits which is a human right. Despite what they might say, for the bosses of organised sport, it is not really sport. It is simply capitalist commercialism of the most cynical kind. It is nothing but a money-making business

The fraud of unity in sport is a mirror of the fraud of equal political rights. The old ruling class bosses of sport still control all the major facilities of sport and so they can dictate terms. In the same way the business class still controls the wealth and resource of South Africa through their ownership of the mines, factories and farms. As the masters of the South African economy they can dictate terms to the government as to how the country should be managed. To achieve real equality in sport their political and economic power must be broken. ●

EDITORIAL

IS THERE NO MONEY?

In days not so long gone past, the ANC called on people to support its policies on the basis of promises, amongst other things, of free and equal education, health and social services for all. Now, more than three years after an ANC government has been voted into power, thousands of teachers have been sacked, with thousands more to follow. Health services have been cut with thousands of nurses being pushed out with so-called retrenchment packages. Thousands of people had to starve, while waiting for their state pensions and the needy still have to make do with miserably small child welfare grants. Why? In every case our ANC government tells us that there is no money. After the nation became irritated by this useless answer the national government tried a little variation of the theme: "We have given all the necessary funds to the provinces and they must see to these problems". The provincial parliaments then try to clear themselves of any blame by telling us that the central government has not given them enough! This silly game of the central government blaming the provincial governments and the provincial governments blaming the central government gets us nowhere. So is there really no money?

In its last budget the government allocated expenditure of 186.7 billion Rand for 1997/98 fiscal year. This is R24.7 billion more than the government expects to get via taxes and duties etc., and this 4% budget deficit would be made up by loans. Local and international business and financial institutions all praised the minister of finance Mr Trevor Manuel, for preparing a very good budget, with no increase in taxes. In this budget the government was proud to say that it was providing R40 billion for education. That sounds like a lot of money, but it has obviously not been enough as far as the population is concerned. We do not know how much of this money has been spent on maintaining the notoriously inefficient administrative bureaucracy which remains a cumbersome combination of all the old apartheid, race-based educational administrations. While thousands of teachers have been kicked out we hear of none of these pen suckers losing their jobs. But what about other allocations of expenditure in the budget? R9.6 billion has gone to the defence force. What it is defending we do not know. Besides guarding our borders and coast line (and not very well apparently) and occasionally helping out the police force, there is nothing much that this defence force appears to be doing with all this money. We don't even find idle soldiers being roped

in to help build houses and roads for example. But the government thinks it is more important to keep this military machine at its present level than to use some of this much needed money to pay teachers and nurses. Then there are the payments to service the government's debt, a debt run up by the old apartheid government. For 1997/98 these payments amount to R39.6 billion! We are still paying in cash for the suffering that apartheid brought us. Why?

The government did not increase taxes on business and the bosses of big business were very happy. Looking at their profits it is easy to see why. From the Bureau of Financial Services at the University of Pretoria, we learn that the latest annual profits (after taxation) of the top ten companies in the categories of Industry, Finance, Gold Mining, Other Mining, and Mining Finance, totals up to R52.4 billion! These profits are made out of control of the rich natural resources of our country and the rank exploitation of the working class who are forced to go to extreme measures to win a few rands more in wages.

We say that there is indeed enough money, but it sits clutched in the hands of a self-interested minority. For this reason the APDUSA demands the scrapping of the government debt, the nationalisation of all key industries and financial organisations and their management by the working masses according to the interests of the majority. We demand an end to the subsidisation of the thousands of useless and non-productive petty state bureaucrats who are nothing but the lackeys of big business and international imperialist finance. These are tasks that can only be executed by a state and government that is truly representative of the interests of the working class and the landless peasantry. To that end we must firstly organise ourselves. ●

WHITHER ZIMBABWE?

When the Zimbabwean masses took to the streets in January of this year in response to large increases in food prices, the government backed down and cancelled the increase in the price of maize meal. But this was not before the army had been called in and five people had been killed by police gunfire or owners guarding their property. This act of resistance of the masses to the government's austerity measures or to poor conditions of employment is but one of many, including a successful national strike by farm workers that has occurred recently.

Imperialism and its agencies, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the world Bank, are concerned that the Zimbabwean government has given in too frequently to the demands of the people.

