

# New Unity Movement



## The Bulletin

(An official publication of the New Unity Movement)

Vol. 27 No.1

March 2020

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Printed and Issued by the Publications Bureau of the New Unity Movement (NUM)

Address all Correspondence to the Secretariat: New Unity Movement PO Box 27561 Greenacres 6057

E-Mail: [michaeltitus@vodamail.com](mailto:michaeltitus@vodamail.com) / [mikesteenveld2020@gmail.com](mailto:mikesteenveld2020@gmail.com)

083 225 6329 / 071 645 1590

## EDITORIAL

### ON THE VAST GAP BETWEEN EDUCATION FOR THE RICH AND EDUCATION FOR THE POOR

As the late Dawood Parker once remarked, “The colour bar has been replaced by a money bar.” Nowhere in South Africa is this more evident than in the country’s educational system.

Amnesty International’s recent report on the state of education in South Africa<sup>1</sup> provides extensive details of the huge disparities between the educational experiences of the haves versus those of the have-nots. According to the report, the average-spend by government per learner amounts to around R15000 – R17000 per year. Contrast this with the fees charged by a (public) school like Rustenburg Girls High, in the Western Cape: According to the school’s website<sup>2</sup> the fees for a learner in grades 10, 11 or 12 are R48500 for 2020 (And Rustenburg is partly-funded by the Western Cape Education Department).<sup>3</sup>

This, surely, is the most telling statistic of all. What it in effect says is that equal education can ONLY be secured through equal spending per learner.

In the apartheid era, the disparities in educational spending were funded by government, whereas today, the major financial burden of the cost of a decent education is carried by the parents.

According to a Mail & Guardian report on 19 November 2019:

Income inequality in South Africa has deepened. According to the latest figures from the World Inequality Database, the top 1% of South African earners take home almost 20% of all income in the country, while the top 10% take home 65%. The remaining 90% of South African earners get only 35% of total income.<sup>4</sup>

This legacy is attributable to apartheid-based continuities which CODESA did nothing to change – which CODESA in fact entrenched.

As long as such disparities in income persist, so long will the current disparities in educational experiences (and outcomes) persist. How can it be otherwise?

What is a decent education?

Demand 3.3 of the Unity Movement’s Ten-Point Programme provides some indication:

Education in all public schools shall be free of tuition fees. It shall be the duty of the state to provide such education, which shall apply to all pupils from pre-primary levels up to matriculation, with free textbooks, stationery and school equipment, free meals and access to adequately trained teaching staff. In addition, it shall be the

<sup>1</sup> Amnesty International: Broken and Unequal: The state of education in South Africa, February 2020. (Available from the website <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr53/1705/2020/en/>)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rghs.org.za/admissions/fees/> [Accessed 6 March 2020]

<sup>3</sup> At St George’s Grammar school the tuition fees ALONE for grade 12 are R95957.

<sup>4</sup> Article by Dennis Webster entitled “Why South Africa is the world’s most unequal society. Available at <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-11-19-why-sa-is-the-worlds-most-unequal-society/> [Accessed on 6 March 2020]

duty of the state to provide such learners with sponsored transport to and from schools and other learning sites. Each school shall be equipped with specified minimum learning facilities. These will include an adequately-stocked library of books and other graphic material conforming to specified minimum standards, with annual budgets to increase and maintain stocks. Such learning facilities will also include adequately-resourced computer rooms, free Internet access, adequately-resourced science laboratories, and suitable sports facilities such as playing fields and sports equipment.<sup>5</sup>

Radical transformation – not piecemeal, reversible reforms – is the pathway to this wholly-realizable vision.

### **CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) SET TO RAVISH THE WORLD**

According to Harvard epidemiologist Marc Lipsitch, the coronavirus could become a pandemic that affects between 40% and 70% of the world's adult population – at least 3 billion people.<sup>6</sup>

In the view of Yale-based expert in Public Health, Jason Schwartz, the authorities should have been preparing since the SARS outbreak of 2003.

“Long term government investments matter because creating vaccines, antiviral medications, and other vital tools requires decades of serious investment, even when demand is low. Market-based economies often struggle to develop a product for which there is no immediate demand and to distribute products to the places they’re needed”.<sup>7</sup>

Market-based economies rely on private pharmaceutical companies to provide solutions to society’s health-care problems – but private companies will invest only in the expectation of a profit. So, if Covid-19 does not benefit the pharmaceutical companies, they will either not invest, or demand (substantial) government subsidies, or charge horrendous prices.

Many governments around the world are cash-strapped and up to their ears in debt. For example, SAs debt-to-GDP ratio is projected at 60.8% this fiscal year, compared with the February estimate of 56.2%. It is seen rising to 64.9% next year and 68.5% in 2022.<sup>8</sup> So, widespread outbreaks of the disease in the poorer countries will see those countries ill-prepared to deal with the problem effectively.

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<sup>5</sup> New Unity Movement: Ten Point Programme, December 2012,

<sup>6</sup> See Aylin Woodward’s article at <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/coronavirus-outbreak-could-hit-3-billion-adults-harvard-expert-2020-3?r=US&IR=T> [Accessed 6 March 2020]

<sup>7</sup> From the article by Ben Hillier entitled, “Coronavirus: a disaster of capitalism’s making,” dated 2 March 2020. Available at website <https://mronline.org/2020/03/04/coronavirus-a-disaster-of-capitalisms-making/> [Accessed 7 March 2020].

<sup>8</sup> Article by Robert Brand on 30 October 2019 entitled “Bailouts to Push South Africa’s Debt Ratio Above 70% of GDP,” at website <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-10-30/bailouts-to-push-south-africa-s-debt-ratio-above-70-of-gdp>. [Accessed 7 March 2020].

