



# THE APDUSAN

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AFRICAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC UNION  
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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

## A NEW ANTI-TERRORISM BILL WHO ARE THE "TERRORISTS"?

There is something very sinister about our government's eagerness to enact a new anti-terrorist law. We are asked to believe that the government is merely aligning itself with a very necessary, world-wide fight against terrorism, as agreed in the United Nations. What is not stated is that the nature and objectives of this anti-terrorism campaign is being dictated by the Bush administration in the USA. According to this standard anything that threatens the interests of the American ruling class can be classified as terrorism. If our own rulers feel they can identify with this approach then they can equally give themselves the right to defend their own position and the interests of those who they represent from any threat. And where may that threat come from? Only from the millions of poverty stricken workers and peasants who are becoming angrier by the day with government policies.

The definition of terrorism in this bill is horrifically vague. According to the bill any action which "is likely to intimidate the public or segment of the public" can be called a terrorist act, a criminal offence carrying a life sentence. This means that anyone belonging to an organisation that strongly opposes government policies which benefit a

minority at the expense of the majority can be charged as a terrorist, facing imprisonment for life. In the same vein the Minister for Safety and Security can seek to have an organisation declared a terrorist organisation if, amongst other reasons, he has "reasonable grounds" for believing that the organisation endangers the security or territorial integrity of the republic. Such an organisation can then be banned and its assets seized. Anyone who attempts to defend or protect such an organisation becomes a criminal facing a heavy prison sentence.

There are many laws on the statute book which can be used to prosecute persons committing criminal acts, even where a political motive is involved. So there can be no need for any special, politically motivated law such as this new anti-terrorism bill *unless* the ruling class wants to be able to use it against any of its political opponents.

We condemn this so-called anti-terrorism bill and call for the scrapping of all procedures to enact this grossly undemocratic attack on our freedom of speech and association and the rights of all people to defend themselves against institutionalised injustice. ●

## THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT INDABA

The Social Movement Indaba (SMI), which came into being in the run up to the World Summit for Sustainable Development last year, met again in Johannesburg during February this year. A wide range of organisations that have achieved prominence in the struggles of the workers and peasants in recent times, came together to consider a more permanent collaboration than the one which produced the massive protest demonstration at the WSSD. Considering the diverse range of organisations that gathered at this meeting it could hardly have been expected that agreement would have been found on all the major questions at issue. Nevertheless, the birth of the SMI must be seen as a development of great significance for the struggle of the oppressed and exploited workers and peasants of

our country.

Most importantly, there was common agreement on the need for an organisational collaboration and coordination of campaigns and action against the neo-liberalist economic policies of the major imperialist powers in the world, implemented by our own government with devastating consequences for the working masses. It was also generally accepted that at this juncture the SMI can only be a loose coordinating body without any authority to impose itself on the basic struggles of the workers and the landless people of our country that are taking place at present. Looking ahead, at one extreme there was the idea that the SMI should only coordinate and

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## The Social Movement Indaba

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unite struggles and not organisations (as if any struggle can be conducted without organisation!). At the other extreme there was the call for the SMI to bring millions into its ranks. Not spelled out in this approach was the fact that it could only be effected under the banner of a political programme and a campaign to bring organisation to the masses instead of the idea of only trying to unite people's organisations, waiting for them to arise where they do not exist!.

It is unfortunate that the understanding of what constitutes a social movement was not spelt out at any stage. There appears to be a general assumption that a social movement is an expression of the basic, economic struggles of working people against the immediate effects of their oppression and exploitation. Thus, a community civic organisation or even an ad-hoc construct taking up the cudgels against immediate and urgent problems such as home evictions or water cut-offs, qualifies as part of a social movement while a political organisation which attempts to govern itself by the objective interests of the working class does not.

While it was agreed that another meeting of the SMI should be convened in Cape Town in

September this year, the growth and development of the SMI will be hampered by a non-recognition of the fact that organisations of the people engaged in struggle against neo-liberalism and the effects of capitalist exploitation are few and far between and most of them are still weak. It simply means that the SMI cannot be conjured up on the basis of wishful thinking. Indeed, one has to ask whether, in present conditions, bodies such as the APF could survive without the efforts of the radical intelligentsia. Then again, while the reactionary role of the present trade union leadership is suitably deplored, the question must be asked whether in the long term, a meaningful social movement indaba can be built without the inclusion of the unions.

