

# The Worker

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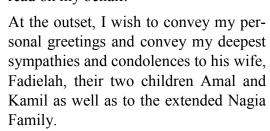
### Special points of interest:

- \* Anwah Nagia the social activist
- \* At a minimum, nonracialism should be about building a single, undivided, independent, non-racial, democratic and socialist South Africa
- \* The NEUM was the first organisation in the world, sociologically, to expound on the policy of nonracialism on a scientific basis

## TRIBUTE TO COMRADE ANWAH NAGIA DELIVERED AT THE CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE, CAPE TOWN 10 OCTOBER 2020

I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of comrade Anwah Nagia on 28 September at the age of 62 years.

Regrettably, due to the Covid 19 regulations, ľm unable to attend this celebration of his life and work in person. I am grateful to the members of our Cape Town branch for arranging for this personal tribute to be read on my behalf.



A message of condolences from the New Unity Movement (NUM) was personally delivered to the family by the joint secretary of NUM, comrade Mickey Titus during the past week. He is also, unfortunately, unable to attend this memorial ceremony.



am indeed proud to have been associated with someone who has been justly described as being a Visionary, Revolutionary Fighter, Strategist, Philanthropist, Entrepreneur and Powerful Change Agent. Others present here to-

day will reflect

on these qualities

in some detail.

But his being in

possession of all of these lofty sounding attributes is somehow belied by his outgoing, friendly and compassionate nature.

These most laudable attributes were exhibited in numerous and varied ways, throughout his life. Some of the ways in which these attributes were exhibited by him include the following:

- He played a leading role in the Hands Off District Six Campaign Committee and the founding of the District Six Museum.
- He served as chairperson of the *District Six Beneficiary and Redevelopment Trust* and the Mustadafin Foundation.

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A collage of photos of Cde Anwah Nagia's activism

- He played a leading role in the Anti War Coalition in 2003
- He was widely respected as an ethical <u>businessman</u> and entrepreneur, serving amongst others as Executive Chairman of Altius Holdings and Element Investment Managers.

In recognition of his being a widely respected social activist in Cape Town he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by UWC in 2004 and had served as a member of the Senate and Council of that institution.

In 2005 the Minister of Finance appointed him as Director of the Financial Service Board (Directorate of Market Abuse) with particular responsibility for market abuse on the JSE. I would however like to believe that his involvement in all of these initiatives was in part underpinned by his strong commitment to the principles and policies of the Unity Movement.

I would like to mention the following in this regard:

Comrade Anwah became steeped in the policies and principles of the Unity Movement during his student days. He became active in UM aligned organisations like the Federation of Cape Civic Associations (FCCA) and the Cape Town, Cultural society and as such was a participant in the deliberations that preceded and culminated in the launching of the NUM in 1985, becoming a founder member of the Cape Town Branch.

It was in the UM that he learnt to understand that it was the global system of capitalism-imperialism that was the cause of the barbaric conditions under which the poor and marginalised communities across the world lived. He became particularly incensed by the Israeli oppression of the people of Palestine and invested great energy in highlighting their plight and forging bonds of solidarity with them and other oppressed communities.

To the end comrade Anwah remained a staunch believer in the UM's Policies which are:

The policy of Radical Non-racialism as opposed to the liberal non –racialism as espoused by the ANC and the DA

The policy of Non-collaboration & Anti Imperialism

The building of a single undivided nation in which group and or tribal identities are not emphasised.

The Ten Point Programme of Transitional demands which with its preamble sets forth the path to the establishment of a movement for Socialism.

I believe that is was these ideas which also inspired what may be seen as his crowning achievement, namely the visionary Al Kaaf Human Rights Centre and Palestine Museum. One hopes and trusts that it will endure as a lasting monument to his revolutionary and visionary spirit.

One could but stand in awe when he took some of us on a tour of the still incomplete building five years ago and gave us an account of his unique vision for the centre.

And one was stunned to hear the trials and tribulations he had to endure in bringing his dream to fruition. Not only did he need to overcome a destructive arson attack on the building he had bought to convert into the centre, but once he had commenced on the actual building of the centre he had to contend with hostility from the owner of a neighbouring building and from the municipality which literally tried to prevent him from implementing his building plans.