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WHITHER ZIMBAWE? (continued)

It has accordingly been applying financial and political pressure to impel the government not to make any further concessions to the population.

The implementation by the government of its Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1991 has had dire consequences for the people. Hospital and clinic attendance dropped with the introduction of user fees. Maternal mortality has increased alarmingly because poor women cannot afford the fees charged by hospitals for check ups. School attendance dropped because parents withdrew their children from schools, not being able to pay the fees charged by the education authorities. The unemployment rate has worsened and is estimated at 50%, while the government's own assessment of the poverty rate is 61%, an underestimation in the view of some experts. As regards land, a paper produced by the International Development Agency, one of the World Bank group of organisations, states that the government's policy is no longer to decongest selected overpopulated and resource-degraded communal areas! The emphasis is towards large scale commercial farming. The Minister of Lands, in answer to a question at a national conference in May 1997, said that landless people are no concern of his. The main beneficiaries of the freedom struggle among the blacks are the black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

The IMF, the World Bank and the government's other creditors have the whip hand in the running of the Zimbabwean economy. They can suspend credit facilities whenever they wish to apply pressure on the government. This, the IMF did in 1995 when it

suspended a loan worth 100 million US dollars, pending a reduction in the budget deficit. Following a decision by the Zimbabwean government in August 1997 to finance a 4 billion Zimbabwean dollar payments package for pensions to 50 000 freedom fighters of the civil war, the World Bank withdrew 62.5 million US dollars balance of payment credit. This precipitated a crisis in the economy, the Zimbabwean dollar losing almost half of its value in 2 months. The government subsequently introduced a new tax to finance the pensions of the war veterans but was forced to repeal it when the workers launched a national strike.

President Mugabe's recent threat to redistribute over 4.5 million hectares of mostly white owned farms to black peasant farmers must be seen in the context of the land policy being pursued by the government, as well as the deteriorating economic situation and the upsurge of mass unrest. The country is in a debt trap, having to obtain new loans to pay off the old ones. Unable to meet the demands of the poverty stricken workers and peasants, he resorts to promises he cannot possibly fulfil. He has now accepted a loan from the IMF of 176 million US dollars which, in addition to committing him to tighter fiscal discipline and acceleration of privatisation, in effect only allows his government to acquire land if it has the funds to compensate the owners. His "Land Distribution Programme" seems destined for the scrap heap. The scene is set in Zimbabwe for further confrontation between the workers and the peasants on the one hand and the ruling class acting in concert with imperialism on the other.

THE WASHINGTON 'PEACE' ACCORD AND THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE

The Israeli state, with the mightiest military machine in the Middle East at its disposal and underpinned by the USA, the only superpower in the world, is imposing its own version of the Washington 'Peace' Accord. It is stopping further troop withdrawals from the West Bank and giving the go ahead for building new Zionist settlements there and in Gaza. However, its image of invincibility is being tarnished as the Palestinians defy the authority of the Israeli army on the West Bank, while suicide bombers of Hamas, the Muslim fundamentalist current, wreak havoc on the streets of Israel. In

Lebanon, the Hizbollah, the Amal and the Lebanese army have successfully resisted deep incursions into their territory by the Israeli army.

When the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat had in 1988 recognised the state of Israel, a Zionist racist state founded on the expulsion and oppression of the Palestinian people, and renounced "terrorism" to achieve its aims, its leadership was preparing the ground for the betrayal of the interests of the Palestinian people. By 1993 the PLO was ready to sign the "Washington Accord with the leaders of Israel,

which effectively created a Bantustan in Gaza and the West Bank for the Palestinians. In terms of these 'peace' accords, the Israeli army was to withdraw from the towns of the West Bank and Gaza to strategic positions from where it could intervene if in its view the security of the Israeli state or Zionist settlers in the region were threatened.

There is not the remotest possibility, nor was it ever the intention that this Bantustan, like any other Bantustan, would ever function as an independent state

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Palestinian 'Peace' Accord (continued)

with the necessary resources to ensure an existence for its citizens as befits those living in a modern state. Its purpose is to provide cheap labour for the factories and farms in Israel. When the labourers have finished their daily toll there, they cannot sojourn a moment longer in Israel, being forced to travel back to their miserable hovels in the Gaza and West Bank. The powers of the "Palestine National Authority" (PNA) which operates this Bantustan are rigorously controlled. Even its "electoral system" is subject to the prior approval of the Israeli government.