It is clear that the move to establish a South African Social Forum via the present SMI is strongly inspired by the development and growth of the World Social Forum and its components across the globe and this must be welcomed with all enthusiasm. A key question that should be considered is whether this task would not be facilitated by a political alliance of all the left-wing groupings whose members already play a prominent role in the SMI and its main proponents. Whatever the obstacles, the building of the Social Movement Indaba demands the widest support. ●

## THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

The Growth and Development Summit, held in Midrand on 7 June 2003, was called to address the problems of economic growth and rising unemployment. Reference to the macroeconomic policy of the government GEAR were noticeably absent from discussions and proposals submitted by, amongst others, the leadership of COSATU. The consensus is that those debates are closed and that discussions should rather focus on the details of this neo-liberal economic policy.

According to figures released by Statistics South Africa, unemployment grew by 4.5% between February 2001 and September 2001. A total of 7.7 million people were unemployed at the end of this period. (Financial Mail 5 April 2002). Compare this to COSATU's figure of 5 million unemployed at present. Out of the total economically active population this amounts to an unemployment rate of 41.5% which is far more than was officially acknowledged in the

past. Hence the apparent urgency on the part of the NEDLAC participants to address the situation.

But how do they go about doing this? Firstly, the people who are supposed to benefit from the initiatives are not part of the talks that were held and are going to be held. Not even the Cosatu leadership, for all its rhetoric about safeguarding the interests of workers and the poor, is tackling it on an organisational basis. What happens to retrenched union members when their membership expires due to them joining the ranks of the unemployed? Surely the unemployed need to have a voice in discussions that concern them.

In the agreement signed the aim is to halve the unemployment rate by 2014. This is proposed in the face of 'jobless economic growth' occurring world-wide. What then makes South Africa an exception? The handful of temporary jobs created through the public works programme has not and will not improve workers'

economic situation in the long term. If the 70 000 to 80 000 learnerships envisaged do materialise it will represent less than 1% of the unemployed that may benefit from it.

When taking a closer look at the agreement it is but an affirmation of the economic growth objectives spelled out by government earlier in the year. Nothing extraordinary is presented to address the needs of the workers and landless peasants. Targets are set but may be discarded on the basis of extraneous political and economic developments. Promises are made that are not kept, on the basis of cost considerations and failure on the part of the state bureaucracy to utilise funds as required.

A new idea being introduced is the one of co-operatives which are to be run by the union federations and community organisations. Will this type of economic organisation answer the needs and aspirations of the workers? What is certain is ➡

➔ that the control of this 'co-operative movement' will be firmly in the hands of those who consider themselves the political custodians of the workers and landless peasants.

After the pathetic failure of the 1998 Presidential Jobs Summit it is not surprising that this new

summit generated very little public enthusiasm. While the fundamental problems are ignored these summits will remain empty talk shops.

We of the Apdusa call for "the full representation of the unemployed in the management of a progressive public works

programme" ; also for "the promotion of independent and democratic worker committees and unions which arise from the ranks of the workers themselves whether employed or unemployed." ●

## PROFIT SHARING OR ENSLAVEMENT?

The Business Day (15<sup>th</sup> May 2003) reported that the National Union of Mineworkers was discussing the question of their workers receiving shares in mining companies. This idea is put forward in the guise of worker participation, black economic empowerment or worker equity. It is not a new idea for the union bosses since their investment arms are already busy in the economy acting as big capitalists corporations, investing the workers' money and making instant millionaires of a chosen few under the name black empowerment. We only have to look at Cyril Ramophosa, Marcel Golding and Johnny Copelyn, to name but a few. These investment arms of the unions have been conveniently isolated from the broader organisation.