It is widely expected that global economies will face serious economic disruption, with the prospect of global recession and, consequently, sharply rising unemployment levels. In the SA tourism industry alone, accounting firm PwC warns that as many as 1000 jobs could be lost.<sup>9</sup>

SA's unemployment figures are already at unprecedented highs, and set to rise even further if Covid-19 strikes this country. This leaves the mass of our citizenry without the resources to protect themselves.

## **STATE CAPTURE: PART OF A BIGGER PICTURE**

The still ongoing Zondo Commission hearings into state capture have captured the imagination of all South Africans.

The Zondo Commission was set up in 2016 on the recommendation of the then Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela who in her report on her investigation into state capture stipulated that the Commission should deliver its final report within 180 days. However, it has been granted an extension of time to complete its work by 31 March 2021. What the final outcome of the commission will be is anyone's guess, if the outcomes of previous commissions set up by this government are anything to go by.

Upon the calling into being of the Zondo Commission, it became clear that the issue of state capture had become a battleground for the very life and soul of the ANC. The battle lines were drawn between those represented by Cyril Ramaphosa and Pravin Gordhan who strive to retain what they see as the "true values" of the ANC versus those who represent the interests of the aspirant black bourgeoisie together with the "bureaucratic" bourgeoisie as described by RW Johnson in his book "How Long Will South Africa Survive?" It is this latter grouping that champions the ANC's adoption of policy positions in the form of "white monopoly capital," "radical economic transformation" and Land Expropriation Without Compensation (LEWC). However, these slogans can clearly be seen for what they are, namely, smoke screens to obscure their complicity in promoting state capture and hiding the widespread corruption prevalent within their ranks.

The revelations from the Zondo Commission have been eye-opening and perhaps the most compelling example of the phenomenon of state capture is that described by Adriaan Basson in his book, "Blessed by Bosasa," published in 2019 after the mysterious death of Gavin Watson, a day before he was due to appear before the Zondo Commission. However, we believe that the phenomenon of state capture is but one facet of a many-sided picture

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<sup>9</sup> See article entitled "The economic impact of the Coronavirus on South Africa," dated 27 February 2020, at website <https://www.consultancy.co.za/news/2054/the-economic-impact-of-the-coronavirus-on-south-africa>. [Accessed 7 March 2020].

depicting the nature of the state-administered by the ANC which is characterised by deep-seated corruption, ineptitude, nepotism and fraud.

State capture must be seen as but one aspect of the systemic corruption that characterises the post-1994 dispensation

The phenomenon of state capture was largely facilitated by the nature of the systems put in place in the Public Service by the ANC government after assuming power in 1994. State capture as exemplified by entities like the Gupta's and the Watson's of this world may be seen as operating in parallel with the way in which the public service has been run.

On assuming political power in 1994, one of the first changes brought in by the ANC was that of the wholesale retrenchment of the largely Afrikaner male-dominated public service corps and their replacement by largely, inexperienced, under qualified and inept black officials. The already demonstrably corrupt public service administrations of the various Homelands were incorporated as-is.

The deployment of ANC cadres, as reward for their loyalty and service to the ANC, took place with no regard to their suitability for the posts they were appointed to. Such appointees exhibited a nauseating sense of self-entitlement as exemplified by the mantra of such ANC cadres: " I didn't struggle to be poor. "

Thus, soon after the transition to constitutional democracy in 1994, a noticeable drop in the standards of service in all sectors of the public service became evident. This went *parri passu* with blatant examples of all forms of corruption within the public service.

The drop in standards became apparent at all levels of government, Local, Provincial and National. After 1994 the country was fed with an endless stream of media reports exposing glaring examples of nepotism, theft, and self-enrichment. Added to this was the wholesale corruption of the tender process of Municipal, Provincial and National procurement. As a result, a new social class of "tenderpreneurs" came into being.

The state-owned enterprises (SOE's) like ESKOM and SAA, were literally driven into the ground through the wholesale plundering of financial resources, and the ineptitude of the cadres deployed to run their affairs.

State entities like the Road Accident Fund (RAF) became a happy hunting ground for corrupt legal practitioners.

Yet another manifestation of the systemic corruption within the public service is contained in the Auditor General's report released in November last year which highlighted wastage and negligence in the public sector.

The report states that over the last five years government (national and provincial departments) wasted more than R4 billion in fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

Claims for negligence against government departments especially police and health are estimated at R100 billion for the 2018/19 financial year.

The claim for medical negligence is particularly concerning. The amount of money being paid out by the government to settle medical negligence claims is truly mind-boggling.

It has been reported that the National and Provincial Health departments are facing a rising mountain of claims, currently estimated to be in the region of R80.4 billion.

The validity of many such claims due to the dysfunctional healthcare system as manifested by inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of staff and specialists at health facilities, unserviceable machines and equipment, as well as simple criminal negligence on the part of health care workers is undisputed.

However, there seems to be evidence to suggest that many of these claims are fraudulent. It is being speculated that there are syndicates consisting of legal practitioners including those in the State Attorney's Offices, government officials and politicians who are raking in millions of rands from the pay-outs made by the government in settling these claims.

For example, the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDOH) spent R630m on medical malpractice claims during the 2018/19 financial year.

It is suspected that the state's lawyers, acting in cahoots with corrupt politicians, are not exerting any effort in defending the claims lodged against the department.

In order to stem the tide of apparently fraudulent claims, the ECDOH has appointed a leading international law firm to manage and investigate the R17 billion in medico-legal claims against it, over the next two years.

It has also been alleged that the Bank which is responsible for effecting the payment of such claims has detected fraudulent activity in relation to the processing of these negligence claims by certain politicians and individuals in the state attorney's office.

These revelations point towards a more deep-seated and insidious level of corruption of the ANC-controlled state.

Rooting it out will prove to be a Herculean task, akin to cleaning out the Augean stables. We say, only the complete eradication of the neoliberal-inspired policies and its replacement by policies grounded in socialist principles and solely in the interest of the workers and the rural poor, will succeed.