The leadership of the PNA is provided by Arafat and the corrupted bureaucratic apparatus of the PLO in exile, purged of all

the militants committed to the Palestinian national struggle. The PNA have at their disposal a large police force picked by Arafat abroad and trained by the Egyptian and Jordanian armies. This police force carries on where the Israelis left off, arbitrarily arresting, torturing and killing opponents of the regime. When Palestinians carry out acts of resistance in Israel, the Israeli government punishes them collectively by sealing off its border with the Bantustan, thereby depriving Palestinian workers of their livelihood, as well as stopping the movement of people between towns and regions. It also withholds the revenues of the PNA. It is an occupying power.

The 'peace' accords are dead. The Palestinian masses are fighting, not just against the

occupation by the Israeli army and the presence of the Zionist settlements in the territories seized in 1967, but for national self-determination. For their struggle to succeed they must forge links with other oppressed people in the region as well as internationally. Their cause is tied to that of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon as well as the masses of the indigenous population, oppressed by their own governments. In Israel itself, there is opposition to the presence of the Israeli army in the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinians are engaged in a long and arduous struggle for nationhood and the heroism they have displayed in that struggle is a source of inspiration to oppressed people all over the world.

CRISIS OF THE "ASIAN TIGERS"

The crisis of the East Asian economies has shattered the model of the "Asian Tigers" which the imperialists so eagerly held up to the rest of the world. The poor nations of the world were told that the only way they could catch up with the rich nations was by following the path of the "Asian Tigers". The imperialists and East Asian ruling classes are desperately trying to stem the crisis. However, the threat that it will engulf not only the region but the rest of the world remains.

It is opportune to briefly examine the policies pursued by the ruling classes in these "model" economies and the effects these have had on the living conditions of the workers and peasants, also to look at the impact on the population of the measures adopted by the ruling classes in response to the crisis.

The regimes of the 'Asian Tigers' range from virtual dictatorships imposed by the military as in the case of Indonesia, to authoritarian with a few trimmings of democratic practice as in Singapore and Malaysia. In these countries, political and trade union opposition is crushed with political and trade union dissidents imprisoned for years with no recourse to a justice system which protects individual rights. Trade unions are either not allowed, as in the notorious Export processing Zones (EPZs) or barely tolerated, with the emphasis on company or "sweetheart" unions, which do the bidding of the bosses.

The magazine "Red Pepper" (December 1997) in an article exposes the conditions of the workers in the EPZs: "The 'economic success' of the tiger economies of East Asia rests on harsh treatment of workers hired on short term, insecure contracts in proliferating EPZs ... A key element in the East Asian model of industrialisation, the zones link autonomous industrial sites directly to the global economy More than just fenced off industrial areas, in many countries they are exclusory, political and social spaces within which labour rights are actively repressed. Physical isolation in the zones is reinforced by close monitoring and surveillance of workers. For workers who live in dormitories inside the zones, this surveillance reaches into their private lives. Within these spaces governments promise trans-national capital a passive, cheap labour force, marginalised from the mainstream labour movement yet considered privileged due to relatively higher wages".

The harsh conditions of existence endured by the workers and peasantry in East Asia will be aggravated immeasurably by the crisis gripping the region. Millions of workers have already lost or will be losing their jobs as the IMF-inspired austerity policies, cutting government spending and shutting down "non-profitable" industrial and commercial concerns, bite. In Indonesia alone it is estimated that two million people have already lost

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their jobs. Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea plan to repatriate millions of foreign migrant workers, which will cause extreme hardship for some of Asia's poorest countries as these workers return home. In South Korea, the trade unions are not taking things lying down. The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions warned of a general strike if parliament pushed ahead and legislated layoff laws.

As the prices of the basic necessities of life rise steeply in the East Asian countries, due to

devaluation of currencies, removal of subsidies and drought, the misery endured by the masses knows no bounds. In East Java and in Indonesia, supermarkets have been burned in protest at the rise in prices of essential items. While the imperialists and local bourgeoisie seek to ensure that their profits are not adversely affected and that the cost of the crisis is born by the masses, the workers and peasants are resisting their plans. The region is entering a period of even greater instability with political and social turmoil.