The trade union bureaucrats are starting to hear the rumblings of their members about the development of a black elite who are sponging on the struggle of the masses. They are now starting to look for new means to deceive the workers and this is where this so-called profit-sharing and worker equity comes in. It has already happened in Telkom. While it was busy with restructuring in preparation for its listing on the stock market, thousands of workers lost their jobs. Then the public and especially the workers were invited to buy shares in the company. But let us look at the meaning of these two terms, black empowerment and equity.

The government was recently criticised by the brother of president Thabo Mbeki that these high powered black businessmen do not have a clue of the realities of capitalism. But due to their connections they are being put into highly paid jobs where their decisions determine the lives of thousands of people. The trade union investment arms are using the money of union members to invest in such companies. We should remember the time when the same National Union of Mine Workers invested some money in the Independent Bank of Transkei where they lost millions of rands. A few get rich at the expense of the workers who pay their subscription fees to the union.

The new scheme of worker share-holding or equity is now being used to dupe workers to "sleep with the enemy". The workers receive shares in the

company and this is supposed to empower them. But in the first place, these share holdings are too small to satisfy their economic needs. On the other hand, workers who sit on the board will have to decide on how to make the company more profitable. We all know when profitability is being discussed among the "captains" of industry the wage bill is the first point that comes into question. According to the bosses, wages are the only thing to be cut to ensure bigger profits. The workers are also placed in a position in which they must question their readiness and willingness to strike if their rights are being threatened in relation to their shares in the company.

*Profit sharing only means the right of these instant millionaires on the struggle band-wagon to make big profits for themselves and the right of workers to be docile slaves in the capitalist scheme.*

## VOTING FOR LAND

As the country approaches the next general elections questions of what social progress has been made since the 1992 political settlement will come strongly into focus. The ANC ruling party will surely boast about what it has achieved over the past 10 years. We will be told about the number of houses that were built, the number of rural households that were electrified or supplied with running water, etc. Yet it is plain for all to see that millions are still living in poverty without decent houses, hundreds of thousands have lost their jobs because of the government's economic policies, while a select few have joined the ranks of the rich and elite. A key issue lying at the bottom of this state of affairs is the government's pathetic pretence at addressing the very fundamental land problem in South Africa.

With 87% of land owned by whites, the rule of the ANC petty bourgeois leadership would never be legitimate in the eyes of the majority of South Africans without them addressing this issue. But expropriation of land from whites is against the principle that the ANC vowed to uphold at all costs - private property - the private ownership of the mines, banks factories and land. The ANC Government's Land Reform Program ensures that there will be no fundamental change in the pattern of land ownership

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## VOTING FOR LAND

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while giving the impression that it is serious in addressing this problem.

While there has been great publicity for the few success stories of actual land transfers in the land reform program, the reality is quite different for the majority who are trying to make a living off the land. The majority of beneficiaries under the Land Restitution component of the Land Reform programme received a pitiful cash benefit of about R20,000. Others received hopelessly inadequate and infertile pieces of land. Above all, they are unable to obtain credit from financial institutions to conduct farming on a successful basis.

The Redistribution component of the Land Reform Process has likewise only benefited a few people who have enough money to buy land from "willing sellers" who are only willing to sell their farms at ridiculously high prices. Since the start of the reform process less than 1% of agricultural land has been made available for redistribution. It is clear that the main objective is to create a class of commercial black farmers.

The 13 million people living in the former homelands have probably the most uncertain future. All the land in these former homeland areas belong to the state. The government's intention is to transfer this land to communities living in these areas. The first problem with this strategy is that many of these areas are still under the control of chiefs who have played a major role in controlling the peasantry under Apartheid. These so-called traditional leaders have been abusing their power for decades and with the ANC's support they will control access to land which millions of poor peasants depend upon for their livelihood.

The second problem is that most of the land in the former homelands is not suitable for agriculture. Of the 15 million hectares in these areas, only 2,3 million hectares are arable. The majority of peasants, being unable to make a living off the land, move to the urban areas where they join the mass of unemployed workers in the ever growing squatter camps.