## **PRECARIOUS WORKERS' STRUGGLE AT HEINEKEN SA, JOHANNESBURG.**

*Femke Brandt, March 2020*

This article describes an example of workers' experiences with the restructuring of employment under capitalism, in particular the case of labour broking. For labour broker workers, employment relations and working conditions are determined by commercial contracts between companies. Besides lower wages and job insecurity, labour broker workers have limited to no access to institutions such as trade unions and bargaining councils. This article focuses on labour broker workers' responses and strategies to improve conditions at Sedibeng Brewery of the multinational beer brewer Heineken. I have been part of documenting and supporting the workers' campaign as a researcher since 2017<sup>10</sup>. This experience illustrates how efforts to claim legal worker rights are frustrated by the industrial relations framework that operates against their interest. It shows how black women workers are particularly affected by this employment model and the everyday power negotiations it produces in workplace relationships.

### **MARTHA XAKAZA**

Zooming in on Martha Xakaza's experiences as a woman worker at Sedibeng illustrates what it means to be employed through labour brokers. Martha started working at Heineken Sedibeng in 2011 as a bottle sorter. From 2012 until 2018 she moved jobs in the plant between the sorting department and the production lines where she worked as a line checker. During 8 years she was employed by 4 different companies in the same workplace. Martha's wages dropped and labour broker workers were treated differently and kept separated from the Heineken permanent workers through separate entrances and separate canteens. As labour broker worker she did not receive benefits like medical aid or site allowance.

Martha joined the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) who had separate agreements with Heineken and Imperial since 2011. However, the union did not represent the interests of the labour broker workers. Even her brief experience as a shop steward confirmed the union was not prepared to challenge the realities at Sedibeng. FAWU accepted the use of labour brokers, even after an amendment was made in the law regarding the use of temporary employment services. They have been complicit in legitimizing the discourse on the use of companies like Imperial as 'service providers'.

The amended section 198 in the Labour Relations Act (LRA) came into effect in 2015. Section 198 regulates the use of temporary employment services. It provides protection for labour broker workers, fixed-term contract workers and part-time employees. If temporary work exceeds a period of three months, a temporary worker is deemed an employee of the client company and should be treated equally to its employees who do the same or similar work. Like Martha, most labour broker workers at Sedibeng have been there for over three months and regards themselves deemed employees of Heineken.

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<sup>10</sup> Another researcher, Thomas Englert, wrote an MA thesis on this struggle titled: **Precarious workers, their power and the ways to realise it. The Struggle of Heineken Labour Broker workers. WITS University, 2017.**

Labour broker workers at Sedibeng approached the Casual Workers Advice Office (CWAO) in Germiston for help<sup>11</sup>. CWAO is a non-profit organization that assists workers free of charge. It hosts the Simunye Workers Forum (SMF), a platform where workers from different companies share their issues at work and discuss workers' rights. Workers went on the radio to expose the extreme working conditions of labour broker workers at Sedibeng. Soon after, they referred a section 198 case to the CCMA in October 2017. Martha is the main applicant representing a group of 293 workers. Heineken and FAWU promptly made a deal to only employ a fraction of the labour broker workers at Heineken directly, leaving hundreds of workers in precarious positions. In order to not be implicated in this deal, workers resigned from FAWU. With support from CWAO, workers formed the Heineken Workers Council (HWC) and Martha was elected as one of the leaders.

In 2018, Martha, together with other worker leaders, was dismissed by Imperial. Several leadership groups of the HWC have been dismissed over time. Most cases still need to be heard at the bargaining council, CCMA or labour court. The Section 198 case that has to determine if Imperial operates as a labour broker, is still undecided. Imperial and Heineken have the resources, and legal representatives, to delay these processes endlessly. For workers, it is a hassle to even find transport money to attend meetings. The institutional framework allows these extreme differences in power and resources to play out, inevitably in favour of the companies.

### ***NEGOTIATING PERSONALIZED POWER RELATIONS***

At the Sedibeng brewery, labour broker workers are concentrated in so-called low-skill jobs and they outnumber the 300 Heineken permanent workers (Englert, 2017). Labour broker workers face high job insecurity, work day and night shifts of long working hours and are expected to work overtime. They earn poverty wages varying between 1000-8000 ZAR a month. Heineken permanent workers earn more than 17000 ZAR a month. The most vulnerable workers are those with employment on a basis of "no work no pay" or one-month contracts. The enormous differences in working conditions fragment and divide the workforce. Despite this, labour broker workers have been consistent in their demands to Heineken from the moment they openly declared their concerns:

- 1) all workers must be made permanent with equalization,
- 2) stopped workers must be reinstated with back pay,
- 3) suspension of managers trading jobs for money and sexual favours.

The temporary employment arrangements of labour broker workers require they personally negotiate conditions with managers and supervisors who have a say in recruitment and rewards. These relationships shape expectations around job placements, shifts, promotions and bonuses. In the context of high unemployment and high job insecurity, workers compete with each other for favourable conditions. Workers are invested in these relationships through exchanges of promises, gifts, and loyalty.

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<sup>11</sup> [www.cwao.org.za](http://www.cwao.org.za)



## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The experiences of precarious women workers illustrate this. Male superiors demand sexual favours in exchange for jobs or promotion. There are many stories of women workers who enter in relationships with male supervisors or Heineken permanent workers who promise them money, promotion, groceries and gifts. Women who refuse to negotiate such demands risk losing their job. To avoid this, women manage such demands and expectations in different ways; including entering into sexual relationships, avoiding directly answering to such demands or lying about their relational status.

Such decisions and strategies should be understood in the abusive context where it occurs. Women are often judged and assumed to be wanting or asking for sexual relationships. Or they are portrayed as being opportunistic. The reality for women, however, is that there is a high risk of being victimized if they decide to speak out about sexual harassment<sup>12</sup>. Supervisors simply stop calling "difficult" women to come to work. Formal reporting procedures expose vulnerable individuals and are skewed in the employers' interest. Men who defend women, and challenge the power of abusive men, are victimized too. The concerted efforts of men with power to intimidate and harm workers firmly keeps the abusive system in place.