It is therefore clear that he has succeeded in bringing his vision to fruition against what can only be described as seemingly insuperable odds. This building now stands and hopefully will endure as a monument to his doggedness, his perseverance and his revolutionary zeal.

We in NUM are thankful for his loyalty and dedication to the principles and policies of the Unity Movement which he has expressed most tangibly by allocating space on the third floor of the Al Kaaf HRC as a repository for the Unity Movement archives and library.

We were also gratified by his allowing us the use of the Al Kaaf Centre as the venue for the BM Kies memorial lecture that was held there in December 2019 But not only that. He also sponsored the catering for the event and contributed to the cost of bringing in our guest lecturer, Hillel Ticktin from England.

And as proof of where his heart lay, I would like to quote what he had to say in response to the letter we wrote thanking him and his family for their contribution to the success of the BM Kies Memorial Lecture. He said: "This is for our comrade Ben and for my movement the New Unity Movement. It's Ben's contribution to all of humanity that motivated us then and now. "

I must also mention that comrade Anwah had started putting out a publication called 'Human Rights Notices" which focuses on issues related to human rights. Notice number 4 which focussed on the impact of Covid 19 on the working class,

makes the following observation:

"Like the climate crisis, the virus predominantly threatens all of humankind. In this situation, the Al Kaaf Human Rights Centre and the New Unity Movement believe that the working class is one of the sectors that are most vulnerable."

What stands out in comrade Anwah Nagia's life's work is his selfless devotion and dedication to the cause of the underprivileged and oppressed members of society wherever they are in the world.

May his family find some solace in the fact that their loss is sorely felt by the countless numbers of people who admired and respected him.

Hamba Kahle comrade Anwah

We salute you

Basil Brown

President

### SKIN-DEEP NON-RACIALISM BENEFITS ONLY THE ELITE

It is 77 years since the formation of the Non-European Unity of racial oppression that continues unabated into the era of the Movement and the foregrounding of non-racialism as a driving force in the struggle for a single South Africa where only your humanity matters.

We are reminded that a society built on colonialism develops a deeply-ingrained racist culture. We remember too that racism is a means of social control instituted for the benefit of the racists. The colonialists needed racism to grow and become the owners of great wealth that they are today. This helps to explain why – almost three decades into the "new" South Africa" - we are still fighting tooth-and-nail to eradicate this scourge from our national psyche.

Therefore, the struggle against colonialism includes the fight for non-racialism. But non-racialism has come to mean different things to different people. Many claim to be non-racialists these days - even (wait for it!) - the DA. It has become politically fashionable to declare oneself to be non-racial.

Surely there is more to it than the political posing that abounds. Well, firstly, one has to accept that scientifically there is no such thing as race. Secondly, race was invented by oppressors to preach the superiority of one "race" and the inferiority of another. This they did to justify their "right" to rule and to enslave and to live off the sweat of those they regarded as inferi-

What, therefore, is your non-racialism worth if it benefits only a privileged few? What is it worth if it strengthens injustice and inequality in society? What is it worth if it disregards a history

"Rainbow Nation?"

It is a sham non-racialism! It is a bogus non-racialism! It is a fraudulent non-racialism! At a minimum, non-racialism should be about building a single, undivided, independent, non-racial, democratic and socialist South Africa in which the interests of workers and the rural poor shall be paramount.

But things can get bizarre when you're dealing with self-styled non-racialists, as they did recently. Consider the following:

The DA-dominated Western Cape Education Department (WCED) once again covered itself in shame. In true baasskap style, it took steps to haul an Oudtshoorn-based teacher, Mr Glen Snyman, before a disciplinary hearing because (way back in 2017) he had dared to refer to himself on an application form as "African" when, according to the WCED, he is a "coloured". (!!!)

As it happens, Mr Snyman is the founder of an organisation which calls itself "People Against Race Classification." To quote from a Timeslive.co.za piece on 14 October 2020:

> Snyman is an outspoken critic of race classification, and founder of People Against Race Classification. He is particularly outspoken against the use of the term "coloured", which he considers degrading. . . Since 2010, Snyman has led a campaign against the government's continued use of race categories - "black," "coloured," "Indian," and "white." - on official documentation, including job-application forms.