AMERICA'S SECRETARY OF STATE VISITS AFRICA

Madeleine Albright, United States (US) Secretary of State, visited central and southern Africa during December 1997 to prepare the groundwork for a visit by US president Clinton sometime in 1998. As the *Financial Times* confirmed: "Next year Mr Clinton himself is planning a trip. Underlying these travel plans is a vision of a new relationship between the US and a generation of post Cold-War African leaders." (FT 15/1297). Why these urgent high-powered trips to Africa? What is this "new vision" for Africa? How will the workers and peasants of the continent be affected by such schemes?

A wide range of interconnected historical, domestic American and international events forced the American rulers along this track. In 1993, US armed forces received a heavy blow in poor Somalia, adding to the Vietnam experience still haunting Americans. Imperialism, including the US, invested heavily in Nelson Mandela to police Africa at its command. Recent anti-imperialist struggles throughout the continent, especially Angola's support for such struggles, sounded the alarm bells. Concern over a 'borderless Africa', meaning anti-imperialist solidarity amongst African countries, now floats through America's corridors of power. The *Newsweek* of 15/12/97, described the oil-rich Angola as the "rising regional power". The desperation is also reflected in the imperialist press, when a journalist recently commented: "Meanwhile, he [Nelson Mandela] has failed to provide the rest of Africa with the leadership it so desperately needs..., proving ineffectual as he tried to influence events during the

last days of the Mobutu regime in Zaire." (M Holman, FT, Dec. 16, 1997)

Meanwhile the United States has been pushing at the United Nations (UN) and cajoling the OAU for an African Crisis Response Force. Such a force, it dictates, should consist of armies from ten surrogate states in Africa. Soldiers will be indoctrinated in imperialist fashioned military doctrine and equipped with interchangeable weapons. Furthermore, during so-called non-crisis times, this imperialist military corps will be integrated into the domestic state machine. (The *Economist*, 18/10/97 pp 45-46). This evil scheme is not merely aimed at saving the lives of a couple of American soldiers. Through a more direct control over the state machinery, imperialism aims to ensure relentless exploitation of Africa's natural wealth and its working people.

The US President outlined his 'New Vision for Africa' prior to the GS Summit in June 1997. He entitled this conspiracy the "Growth and Opportunity" program. It declares officially that "trade and investment" will now replace 'aid' to Africa. What rubbish! Poor countries all over the globe are still suffering from the aid venom prescribed and administered by imperialism. Debt repayments are killing African countries! In fact, imperialist banks and other bodies dished out money and arms to their lackeys to facilitate third world exploitation. Their 'aid' ultimately fastened the tentacled grip of the capitalist octopus on third world economies. Replacing the old misnomer of aid with the more fashionable "trade and investment" is simple

remasking the monster. Dynamic forces inside capitalism are driving the exploiters and moneybags - falling profit rates; cut-throat competition between capitalists globally and rising resistance by the labouring classes (including Americans) to wage and social welfare cuts, against unemployment; etc.

Clinton's planned 1998 visit to Africa is part of a rising wave of third world plundering. He visited Venezuela, Argentina and Brazil in South America in October 1997. This was blatantly exposed in the subheading of an article in the *Financial Times* of October 10: '*President's Latin American trip follows in the tracks of US businessmen*'. During this whistlestop tour a summit was set for April 1998 to, amongst other things, prepare for a Free Trade Area of the America's (an expanded NAFTA) by 2005. These schemes will channel the flow of 7 million barrels of Venezuelan oil per day to the US; provide cheap production sites for US corporations and a market for US arms industry.

Working people in these countries were not lured by Clinton's sugar coated poison of "trade, investment, open markets, etc.". Protests and demonstrations by workers and peasants intensified during Clinton's roadshow. Popular slogans were: "*Clinton No, Che Guevara Yes!*" and "*Clinton and IMF out!*" Governments in these imperialist colonies responded with brute force and repression. These developments unmask America's "trade and investment vision for Africa." ●

THE ANC AND THE LIBERALS

In those times before the negotiated political settlement, the ANC and the white Liberals were good friends. Leading liberals spokesmen went out of their way to defend the ANC and to project it as a laudable organisation, while the liberal press did all in its power to popularise the ANC by giving the highest publicity to all its campaigns.