When the story "sex for shifts" was published in the press, Heineken responded officially<sup>13</sup> with a letter to CWAO promising to take the "allegations" serious. When workers wrote a letter back to ask how Heineken would ensure women's safety and protection from dismissal, there was silence.

## ***I DON'T MIND WORKING, BUT I DO MIND DYING.***

In the 1960s, 65 workers died in US car factories per day, mostly due to heart attacks as a result of relentless pressure from supervisors on workers to meet targets. More workers died per day than US soldiers in the Vietnam war (Georgakas, D & Surkin, M., 1975). The experiences of the car factory workers in Detroit are captured in Joe Lee Carters' song 'Please Mr. Foreman':

Please, Mr Foreman,  
slow down your assembly line.  
You know, I don't mind working,  
but I do mind dying".

What has changed since the 1960s is the employment model operating in factories. Labour broking creates the conditions for abusive practices and it frustrates workers' organizing efforts. Accidents and harm to workers' bodies and health persist. In order to reach targets

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<sup>12</sup> The report *Gender-based violence in the Walmart Garment Supply Chain*, published by the Global Labor Justice (GLJ) and Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA) illustrates how an operational model similar to the one at Sedibeng, provides structural conditions for power abuse and violence against women workers.

<sup>13</sup> 17 April 2019

that are promised in the commercial agreement between companies, workers are pushed to deliver them regardless of the impact on their well-being. Forklift drivers, for example, explained that when they perform mandatory checks and discover faults with the forklifts, supervisors tell them to use the vehicles anyway to keep the work going. Workers also exceed speed limits to avoid being disciplined for working too slow which increases safety risks. In Africa, there are deadly accidents in Heineken factories where work-related injuries and accidents are known to be overrepresented<sup>14</sup> (Beemen, 2016).

Workers are aware of the exploitative origins of these realities. A worker explained, "in returnables, we don't have the machines, we are the machines". Sorting bottles and piling up crates is physically demanding work. Handling used bottles is described as 'dirty' work: especially the smell of returned bottles filled with urine or cigarette butts. Workers joke about weight loss and shrinking clothing sizes when describing what bottle sorting is like. A woman worker claimed that "returnables is not good for women". She mentioned several health issues that are common in factories where women stand on their feet during long shifts. These typically are back problems, nose bleeds, headaches, abnormal menstruation patterns, and shoulder aches. Workers, however, generally do not complain about having to do these jobs, but indeed they do not want to do it at the cost of their health.

### ***CLAIMING SPACE AND BELONGING AS FORMS OF RESISTANCE***

The Heineken Workers Council has never been recognized by Heineken or the employers as a legitimate representative body of workers. For Heineken, this is consistent with their view that the labour broker workers are not their employees and therefore not their concern. For Imperial, whose representatives engage with workers every day, the denial of the HWC is a direct attack on workers' organizational rights. Workers who speak out or challenge management have been victimized and dismissed and industrial actions have been successfully suppressed with interdicts granted by the labour court. Imperial clamped down on any sign of workers claiming their rights and rules through a culture of fear and intimidation.

As a result, workers 'hide' their resistance in ritualized prayers, greetings, and pretence to be involved in other collective efforts such as funeral policies whilst they are making an effort to mobilize workers. The intensity of the everyday realities with Imperial superiors and their disciplinary practices explains why workers often frame Imperial as the source of their problems, while Heinekens' business model enables the power hierarchies in the first place. For many, the prospect of being employed by Heineken directly is worth fighting for.

The uses and negotiations of space play an important role in control and resistance at Sedibeng. When labour broker workers appeared united in their claim to be deemed employees of Heineken, the companies intensified the spatial divisions and markings of who belonged where on the site. The signage was changed to suggest Imperial and Heineken are not part of the same workplace owned and controlled by Heineken. Workers were given Imperial induction cards to replace their Heineken Sedibeng ones. Many refused to use them and some burned theirs during a mass meeting of the HWC. Imperial

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<sup>14</sup> This information appears in Heinekens' annual sustainability reports.

management and the security company contracted by Heineken disrupted worker meetings at the workplace. Workers then suggested meeting on a field just outside the main entrance of the business park.

This field is used by trucks to stop and park. Workers refer to the place as “Marikana”. This name emerged when one of the labour broker companies (LSC) brought busloads of scab workers there during a FAWU organized strike by permanent Heineken workers over wages in 2017. The arrival of scab labour resonated with TV images from the Marikana mining strikes in 2012 that resulted in a massacre in which 34 workers were killed by the police. Sedibeng workers felt they are witnessing their own Marikana at Heineken. Worker meetings were highly visible as workers strategically occupied the field; collected wood and made fires to endure the cold during meetings on winter mornings, gathered there for protest and waited there to speak to workers arriving or leaving the plant.

This visibility challenged the companies’ attempts to render labour broker workers completely invisible. An experience that upset labour broker workers a lot was that they are told to ‘hide’ when the plant is visited by officials from the Netherlands. Supervisors have told workers to stay at home on such days or literally leave their work stations and wait in the toilets. A supervisor told a worker “please cooperate for 20 minutes”. This way the workplace is presented to visitors as ‘empty’, without humans, without relationships and power battles.

The same happened during visits of a CCMA commissioner and the legal representatives of the workers (accessed through CWAO). It seems a key strategy of the employers in the section 198 case. By systematically disputing the list of applicants they deny workers any legitimacy to claim worker rights. And all CCMA commissioners have allowed companies to do this. Ironically, whilst the employment status of workers is exactly at the heart of the dispute, their employment status was effectively used by the companies to deny there is a dispute. This made workers furious after all the efforts they made to negotiate with Imperial and Heineken.