On the same day that the above news broke, it was also reported that WCED minister of education Debbie Schäfer expressed "shock" about the disciplinary hearing, and self-righteously declared that the allegations against Snyman were "not what her administration stood for."

But here's where it gets bizarre:

Also on the same day, pictures circulated on social media showing the self-styled non-racialist, Glen Snyman, posing arm-in-arm with none other than Helen Zille, BOTH regaled in T-shirts that loudly declared in bold colour, "I am not a Coloured, Black, Indian or White. I am a South African." And on the same day, there was a picture of him posing with Alan Winde (whose arm was round the non-racialist's shoulder)!

Can you now wonder why Debbie Schäfer was rushing around to do damage control? The charges against Mr Snyman have since been withdrawn.

Apart from the tragi-comedy played out in the above episode, there is also a more sinister side to this story: it involves the WCED's knee-jerk reaction to anything that smells of disobe-

dience. Once again we are seeing the characteristic *krag-dadigheid* of the WCED at work. Their style of control is well-known. We saw it at work in the victimisation and dismissal of Brian Isaacs (former principal of South Peninsula High School) and now, in the attacks on Wesley Neumann (current principal of Heathfield High School). In both cases, the DA-led WCED has trained its guns on outstanding educators, revered by their students, staff and communities, and who had no hesitation in acting according to their consciences and in speaking truth to power.

The WCED knows only one way: their way or the highway.

As we said at the beginning of this article, a society built on colonialism develops a deeply-ingrained racist culture. We have a history of colonialism, segregation, apartheid and now, neo-liberalism. No amount of skin-deep non-racialism will make any kind of dent in the system. The ruling class's kind of non-racialism is for empowering a privileged elite, even from the ranks of the oppressed. It has nothing to do with the real thing, and even less to do with liberation from oppression, injustice and inequality.

### HERITAGE & CULTURALISM

The president has asked the country to join in on Heritage Day to dance the global *Jerusalema*. With so many being worn down by the extended lockdown and the *Jerusalema* having very catchy tune, it is expected that many will join in by dancing the *Jerusalema Challenge*.

Also known by the misnomer of "Braai Day", South Africans celebrate the day/month remembering the cultural heritage of the 'diverse cultures' that make up the South African population. By this, does the "New SA" constitute a conglomerate of cultures? A "Coloured, Indian, Xhosa, Zulu, Setswana ... the eleven official languages, Portuguese, Spanish and all the other European countries cultures?'.

How do we define culture? We look at culture as the ideas, customs, arts, social behaviour, and other manifestations of human achievement regarded collectively.

The social system that spawned tribalism and thus culture relates to a development stage in human society. It is not exclusive to Africa. The Norsemen, the Grecians and Romans all over the world went through this stage. However, in Africa, this has been maintained for dominance and exploitation by the European colonisers. They have done so for historical reasons related to oppression and exploitation, Africans have been divided, ruled, and led to believe in the myth of tribalism and thus culturalism that has developed into mythology.

The advocates of "race" differences have thus promoted the

ideas of the present-day tribes. These ideas have emanated from those who endorsed the ideas of "Western Civilisation". What is being brought about is division amongst the peoples of Africa and particularly South Africa with its history of apartheid. These "cultural" differences breed discrimination and divisiveness. These divisions are unscientific and cannot be justified.

On Heritage Day, 24 September, South Africans perpetuated these 'cultural' divisions and thus the apartheid philosophy, wittingly or unwittingly. Verwoerd and his followers, of whom there are still many, must be acclaiming the success of their divide and rule policies that had its genesis in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the advent of capitalism. Of course, it was European colonialism and slavery that drove this evil system.

The policy of nonracialism was first discussed within the *Workers Party of South Africa* and found resonance in the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) that was established in 1943. The NEUM was the first organisation in the world, sociologically, to expound on the policy of nonracialism on a scientific basis. The NEUM rejected race-based organising and the concept of race itself.

We come from a history of divide and rule. We do not belong to different races or ethnic groups nor do we have different cultures which separate us. We are all part of the human race and all cultures are part of the human culture. Alongside the organising of the struggle against the concept of race, it was simultaneously also an anti-tribalistic or anti-ethnic resistance. In "Tribalism: An Archaism and a Divisive Myth", Livingstone Mqotsi wrote, ".... evidence shows that the concept of the existence of tribes" is a myth that has been developed into a fully-fledged mythology by the advocates of face differences, racial superiority and its converse, racial inferiority."