While it is important to exercise our voting rights, there is an important lesson that must be learnt: No amount of promises by political parties that are bound to defend the interests of the rich minority at the expense of the majority, will solve the problem of land hunger or ease the plight of the millions of exploited workers. It is only under the democratic, political rule of the working class, supported by the peasantry, that the land problem can be resolved and the wealth created by the workers be equitably shared. The building of the organised unity of the workers in the towns and peasantry in the countryside remains the task of the day. ●

# JUNE 16 1976

## THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

*The demand for a free and equal, progressive educational system has been a critical feature of the liberatory struggle in South Africa from its very beginning. It became inscribed in the blood of the youth of the nation on 16 June 1976 when they were driven to take up the cudgels of this struggle on their own terms. The successes and failures of this struggle demands our ongoing attention.*

### *Education used as a tool to divide and rule.*

The racist regime of the past, under the rule of HF Verwoerd, established a system of Bantu Education. This system became known as education for barbarism or education for slavery. It made its victims slaves to economic interests of the ruling class of the time. The aim was to create a pool of semi-skilled, unskilled and docile workers for super-exploitation. This led to the greater economic deprivation of one section of the society – the majority, who were relegated to an even lower social status.

### *Illusions of Bourgeois Political Rights*

The period from 1976 onwards was characterised by massive resistance and campaigns against bantu education. Many of the youth believed that, if the racist rulers could be dealt a decisive blow a high quality system of education could be brought into place. This view was heightened by the dominant ideas at the time of political leaders advocating Black Consciousness, Pan-Africanism. These leaders purported that if legalised racial injustice could be eradicated then all the ills of society could be cured.

### *After 1994*

This is the period of education under the ANC government. It has revealed social and political dynamics that are interesting in character. The ANC, having come into power with the assistance and blessings of imperialism, committed itself to defend the interests of 'Capital'. This could never have been visualised in the imagination of multitudes. The new regime is quite cognisant of the level of destitution suffered by so many millions. Yet it is religiously following the path of privatisation of social services and it is making education a capitalist business in the country. This can only be seen as a mechanism to sustain bourgeois rule because addressing the people's needs will counter this objective.

What the masses have experienced as a result of the policies of the new government has begun to teach them the true character of the ANC. But in spite of these experiences the masses continue to give a mandate to ANC rule, hoping for improvements and changes in the course of time. But the striking pain of class antagonisms is becoming apparent. ➔

➔ **The APF takes up the challenge**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2003, the Anti-Privatisation Forum (Gauteng) Co-ordinating Committee meeting tackled the issue of education. A consolidated report of political demands from various sectors was compiled. The demand for free education was a strong feature of this report. Communities reported the with-holding of students' results by schools due to the failure to pay school fees. Most schools in Orange Farm are reported to be privatised and a certain Mr Mololeko has four schools in Orange Farm. This shows the extent to which the state has distanced education from the people.

Salim Vally, a director of the Education Policy Unit at Wits university stated that " the results of our research show that the OBE system does not work for poor communities. This system works for the wealthy communities." He further cited how burdensome the education system is for teachers in poor communities, where a single teacher has to deal with sixty-two students (Daily Sun, 30 /01/2003).

We know very well how arrogantly the ministry of education under Kader Asmal will receive these findings. So this is the state of affairs in the education system depicting how bleak the future of our children is, unless the campaign for free education for all is intensified. ●



## **From Around the World**

### **THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ AND THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT IN EUROPE**

The savage war unleashed by US imperialism and its ally Britain (the coalition) against Iraq has taken place in the face of unprecedented international opposition. The coalition's attempt to obtain UN backing for the war ended in failure, mainly because of the opposition of two key European imperialist states, France and Germany, as well as Russia and China. While the ruling circles in the US are congratulating themselves on their military victory, the occupation of Iraq may prove not be quite the success story they are expecting. Contrary to the coalition's propaganda that their troops would be welcomed in the streets of Iraq as liberators, the people took up arms against the invading force. The occupation is proving a disaster for the people of Iraq. The infrastructure in the cities, which was badly damaged or destroyed has not been repaired and the inhabitants have to endure life without electricity, inadequate water and sewage sanitation with the constant outbreaks of dysentery and threats of cholera.