On two occasions, workers visited the Heineken Head Quarters in Sandton. These visits are part of workers’ deliberate efforts to challenge the artificial distance created between them and Heineken. The green Sandton lawns and shiny glass office doors sparked a telling remark by a 19-year-old worker who stated he would rather clean toilets in Sandton than work at Sedibeng. It reveals the extremely modest claims of law-abiding workers who aspire to get out of dusty and dirty environments. Nevertheless, when they make their presence and demands visible, they are treated by companies and the state as if they want to take over control of the company completely. Most workers visiting the Head Office were dismissed.

### ***CONTEMPORARY WORKING-CLASS STRUGGLES AND POLITICS***

What this experience illustrates that there is a persistent effort of labour broker workers to negotiate and resist power relations in the workplace, claim worker rights, and organize within the established industrial relations framework. But this framework contributes to

their oppression. Labour broker workers work with NGOs, researchers, and communities to strengthen their demands for social justice.

Their efforts to use legal industrial action to claim modest demands have been met with the greatest of violent responses: police shooting, labour court interdicts, and many dismissals. They are up against employers, unions and the state. The CCMA is not effective or even complicit in delaying dispute mediation as legal processes are working in favour of resourceful parties. At the start of 2020 Imperial has communicated to workers that Heineken has not renewed the commercial contract. In April, workers will be transferred to a new 'service provider'. Several dismissed workers have already negotiated their way back to work at Sedibeng, employed by new labour brokers.

The empirical realities of labour broker workers mean that unity in the working-class will not come from movements lead by established trade unions. At Sedibeng, FAWU divides workers and actively oppresses the most precarious sections. In response, labour broker workers formed their own council, women started a women workers' support group and workers actively build solidarity beyond the workplace. These experiences, like Martha Xakaza's, help us understand the realities shaping contemporary working class struggles and politics in South Africa.

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**Dr Femke Brandt** is a widely published researcher, lecturer and activist. Until 2016, she was a postdoctoral fellow in the NRF Chair on "Land Reform and Democracy in SA" at UCT. Between 2017 and 2019 she was a GES postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies at the University of Johannesburg. Her work is "inspired by struggles for social justice and equality in society."

## THE POLITICS OF CLIMATE-CHANGE<sup>15</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

The spread of Corona Virus Covid-19 is a potential global catastrophe, and governments the world over are treating it as such. Yet, while more than 3,000 people have succumbed to the virus thus far<sup>16</sup>, according to the World Health Organization, air pollution alone – just one aspect of our central planetary crisis – kills seven million people every year.<sup>17</sup>

So, why is global warming not treated as an emergency?

The simple answer is because ending the climate crisis will mean ending capitalism. There can be no sustainable solution to the climate crisis without the ultimate defeat of the capitalist system.

Capitalism is about profit-making – whether this is achieved via income growth or cost-saving. Usually, it is achieved by maximizing both within the framework of the capitalist corporation's investment strategy – and the market.

The use of fossil fuels to drive the motor of capitalist enterprise has been embedded in the system since the dawn of industrialisation. This is supported by research which shows that preference for coal- over hydro-power in the mid-nineteenth-century (even though the latter was cheaper AND more energy-efficient) was because it made controlling the workforce much easier.<sup>18</sup>

Fundamentally, capitalism treats nature (and with it, fossil fuels) as a commodity, as something that is limitless, as something to be bought and sold on the (free) market – something that is subject to the dictates of supply and demand, when in fact, nature IS limited, and therefore cannot be treated as a commodity.

Proponents of capitalism argue that there is no challenge that the system cannot overcome. But Victor Wallis is far less sanguine:

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<sup>15</sup> This article is based on the paper "Capitalism or Barbarism" presented to the New Unity Movement's conference in December 2019.

<sup>16</sup> From an article by Owen Jones entitled, *Why don't we treat the climate crisis with the same urgency as coronavirus?* in The Guardian on 5 March 2020  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/05/governments-coronavirus-urgent-climate-crisis>  
[Accessed 6 March 2020]

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> See web post by Rasmus Landström entitled "Andreas Malm: 'Without a mass movement we don't stand a chance against fossil capital'" dated 5 February 2018 at the [climateandcapital.com](http://climateandcapital.com) website. [Accessed 22 October 2019].

The unending proliferation of innovations – a hallmark of late capitalism<sup>19</sup> – lends credence, in public perception, to the idea that there is no challenge that technology cannot overcome. The unstated premise behind such claims is that the selection of any technology will continue to reflect corporate interests, which in turn reflect the goals implicit in market competition, i.e., profit-maximization, growth, and accumulation. While green technologies – e.g., renewable energy sources – may attract a degree of corporate attention (thanks mainly to social/political pressure), nothing short of a change in the basic locus of economic decision-making will stop certain corporations from continuing to pursue established [non-green] lines of production. Insofar as they must nonetheless try to present themselves in green clothing, they will not hesitate to misrepresent the questions at stake and to invoke technological “solutions” that have little chance of being successfully implemented.<sup>20</sup>

## **“SOLUTIONS” UNDER CAPITALISM**

Solutions, generally, would fall under two headings – *mitigation* and *adaptation*. Mitigation would involve reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while adaptation would mean finding ways of living or coping on a warmer planet.

### **MITIGATION IN A CAPITALIST WORLD**

Mitigation can mean using new technologies and renewable energies, making older equipment more energy efficient, or changing management practices or consumer behaviour. It can be as complex as a plan for a new city or as simple as improvements to a cookstove design. Efforts underway around the world range from high-tech subway systems to bicycling paths and walkways.