The "new" SA still has vestiges of the colonial days of "divide and rule". There has been a vigorous and sustained revival of the barbaric system of tribalism and chieftainship – this is encapsulated in the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act of 2003/2009 & 2019.

Nonracialism is therefore not the politics of racial equality or equal treatment of the people of different "races"; it is also, not what some refer to as "colour blindness" but an active radical nonracialism – a nonracial society, without guarantees for minorities or majorities. There is thus only one race, and that is the human race.

From this, we deduce that there is therefore only human civilisation to which humankind contributed all over the world – and the people of Africa made as large a contribution as any other in the world. Therefore, the separateness of South Africans into different cultures is a false premise and can only lead to divisiveness. These forms of discrimination are aimed at causing division amongst our communities to allow social oppression and economic exploitation to continue.

Who constitutes the South African nation?

The nation consists of the people who were born in SA and who have no other country but SA as their motherland. They may have been born with any of the normal hues of pigmentation of humankind, they may be male or female, their age is irrelevant, they may speak any of the eleven of the official languages in our country, they may have any features of humankind, straight-haired or curly-haired, they may be of any faith or no faith at all, as long as they are of the human species. In a nation, the people forming the nation need not have a common language or common customs or traditions.

With this in mind, we tend to think that there is only the oppression between "nationalities" of "White" superiority over "Blacks", but actually as is shown, there is a more fundamental form of oppression, which is that of class exploitation. When we consider the latter, it is not a question of colour domination, but rather a question of the *haves and the havenots*. This will determine the trajectory of our struggle.

In the 1980s, SA had the most advanced revolutionary working class on the brink of a revolution on the continent. Now

26 years of comprador bourgeois reaction has restored tribalism, racism, sexism, Afrophobia and patriarchy on a sickening scale.

The Coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated the fault lines in the SA situation. The Health system for the poor is virtually non-existent. Education is in a terrible mess. Social Services and almost every aspect of governance is shambolic.

During this period, let us not forget that people were evicted from South End, from the Hill, from North End, from the centre of town in Uitenhage, Cradock Street and environs, In East London from the East and West Banks, North End and Quigney. Forced removals without adequate compensation — to be scooped up by "Whites" who sold these properties at profit to industrialists and property developers.

Spatial apartheid has not begun to be addressed. Informal settlements abound in this new SA. There's a terrible crisis in the provision of electricity, of water of housing. Citizens of SA are living in decrepit townships where violence is endemic. Gender-based violence has become an everyday occurrence

Physical distancing in these informal squatter camps is Impossible. Poverty, joblessness and the degradation of township life makes the celebration of Heritage Day fallacious. To now try to resurrect those areas by claiming citizens must celebrate Heritage Day is doing a disservice to the concept of the day.

So, Mr President, you will have to excuse me if I say, I may dance the Jerusalema Challenge on any other day, but do not ask me to do this jig in celebration of Heritage Month.



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### Forever forward, Backwards never

SA has been dubbed the protest capital of the world. Several of these protests have become violent. Are we in a prerevolutionary period? Or are these outbursts merely run-of-themill service delivery incidents with little or no political content?

Although there were in many cases, important gains, such as an increase in electricity provision and access to water, inequality remains endemic amongst the marginalised communities in SA. Recent data from the World Bank indicates that SA remains one of the most unequal countries in the world.

What would democracy include? Planned and adequate housing for all with an abrogation of spatial apartheid, an absence of "Informal settlements" with no shacks, the abolition of the bucket system, tarred roads without potholes, a free compulsory education system, free health care with a free transport system.

More and more people are realising that we don't have a democracy in SA. There can't be a democracy when conditions are as dissimilar between the areas of Khayelitsha and Constantia. For most democracy is linked to the provision of basic services.

The fundamental struggle in SA as conceived by the New Unity Movement (NUM) is against a completely exploitative and oppressive system as outlined in the revised Ten Point Programme (TPP) and its preamble. The following quote indicates the extent of our struggle:

In the era of capitalist parliamentary democracy following the abrogation of apartheid legislation in South Africa, our struggle continues to be both the national and class struggle of a people dominated by imperialism.