At the coalition's behest and with the climb down of France, Germany, Russia and China, the UN has now voted to give itself

legal cover to occupy the country and control its resources thus legitimising a war which the four states strenuously opposed. The UN resolution establishes the US as the real authority in Baghdad . The coalition, as occupying powers, has unprecedented control over Iraq for at least the next year, which gives them ample time to groom a stooge Iraqi government to take over from them. The US occupation administration has control of the oil, one of the main aims of the US for going to war. Analysts have predicted that expanded exports of Iraqi oil could realise about \$22 billion a year. The plan is that some of this money, an estimated \$13 billion will go towards the reconstruction of Iraq. The US military administration has already awarded contracts exclusively to US companies, one of which is Bechtel, which has close ties with the Bush administration. This is just one striking example of US administrations serving the interests of big business in the US and a third world country being robbed of its resources by the wealthiest nation in the world.

The standpoint of the anti-war movement in Europe and

internationally has been vindicated. No weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq, the pretext for the aggressors to go to war. The Iraqi people having resisted the invasion, are now engaged in a struggle against the occupation of their country, which they rightly perceive as acts of imperialist aggression. In Europe, in countries like France, Germany and Britain where the majority of the people were against the war, the anti-war movement is campaigning against the occupation of Iraq and discussing its tasks for the future. In Britain although the movement succeeded in organising some of the largest demonstrations before and during the war, it was not able to stop Blair from joining Bush in attacking Iraq. Although trade unions are affiliated to the movement, it was unable to mobilise the large number of trade unionists that the movement in Italy could bring on to the streets. In Italy, the movement has the support of Rifondazione Comunista, a political party to the left of the social democratic parties in Europe and with a membership of 100,000.

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**Iraq & the Anti-War Mvt.**  
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The British left have a long way to go before they can match the achievement of the left in Italy. The building of a party to the left of the Labour Party has become a vital necessity. The task of such a party would be one of political radicalisation, focusing in the first instance on members and activists in the anti-war movement and the trade unions as well as individuals in the Muslim community, who overwhelmingly

supported the anti-war movement. The success of the Scottish Socialist Party in the elections to the Scottish Party and the election of the first Socialist Alliance councillor in the local elections in England are encouraging for the future.

The anti-war movement in Europe would not have taken off in such a dramatic way without the support of the anti-globalisation movement. In Florence, in November last year at the European Social Forum, 1 million people marched against

the war. The coming together of these two movements against imperialism represents a powerful force which has to be expanded and deepened. At the G8 summit in Evian, where President Bush and the other leaders of imperialist states met, thousands upon thousands of activists from the anti-globalisation and anti-war movements once again demonstrated their opposition to imperialism and the wars for which it is responsible. ●

## ***A GREAT LEAP FORWARD FOR THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM***

The third World Social Forum (WSF) took place in Porto Alegre in Southern Brazil from 23 to 28 January 2003. Approximately 100,000 people from 131 countries attended the event. This was more than five times the number that converged there for the first WSF in 2001. Factors that shaped this year's gathering were the rapid worldwide expansion of the WSF process, the global economic meltdown, the impending war on Iraq and the electoral victory of Brazil's Workers Party (PT).

Before the opening of the WSF 3, the International Council (IC) held a two-day meeting where it adopted a set of nine resolutions. The IC resolved, among other things, "to stimulate the multiplication of regional, national and even local events, as well as theme events, that intercommunicate horizontally and that will not be articulated as preparatory for one another but as meetings with their own political value." Enormous strides have been made on this front as last year's massive protests organized by the European Social Forum (ESF) in Florence (Italy) has demonstrated. ESF activists see themselves as part of a global struggle but determine their own priorities and pace at which the European movement can grow, taking local circumstances into account. At the ESF preparatory assembly, recently held in Berlin (Germany), planning for the second ESF scheduled for mid-November in Paris and Saint-Denis (France) moved into a higher gear. At the top of the ESF agenda is extending the process into Central and Eastern Europe.

Another example of the strengths being wielded by currents to rid the WSF of its lopsided development has been unfolding in the Americas. At this stage, most of the 9 social forums in the world and 11 out of the 21 mobilisation committees are in South America. Sessions of the IC and the

hemispheric council of the Social Forum of the Americas (SFA) were due to be held in Miami (USA) in late June. These meetings aim to reinforce links that social movements forged in Seattle in 2000 and tighten preparations for the SFA's big convergence planned for March 2004 in Quito (Ecuador).