The following are some of the major mitigation options being explored

- Carbon capture and storage (CCS): This is the process of capturing waste carbon dioxide (usually from large point sources such as a cement factory), transporting it to a storage site, and depositing it where it will not enter the atmosphere.<sup>21</sup>
- Emissions trading: This is a market-based approach to controlling pollution by providing economic incentives for achieving reductions in the emissions of pollutants. A central authority (usually a governmental body) allocates or sells a limited number of permits to discharge specific quantities of a specific pollutant per time period. Polluters are

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<sup>19</sup> Ernest Mandel, *Late Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1975), 192.

<sup>20</sup> Victor Wallis: Article entitled: Beyond “Green Capitalism”, in *Monthly Review*, vol. 61, no. 9 (February 2009), [pages 32-48.]

<sup>21</sup> Wikipedia, article entitled, “Carbon capture and storage.” dated 15 October 2019. [Accessed 20 October 2019]

required to hold permits in amount equal to their emissions. Polluters that want to increase their emissions must buy permits from others willing to sell them.<sup>22</sup>

Cap and trade (CAT) programs are a type of flexible environmental regulation that allows organizations and markets to decide how best to meet policy targets.

At COP21 (Conference of the Parties' 21<sup>st</sup> meeting) in Paris in 2015 195 countries committed to drastically reducing their carbon emissions levels. The accepted target adopted was to keep the overall global temperature increase to 1.5 or 2 degrees C relative to pre-industrial levels.

Right now, we are at 1.1°C, and rising rapidly. According to an authoritative report<sup>23</sup>

- The average global temperature for 2015-2019 is on track to be the warmest of any equivalent period on record. It is currently estimated to be 1.1°C above pre-industrial (1850-1900) times and 0.2°C warmer than 2011-2015;
- Observations show that the global mean sea level rise is accelerating and that there is an overall increase of 26% in ocean acidity since the beginning of the industrial era;
- Global emissions are not estimated to peak by 2030, let alone by the end of 2020;
- Implementing current unconditional Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) would lead to a global mean temperature rise between 2.9°C and 3.4°C by 2100 relative to pre-industrial levels and continuing thereafter;
- The current level of NDC ambition needs to be roughly tripled for emission reduction to be in line with the 2°C goal and increased fivefold for the 1.5°C goal. Technically it is still possible to bridge the gap.

Not surprisingly, Oxfam<sup>24</sup> found that

The poorest half of the global population are responsible for only around 10% of global emissions yet live overwhelmingly in the countries which are most vulnerable to climate change – while the richest 10% of people in the world are responsible for around 50% of global emissions.

According to the World Resources Institute:<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Wikipedia article entitled “Emissions trading,” dated 23 September 2019. [Accessed 20 October 2019]

<sup>23</sup> The “United Science Report,” – a “High-level synthesis report of latest climate science information convened by the Science Advisory Group of the UN Climate Action Summit 2019. See website [file:///C:/Users/thomasch/Documents/Personal/Climate/davis\\_who\\_will\\_build\\_the\\_ark\\_.pdf](file:///C:/Users/thomasch/Documents/Personal/Climate/davis_who_will_build_the_ark_.pdf) [Accessed 20 October 2019]

<sup>24</sup> Oxfam Media Briefing, 2 December 2015, available at the following website:

[https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/mb-extreme-carbon-inequality-021215-en.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/mb-extreme-carbon-inequality-021215-en.pdf).

- The top three greenhouse gas emitters – China, the European Union and the United States – contribute more than half of the total global emissions, while the bottom 100 countries only account for 3.5 percent.
- Collectively, the top 10 emitters account for nearly three-quarters of global emissions.

“The world can’t successfully tackle the climate change challenge without significant action from these countries,” the Institute remarks.

Yet, in 2017 Donald-the-Chump Trump announced his intention to pull America – one of the top three culprits – out of the Paris Agreement.

### **ADAPTATION IN A CAPITALIST WORLD**

Any serious attempt at adaptation would presuppose

. . . trillions of dollars of investment in the urban and rural infrastructures of poor and medium-income countries, as well as the assisted migration of tens of millions of people from Africa and Asia ...<sup>26</sup>

The track record of the capitalist rulers-of-the-Universe leads us to believe that their first priority would be to defend the existing social relations and to defend their privileges, even if it means abandoning the planet. Thus, adaptation for the rich-and-famous would include:

- The creation of green and gated oases of permanent affluence on an otherwise stricken planet.<sup>27</sup>
- Increased use of air conditioning. However, it should be remembered that air conditioning does not *reduce* heating, it simply *moves* it elsewhere. Moreover, air conditioning is power-hungry; it feeds off electricity, which is generated from the burning of fossil fuels!<sup>28</sup>
- Geo-engineering solutions, such as “solar radiation management” (SRM) to artificially increase Earth’s ability to reflect sunlight back into space. These would include schemes to pump sulfate aerosols into the atmosphere to reflect sunlight back into space and putting iron in the oceans to increase carbon absorption by marine organisms. Another

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<sup>25</sup> World Resources Institute website, <https://www.wri.org/blog/2017/04/interactive-chart-explains-worlds-top-10-emitters-and-how-theyve-changed>. [Accessed 20 October 2019]

<sup>26</sup> Davis, “Who will build the Ark?” *New Left Review*, Jan-Feb 2010

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>28</sup> Mann and Wainwright, *op cit*



geo-engineering “solution” would include putting vast arrays of mirrors in the sky or on the ground to reflect back sunlight.<sup>29</sup>

But, as Oxfam reminds us (see section above entitled “Mitigation in a capitalist world”), climate change has largely been caused by the affluent. We should, therefore, expand the range of solutions beyond merely technical options, and *politicize* the issue. This way the question of *compensation* will come into play. As Mann and Wainwright put it

Developed countries, which are responsible for the bulk of the historical emissions of greenhouse gases, have sought to restrict adaptation discussions because it then inevitably leads to the question of historic responsibility and who should pay for adaptation.<sup>30</sup>

### **SUFFERING AS A CONSEQUENCE**

Acute shortages of food and water are poised to become some of the most tangible effects of global warming. In the run-up to the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions, rising food prices partly caused by extreme weather intensified the latent tensions and the Middle East — so far the revolutionary cauldron of the century — can expect more to come. No region is as prone to water scarcity, and none as vulnerable to ‘tele-connected food supply shocks,’ or harvest failures in distant breadbaskets driving up prices of the imports on which the population depends.<sup>31</sup>

### **WHAT IS TO BE DONE?**

For someone like Andreas Malm, nothing short of the revolutionary disruption of the capitalist order is necessary.<sup>32</sup> He quotes Lenin (from “Revolution at the Gates”):

‘The ways of combating catastrophe and famine are available, the measures required to combat them are quite clear, simple, perfectly feasible, and fully within reach of the people’s forces.’