Today things have changed somewhat. The liberals have taken on the role of watch dogs over the ANC government. They relentlessly probe and expose any sign of corruption or gross inefficiency. Not surprisingly, the ANC feels hurt by the behaviour of its former friends. It fights back by accusing the liberals of racism, using the self-damning argument that the liberals never complained one bit as much about the corruption and inefficiency in the old apartheid government. The ANC also claims that it is doing far more to eliminate corruption in government and state than the NATS ever did, but no one is much impressed by this claim.

The truth is that the liberals merely see the ANC as a servant who have been given the reins of political power to do a job on behalf of the real bosses of South Africa - the bourgeois class. The liberals understand very well that they are working for the same bosses. Their attitude to the ANC is: "We helped you to get this job now do it properly".

In the past the ANC refused to accept the truth taught by the Unity Movement and APDUSA that the liberals are our enemies. They pretend to be the friends of the oppressed and the defenders of their interests, but in fact, they are the agents of the business rulers of South Africa whose aim has always been and still is to exploit the labouring masses to the death. These masters of South Africa will use any political strategy, whether it is an apartheid government or a black petit-bourgeois government, to achieve this end.

The ANC is now suffering the embarrassment of having opportunistically accepted these political snakes as friends in the past. But having accepted to do the dirty political work of the bourgeois it must suffer the consequences.

We leave them to their little dog fight. For their own reasons the liberals may do well to fight corruption in government and state. But they will do nothing to fight the system which leaves millions suffering at the hands of the greedy self-interested owners of all the large industries and businesses in South Africa. It is the so-called free market system of capitalism which both the liberals and the ANC are pledged to defend, They live by it but for the labouring majority it offers only oppression and exploitation. ●

Letters

'SCHOOL IS OUT'

Comrades

During the struggles fought against apartheid education in the late 1980's, one tactic the government resorted to was to close the schools. This brought forth a response by parents, teachers, and pupils aimed at reopening the schools, as well as demanding that schools be governed according to democratic principles. This school year has seen many schools not being able to function due to shortages of teachers, lack of stationary and basic infrastructure.

The response of some parents and representative organisations has been to enforce the closure of schools something the educational authorities were powerless to do anything about. At the same time they demanded that those who think of themselves as being sufficiently competent to run the education system, see to it that these problems are sorted out.

However, as we have come to know the agenda of our present rulers and the officialdom that serves it, this is hardly likely to happen. So where does that leave us - the millions who are fully entitled to free, compulsory and progressive education? The enforced closure of schools as well as other advances made, tells us that through our own organisational efforts it is possible to go into battle against this enemy - and win the battles. This is yet another volley of shots fired in the ongoing battles on the educational front. They are strong and very well organised - are we?

APDUSAN



LET US HAVE MORE DISCIPLINE

The Editor
The APDUSAN

In all walks of life one encounters a set of rules, or a code of conduct that one is supposed to follow. In school, at work, in trade unions, in sports organisations and in political organisations. As a member of a particular, organisation. or institution, you must then have or develop the necessary discipline to adhere to what is expected.

In my dealings with trade unions in Gauteng, I have found that there is no discipline. People arrive two hours late for meetings or rallies. The standard starting time is two hours later than scheduled. This is a big problem because as we know, the capitalist

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is more organised when it faces its biggest challenge(s). We, as the workers in Gauteng, are thus shooting ourselves in the foot with our indiscipline and are surely holding ourselves back.

I have also observed over the last two years or so, that there are some APDUSANs also have the same tendencies as above, They are not regular in attending meetings, they arrive late, they do not execute tasks assigned to them and generally retard our own progress. I had the dubious privilege at our conference of seeing a comrade neglect his assigned duty to write a report of the proceedings. The particular comrade did not have a pen, or even a scrap of paper on which to write.

I do not say that we need candidates for wings and a harp but I am saying that we need to get our priorities straight. We go to conference to pay close attention to the proceedings and to make our contribution wherever possible. Thereafter we can enjoy ourselves. What we also need to bear in mind is that tomorrow is another day and the show must go on. So we need to be in shape for another day's sitting.

What we are engaging in is an effort to transform society and if we fail ourselves, we face a very daunting task in convincing others that we are indeed to be taken seriously. The saying: "Actions speak louder than words" will always be very true.