At its January meeting, the IC confirmed that future WSF annual events will no longer coincide with the World Economic Forum, the Davos (Switzerland) assembly of the capitalists and their heads of state. In addition to this, the WSF will return to Porto Alegre every alternate year only, thus paving the way for other regions (countries) to host the major annual WSF. Mumbai (India) is the venue for the 2004 WSF, which will be hosted by the Asian Social Forum (ASF). It must be noted that in this part of the world where most economies in the region collapsed after 1997, an upsurge of anti-neoliberal activism has undergone a great leap forward. Subsequently, and partly inspired by mobilisations in Seattle and elsewhere, two big gatherings took place in Sydney (Australia) and the IC of the WSF had its meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2002. About 25,000 people attended the first Asian Social Forum in Hyderabad (India) on January 2-7 this year.

Extending the geographic reach of the WSF will undoubtedly exert tremendous impact on its form and content. The centrality of the debates and the shifts underway are sharpening the programme of the WSF. In a bold statement issued by the ASF at the end of its Hyderabad meeting we read: "We believe that not only is another World Possible but that Another World is Necessary! We affirm our faith in alternatives based on equity, social justice, human rights and socialism." ●



## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN CEPPWAWU?

Comrades

The suspension of the Wits regional office bearers had been expected by the Wits shopstewards for a long time. This act by the petit-bourgeois bureaucracy is a culmination of a long and bitter history of differences between the Wits Region and the National office bearers over the bureaucratic manner in which the union is being led. The union national leadership cannot brook the Wits region's criticism of the Tripartite Alliance. It also cannot tolerate the region's criticism of mal-administration of the union, in spite of the bureaucracy's confession that the short-term and long-term survival of the union is in question and that 'drastic measures' must be taken to save the situation. The region did not believe that the latter included the suspension of its Office Bearers and NEC delegates for having dared, through the workers mandate, to challenge the bureaucracy. In spite of the bureaucracy's re-assuring words the union has been plunged into its deepest crisis ever.

The Wits workers are demanding an immediate and unconditional re-instatement of its office bearers. To effect its demand the region's local chair-persons have formed a chairperson's committee which called two regional shopsteward councils on the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> of May and the third one on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. These shopsteward councils have called for the suspension of subscriptions until the demands of the regions are met by the bureaucracy. Employers will deduct the subscriptions but not hand them over to the union account until further notice.

To thwart this plan the petit-bourgeois bureaucracy has imposed, what is termed by the region's shopstewards, a 'Bush' regime ala Iraq. It is further conniving with employers, either directly or through the employer associations, to demand that employers pay the subscriptions to the union. In response, workers in some companies have opened their own account to hold their subscriptions.

The march by the APF to Ceppwawu office protesting, against the suppression of freedom of expression, adds a much broader political dimension to the issue, not only for the petit-bourgeois bureaucracy but for the entire petit-bourgeois agenda. The possibility of the unity of organised labour with the civic movement must be a nightmare for all of them. The Ceppwawu issue raises the question of what the workers must do to get rid of the petit-bourgeoisie in the leadership of their organisations and the workers struggle in general. The Stalemate is still there!!

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*Editor's Note:*

*Since this letter was written the Wits Regional Office Bearers of Ceppawu obtained a court ruling that their suspension was unconstitutional. The National Executive, however, continues with its efforts to unseat them.* ◆

## BOOK REVIEW

### THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES

*A Review of "The Algebra of Infinite Justice" by Arundhati Roy, published by Flamingo Original, U.K. 2002)*

Arundhati Roy, the celebrated author of an only novel, "The God of Small Things", began writing in 1998 about big issues gripping the Indian nation. In 1999 she joined an epic struggle in the Narmada river valley against the dispossession of poor farmers, fishermen and forest dwellers by a big dam construction project. Today she is hailed for her contribution to the debates taking place in the global justice movement. This publication, a collection of essays compiled from articles and speeches by her from 1998 to 2002, provides the reader with a timely and valuable insight into these debates.