Malm goes on to list ten “quite clear, simple and perfectly feasible” measures:

1. Enforce a complete moratorium on all new facilities for extracting coal, oil or natural gas.
2. Close down all power-plants running on such fuels.
3. Draw 100 percent of electricity from non-fossil sources, primarily wind and solar.

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<sup>29</sup> These “solutions” are discussed by Naomi Klein in her book “This Changes Everything” (2015). Penguin Books

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Malm, op cit

<sup>32</sup> Malm, op cit

4. Terminate the expansion of air, sea and road travel; convert road and sea travel to electricity and wind; ration remaining air travel to ensure a fair distribution until it can be completely replaced with other means of transport.
5. Expand mass transit systems on all scales, from subways to intercontinental high-speed trains.
6. Limit the shipping and flying of food and systematically promote local supplies.
7. End the burning of tropical forests and initiate massive programmes for reforestation.
8. Refurbish old buildings with insulation and require all new ones to generate their own zero-carbon power.
9. Dismantle the meat industry and move human protein requirements towards vegetable sources.
10. Pour public investment into the development and diffusion of the most efficient and sustainable renewable energy technologies, as well as technologies for carbon dioxide removal.

Such an approach, says, Malm would “be a start — nothing more — yet it would probably amount to a revolution, not only in the forces of production but also in the social relations in which they are so deeply enmeshed.”<sup>33</sup>

## **IN CONCLUSION**

The struggle for a green planet is inseparable from the struggle for a just world. But we know and accept that, as Mike Davis points out, several additional Earths would be required to allow all of humanity to live in a suburban house with two cars and a lawn.<sup>34</sup> In conceptualizing a post-capitalist world in which the relations of production are non-exploitative, the well-being of all must be assured, but NOT at the expense of the environment.

The emphasis must be made to shift from private consumption as the driver of development to what Davis calls “public affluence.”

[This] is represented by great urban parks, free museums, libraries, and infinite possibilities for human interaction,

And which represents an alternative route to a rich standard of life-based on Earth-friendly sociality. . . university campuses are often little quasi-socialist paradises

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Davis, op cit.

around rich public spaces for learning, research, performance and human reproduction.<sup>35</sup>

The Unity Movement's Ten Point Programme provides an overarching framework within which our approach to a new ecological vision is encapsulated:

Point 7.6: A planned economy must have a balanced approach to the preservation of the environment and to the utilization of all land and its resources: water, rivers, dams, lakes, fishing resources, game farming, tourism, etc., in all their ecological aspects so as to enhance the whole South African environment as a habitat for its people and its fauna and flora. Thus, energy generation through the use of fossil fuels and nuclear power must be phased out and replaced by renewable power sources.<sup>36</sup>

The struggle for climate justice is inseparable from the struggle for social justice. It is a global struggle. The Earth belongs to no-one. As Marx put it

Even an entire society, a nation, or all co-existing societies taken together are not owners of the Earth. They are merely its possessors, its beneficiaries, and . . . are to bequeath it, improved, to succeeding generations.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> The Ten-Point Programme of the New Unity Movement, December 2012.

<sup>37</sup> Karl Marx, Capital, Volume III

## FIRST NATION – A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE OR OPPORTUNISM?

### INTRODUCTION

Underpinning the National Party's divide-and-rule strategy in the 1950s was the notion of separate nation-states, each with its own claim to land sovereignty. Initially, there were to be separate homelands for North-Sotho, South Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana, Swazi, Xhosa, Venda and Zulu, with Ciskei and Kwandebele following.

In the National Party's scheme of things, while we had some ten separate nations, we had four separate racial groups—Black, Coloured, Indian and White.

The anti-apartheid struggles which culminated in Codesa in the early nineteen-nineties were a rejection of this kind of thinking.

Today, more than a quarter-century after Codesa, it would seem that we have transcended the idea of separate nations/nation-states, but are still bedevilled by the four-nations/races theory.

With "Land expropriation without compensation" (LEWC) it would appear that we are also in the process of resurrecting Verwoerd's dream of separate nations, albeit within the borders of a single South African state.

In many quarters, LEWC is being touted as the solution to the country's widespread material deprivation—that the *equitable* redistribution of land will be the beginning of the end of national poverty. However, for many, *equitable* here means the restoration of historical ownership patterns—patterns which existed prior to 1913.

But the reality is that—since the dawn of the imperialist conquest of the sub-continent—we have been in the grip of *capitalist class domination*. In short, our woes stem directly from our incorporation as an enclave-economy into the global capitalist system.

LEWC is set to unfold within the capitalist class structure. It is not part of the struggle for a future free of capitalist class domination.