So, my plea to my fellow members is, let our actions show the seriousness of our intent.

Edward (Gauteng) ◆

THE 1999 ELECTIONS

Dear Comrade Editor

I note next year's elections are already dominating the plans and statements of all the parties in parliament. They are preparing massive campaigns. Sad to see these plans and statements continue with the false promises and dirty tricks we have come to expect. The ANC wants to reopen its RDP office. They are scared the masses will remind them of all the promises they made under that name. The NP talks about appointing a "Coloured" premier in the Western Cape. They too are running scared of the memories of those who voted for them. An office with a grand name, a premier with a certain skin colour! Will the working class fall for these empty tricks again?

APDUSA's task is to make sure this does not happen. Which means we too must prepare ourselves. The way I see it, the elections present us with a good opportunity. Through their campaigns the capitalist parties themselves wake the people up

to think about political questions. Larger circles of workers and even middle class people feel the need to search for political answers more than during 'normal' times. Revolutionaries like us find a bigger audience who might at first disagree, but who will at least listen. This is true of elections in general. We experienced it in 1994. Next year it will happen again, and on a bigger scale. Why? The clear failure of the ANC government to solve the problems of the working masses will cause a larger number of workers to look more intensely for an alternative. Not that things will swing easily our way. We will still struggle for every little gain. But there can be no doubt our propaganda work will get a better response from the working class than in 1994. Let our April conference start planning and preparing this work. We must strive for maximum impact.

The impact of our propaganda campaign depends primarily on what we have to say. This may seem childishly obvious but it is not. Many socialists spend way too much energy on questions like whether to participate in elections or not, and how much resources to put into it. I certainly think these questions are important. But they are secondary and should not be decided too long in advance. The main thing is the content of your propaganda; the message you are bringing to the working masses. That is what ultimately will decide whether you help the revolution or not.

Whatever action APDUSA takes must start from its programme. Our programme sums up how we approach the struggle. It uses all previous experience and theoretical insight to orientate and guide us towards solutions for the fundamental problems of society. It forms the bases for our unity, our work, everything. We must specifically stress three points. Firstly, we must make it clear we stand for revolution. We believe not a single serious problem of the workers and peasants can be solved under the present system. How do we prove this? By continuing our detailed exposure and criticism of capitalism in general and government policy in particular. Nobody in South Africa at present does this better than APDUSA. Let us take it forward.

Secondly we must put forward definite alternative policies to that of the government. We must answer the following question as clearly as we can: "What measures does APDUSA propose to solve a particular social problem?" Our programme illustrates this, for instances, by proposing definite measures to solve unemployment - we demand that existing jobs be shared among workers by shortening the working week without reducing wages. Furthermore, we demand a public works programme to build schools, roads, etc. and involve the unemployed in its execution and management. Similar measures can and must be put forward for

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other social questions such as education. It gives the workers' movement definite demands to fight for and at the same time builds support for a revolution.

Thirdly we must answer the question: "What steps must the working class and its organisations take in order to get closer to a revolutionary government which will implement these measures?" Point 5 of the APDUSA programme puts forward several basic points to guide the building of independent organisations of the labouring masses. It proposes 'independent and democratic worker committees and unions', 'an end to bureaucracy in the unions', 'worker militias', 'peasant committees', 'parent/teacher/student associations', 'local unity forums', 'unity between town and country', etc.

These are the steps the masses must take towards liberation. We must try to explain it as concretely as possible and help the working people implement it wherever we can. A workers' united front and unity between town and country must form the backbone of our present organisational policy. There is no other way toward the revolution.

This is how I propose we start preparing for the 1999 elections. Certainly, we must resolve questions on whether to participate or not, to enter tactical alliances, etc. But let conference first of all clarify what message we want to bring to the labouring masses. That is what counts in the long run.

Greetings.
Redo Wesso (APDUSAN)

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

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 address below.



*The workers, who create the wealth of this land,
must be free to enjoy the fruits of their labour*

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 :

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MALTA ROAD
SALT RIVER
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ADDRESS :

..... **CODE :**

Printed and Published by The African People's Democratic Union of Southern Africa.
1A Palace House, Malta Road, Salt River 7925.