The title is taken from what she typifies as "equivocal distinctions" between "the massacre of innocent people" (Americans) and "collateral damage" (Afghanis), which she describes as "the sophistry and fastidious algebra of infinite justice", referring to the "anti-terror" campaign being conducted by the Bush regime in America, which it originally tried to justify with the grand name – "Operation Infinite Justice".

In these essays Arundhati Roy's covers the motives behind America's war in full and adds the less publicised connections of the US administration with arms interests - Presidents Bush Snr. and Jnr., and many Republicans are share-holders and staffers of the "Carlyle Group" – "... described by the Industry Standard as one of the worlds largest private investment funds. Carlyle invests in the defence sector and makes its money from military conflicts and weapons spending" (page 229).

Roy demonstrates that while the game of arms trading is played out of public view, its consequences are devastating. In January 2002 Tony Blair paid a "peace" visit to India, with a said £1 billion deal for Hawk fighter bombers at a time when tensions between India and Pakistan were heating up. Shortly thereafter, the incident in which 58 Hindus were burnt alive in an assumed terror attack on a train, precipitated a fascist pogrom against the Muslim community in Gujarat.

The rise of Hindu nationalism and its fascist wing in secular India and the horrific atrocities that has followed in its wake is unspeakable for Arundhati Roy. She speaks of its ugly face that was shown when India and Pakistan acquired the nuclear bomb in 1998, the 50<sup>th</sup> year of independent rule and partition, when there was talk of a "Hindu resurgence" and mob violence on the streets.

While acknowledging the big achievements in India since independence, eg, in the turning of a food deficit into an abundance, she highlights the fact that today, of its one billion people, 400 million are illiterate and absolutely impoverished, unable to buy the grain rotting in the storehouses. India, "the world's biggest democracy" has become a hunting ground for investments and trade. Currently, under World Trade Agreements, import restrictions have been lifted on a range of commodities, and poor farmers are being destroyed by the competition in a "free" market.

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Possibly India's biggest disasters resulted from the pursuit of development through the construction of big dams and canals such as the Narmada Valley Project. This is the longest and most extensively investigated story in the book. How the most uninformed and poor of the country organised themselves to resist dispossession of land and other resources, takes its place alongside similar struggles in Mexico and Latin America. But while the villagers sang of "Home Rule in our villages", the central government and the judges approved the rights of states to continue with these projects.

The Indian states began accepting deals with private corporations. Roy exposes the corruption involved in the Maheshwar dam hydro-electric project contracted to the local enterprise, S. Kamars. When the anti-dam movement occupied the site of the project in protest they were dealt with by private police. Then there is the story of the now notorious Enron company from the US, which clinched a questionable deal to run a power plant and supply

electricity to the Maharashtra State Electricity Board. This deal became an "albatross". The state soon found that it could not afford Enron's extremely high charges so that no electricity was bought or supplied while Enron continued to receive payments for maintenance and administration of the plant.

In the foreword, John Berger speaks of the forces behind global confusion. He writes: "the real decision-makers operating the market make their choices in the face of hourly, or at the most, daily fluctuations. Old-age pensions ... are risked for immediate speculation. Since Bush's unilateral withdrawal ... from the Kyoto Agreements the same goes for the planet. And this state of affairs is called Democracy". So there we have it. The titular head goes about without any disguise of imperialist's intentions – the emperor has no clothes, and this is what Arundhati Roy shows for all who care to see. She has raised the issues. There are several opinions she expresses that one could challenge. But as a good writer, she has the ability to make one think.

G.W.

## APDUSA

APDUSA was established in 1961 by the Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) to raise the interests of the working class and landless peasantry as paramount in the national liberatory struggle. Despite the gain of political rights for all, the compromise of 1992 has not fulfilled the national democratic aspirations of the labouring majority and they continue to suffer in conditions of abject poverty and subjugation to the will of the rich who command the economic resources of the country. We have therefore adopted a programme of transitional demands for the completion of the unfinished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution in an uninterrupted struggle for socialism.

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

We demand:

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

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