..... And because capitalism is globalised, the anti-capitalist struggle must be globalised. Our struggle, therefore, transcends national boundaries and is part of a worldwide struggle of oppressed and exploited people against the capitalist system.

The International and local economic crises that face SA impact directly on our methods of struggle and the strategies we employ. During the protracted drought, the resultant price increases in basic foodstuffs, transport, fuel, and paraffin, and above all, the effects of COVID-19 pandemic, have negatively impacted the lives of the poor. The unemployment figure has escalated to an unprecedented high of almost 40% of the employable workforce. A massive 14.1 million persons were unemployed during the 2nd quarter of 2020. The Youth Unemployment rate was at 59% in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2020. It is

expected that the official percentage may rise to 70% towards the end of the year, with a further increase expected next year.

There is nowhere in the world where the land belongs to a minority. If the land belongs to all, then we should simply nationalise the land and put it under social control, implying that decision-making will be democratic and if democratic, the decisions of the majority will prevail. Since 1994, the land question has remained unresolved. Although black South Africans comprise 79% of the population, they own just 4% of agricultural land. This is unsustainable. Recent attempts by the government to introduce the land expropriation without compensation act is so much hogwash. Informed academics have on numerous occasions opined that it was not necessary to change the constitution to effect radical change.

The capitalist ruling class has now created some space for a small number of the black elite to join the ranks of capitalists. However, South Africa has one of the highest inequality rates in the world. The Gini coefficient in SA, measuring the income distribution or, wealth distribution of 0.63, indicating that inequality level is the highest in the world.

The majority of Blacks (generic term) make out the working class in SA. The question raised at the outset concerning the protest movement now has reference – what happens when the working class including the precariat and the poor rise up, as they will, how will the nationalists' leaders react? Will the working class, and the urban and rural poor be crushed by the twin forces of law and order?

### What are we to do?

All liberatory forces must form principled alliances with likeminded organisations in SA to further the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle. The alliances should be based on non-racialism and non-collaboration with the organs of oppression and exploitation. The building of the principled unity of the oppressed is the historical and immediate task of the liberation movement in SA.

In 1956 IB Tabata states in "Let us Rally"; "The task before is an extremely hard one; the road is arduous and the obstacles are great. We can never reach our goal by each one travelling in a different path. There is no short cut to liberation. We must bend all our efforts in a united concerted struggle.

We may walk separately but we must strike together.

### Let us get down to that job!



### **WORLD TEACHERS DAY**

# "Teachers: Leading in crisis, reimagining the future."

World Teacher's Day is celebrated worldwide on 5 October. And generally, in the month of October On this day, we celebrate the teaching profession by generating awareness about teacher issues and by ensuring respect for teachers. With the Coronavirus pandemic, we became pertinently mindful of the challenges faced by teachers. Teachers are the backbone of society and should be respected as such.

In the last few years, the legitimate demand for free quality decolonised education increased ten-fold. The demand has been exacerbated during the pandemic as the massive levels of poverty, joblessness and inequality have become stark.

Teachers should be reflective and should be involved in changing their schools and society. It is one of the oldest clichés in education that, in the final analysis, teachers teach people and not the curriculum. What is important is that the guidance, cultivation and opening of the minds and attitudes of the students must never be ignored.

Government policies have for decades played havoc with the country's education and therefore with the lives of SA's children. During the pandemic schools were opened, then closed ... and when schools, with their parents, took decisions to normalise the situation, principals were charged with disciplinary action and even dismissal. Teachers must stand together with their colleagues against the enemies of education – especially those in the Education Departments who demeans education. This has happened particularly in the Western Cape. With the strife between the DA & the ANC reaching boiling point, the education of learners is put at risk.

When it came to the education particularly of the poor and marginalised, countless numbers of teachers and students over the decades have, at great personal cost, never flinched at opposing the reactionary and blatantly regressive agendas of the authorities.

Teachers are the victims of poor resources, inadequate facilities, overcrowded classrooms, which are in the main responsible for the low morale amongst teachers. Many schools have become sites of strife, conflict and physical danger for both students and teachers. The schools at which these acts of violence have been reported are all situated in sub-economic, underprivileged communities where many social disabilities – unemployment, crime, gangsterism, drug dealing and abuse, are a daily way of life. The number of unemployed persons in mostly the areas of the poor decreased by 2.2 million. The

unemployment rate according to the expanded definition of unemployment increased to around 50% in some areas and youth unemployment to approximately 70%.

The preoccupation of the DBE with the matric results has led to anti-educational practices. Gr. 12 teachers cannot say that they have educated their classes in 2020. Passing of Gr. 12 exams doesn't mean that education has taken place. The health of the education system cannot depend on the matric results alone. We have shown on numerous occasions how kids are culled in Gr's. 10 & 11 to produce acceptable results for the outside world.

Learners have barely been to school and they are already writing trial exams. The work done in the first quarter is a vague memory. The inactivity throughout the lockdown period has severely affected learners, especially in the poorest areas. One suspects that very few if any of the learners, barring the more conscientious, have picked up a book during this period. They had no idea when or if the school will re-commence this year. When the DBE made an announcement, it was garbled, withdrawn or amended a few days later. Wholesale chaos has reigned.

During the week of 14 - 18 September news reached schools that no formal exams for Gr's. 10 & 11 will be written at the end of 2020. For the rest of the Grades, the situation is thus similar.

Grades 1-3 teachers will tell you that the learners in the Foundation Phase (FP) will know little or nothing of the work done in the first quarter. In the schools of the poor (the majority of the schools), the work done in the first quarter will have to be repeated.

The DBE Planners in their wisdom have reportedly made time -lost into a mechanical exercise, stating that a mere 5 weeks have been lost due to COVID-19. What poppycock. Someone should have realised that our learners are human beings – not machines. That the inequality in society will impact negatively on the schools of the poor.

In an article, entitled "COVID-19 school closures in South Africa and their impact on children" Servaas van der Berg, Professor of Economics and South African Research Chair in the Economics of Social Policy, Stellenbosch University states,

"......Even before the lockdown, 2.5-million children experienced hunger and almost a third of children who died were severely malnourished. Rapid surveys by StatsSA and the Human Sciences Research Council show increases in hunger since the lockdown since many workers

lost their income and children no longer received free school meals.

By early August, South African children will have lost between 30 and 59 days of school, depending on their grade. It appears that many will attend only half the school days in the second half of the year because of how schools implement social distancing.

Teachers will not be able to complete the curriculum, leaving many gaps in children's education. Poorer learners and schools are least able to catch up. International research shows that such learning losses could have lasting implications, even stretching into the labour market and affecting lifetime earnings."

Our kids are heading for a major educational catastrophe! Commentary by educationists has, for the most part, focussed on the matriculants. No one has ever mentioned the learners in the FP. Gr. 1's have to read with some fluency at the end of 2020. They have to learn to write, the muscles for writing have to be adequately developed to hold the pencil correctly – this takes time and practice. This is not the case in the former Model C schools and the private schools' industry. These parents will purchase writing materials for their children and colouring books for their pre-school kids. These children in the poorer schools will start writing for the first time when they get to a school. Therefore, we'll have problems in Gr. 2. What about the learners who progress to Gr. 4? The gap between Gr. 3 and Gr. 4 is huge. Gr. 4 learners may encounter subject

teaching. They have to be adequately prepared for this.

And, this is not the end of it!

The latest *Progress In International Reading Literary Study* (PIRLS) released on 5 December 2017 placed SA last out of 50 countries globally. The assessment of Gr. 4 learners concluded that approximately 80% of learners could not read for meaning. The tests also disclosed that less than half those who took the tests in English and Afrikaans could read. Statistics from these tests also revealed that more than 80% of those in the other official languages could not read at all.

With time lost in schooling and virtually two weeks of every month having to be sacrificed as a result of social distancing (alternating 3 days and two days a week), how are these learners going to improve their reading abilities? And, here we are not considering the learners in the up-market schools who have had the benefit of virtual and uninterrupted schooling.

#### WHAT TO DO?

The current education system is part of a dehumanising system of exploitation and oppression that condemns millions of our children to suffer poverty and inequality. The system can only improve when we eradicate the profit-driven system in society and work towards a system where citizens are *not* subjected to a life of degradation and misery. Education, health, economics, social development and in fact society, cannot be variously compartmentalised and packaged.

The whole social system must be overhauled.



Classroom of the poor