### LAND REFORM AND TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP

As far back as 1971, Archie Mafeje asserted that colonialism had transformed the material basis of society such that a return to traditional ways was no longer valid—that it was a mark of false consciousness to yearn for a restoration of tribalism.<sup>38</sup>

This same notion is present in a WASP article:<sup>39</sup>

[T]he development of capitalism has banished pre-colonial African society in the form it existed at the time of dispossession. *It can never return*. [Our emphasis] In

<sup>38</sup> Mafeje, A. (1971) *The Ideology of 'Tribalism*. The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol 9, No 2, pages 253 – 61. Cambridge University Press

<sup>39</sup> Article by Shaun Arendse, Workers and Socialist Party: "*Marxism and the land*," on 14 September 2017. Available at the website <https://workerssocialistparty.co.za/marxism-and-the-land/> [Accessed 8 March 2020]

its place we have capitalism – a society divided into classes with different and conflicting interests. Today the African majority is the working-class. The land question must be resolved in accordance with their class interests. That can only mean the dispossession of the capitalist class of ownership of the entire economy. The restoration of 'nationhood' is therefore also posed in working class terms. It can only mean a struggle, under the leadership of the working class, for the creation of a socialist society which would genuinely place society under democratic 'majority rule'.

Under ANC rule, a socialist future is not envisaged. The ANC is committed to shoring up neo-liberalism and will be using the institution of chieftainship as an instrument in its land reform policies. Instead of uniting the nation on the basis of a non-discriminatory socialist democracy, the ANC will be seeking to consolidate the rule of capital. The ANC is thus projecting a vision of a multi-national "rainbow" nation, divided into co-existing ethnic groupings.

Within this scheme, chiefs will be positioned as the agents of control of rural land.

### **EMERGENCE OF FIRST NATION CLAIMS**

In line with the paradigm of distinct, independent nations, a movement for the recognition of "Khoisan/First Nation Rights" has gained traction in recent years. At a conference of the A/Xarra Restorative Justice Forum held at UCT in January, several claims were made by speakers from the platform, including the following:

- The current coloured community (especially in the Western Cape) is largely Khoisan in origin.
- Leading on from this: Therefore, the coloured community are the rightful owners of the land (in the Western Cape).
- So, if it's KZN for the Zulu, E Cape for the Xhosa, then Western (and maybe Northern) Cape for the coloured/Khoisan.
- The social evils to be found among coloured people (read Khoisan) including alcohol-abuse and violence are symptoms of a people:
  - Starved of land—where land ownership should be regarded as tangible recognition of a people's sovereignty;
  - Denied recognition and status as a people;
  - Robbed of their history.
- These disabilities result in lack of pride, dispiritedness and bitterness.
- It is contended that land ownership (presumably both personal and communal) are absolute prerequisites for pride and identity. Thus, to restore the pride and identity of the coloured people, it is critical to recognise and honour their right to nationhood.
- Khoisan history has been suppressed, ignored and even belittled. Redress in this regard is part of the healing process.
- Restorative justice must include recognition of rights relating to sacred ancestral lands.

While it would be easy to dismiss much of what is explicitly and implicitly contained in the above summary, that in itself will not stifle the growth of yet another social collectivity positioning itself to bid for a share of power in South Africa.

As Allan Zinn puts it:

While conceding the reality of *social collectivities*, the challenge facing us is to transcend the limitations which group identities impose on us in our shared struggle for a liberation free of capitalist class domination.<sup>40</sup>

## **IN CONCLUSION**

Today's South Africa is the product of the Codesa negotiations.

The political settlement in South Africa in 1994 did nothing to change the pronounced levels of poverty and inequality wrought by the apartheid system of racialist capitalism of the previous decades. 1994 was not about eliminating poverty and inequality, it was about moving away from totalitarian rule towards neoliberalism.<sup>41</sup>

Codesa ensured that formal political power would transfer to the hands of a black elite, while ownership of the economy would remain separate and untouched.

Historically, this economy was built on a foundation of racial discrimination.<sup>42</sup> Instead of leading the struggle for a South Africa free of want and oppression, the ANC is using its hold on power to perpetuate the systemic causes of want and oppression. That is, it is championing the cause of capitalism. Its strategy of parceling out the land along racial/ethnic lines and of elevating the chiefly-layer to positions of authority over these parcels of land is part of the process.

Thus, for the principled left, the watchword remains *Aluta Continua*.

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<sup>40</sup> From keynote address presented at the sixth Neville Alexander Memorial Lecture at Unisa's Cape Town Campus on 5 October 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> See Hillel Tickten's "*The Politics of Race*" (1991).

## **THE FALSIFICATION OF HISTORY.**

*Our attention has been drawn to a book edited by Dr Otto Terblanche of the Nelson Mandela University (NMU), then University of Port Elizabeth (UPE), which details the history of Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape. The book, "Uitenhage 200 The Garden Town" was written to coincide with the celebrations of the two-hundredth anniversary of Uitenhage in 2004.*

*This comes at a time when a book in the Rethinking Africa Series is being reviewed.*

*The book under review is: "Whose History Counts: Decolonising African Precolonial Historiography, edited by June Bam, Lungisile Ntsebeza and Allan Zinn. Published in 2018.*

*The following is an example of how the history of certain sections of the people in this country has been hidden or ignored by certain academics at universities in this country.*

**The article was in the form of a letter sent to the Herald, Dr Terblanche and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.**

**No reply or acknowledgement of the letter was received.**

## **FALSIFICATION OF HISTORY**

A few weeks ago, the history of Uitenhage was published in a book that was edited by Dr Otto Terblanche of the University of Port Elizabeth. The idea here is not to question the integrity or intent of Dr Terblanche or the main contributors, on the contrary.

A criticism that should, however, be levelled is that the history of non-racial sport does not get a mention in such an important work. The Uitenhage Sports Board established in 1963 played an important role in the development of non-racial sport. Lilywhite Cricket Club was amongst the oldest cricket clubs in the country. Swallows, Gardens, Hamiltons and Excelsior Rugby Clubs all have a long and proud history. At one stage, there were 32 soccer clubs in Kwa Nobuhle alone and sixteen in Rosedale. Dolphins Swimming Club established in 1946, is probably one of the oldest swimming clubs in South Africa. The seminal contribution by the teachers played an important role provincially and nationally in the development of sport at primary and high school level. Whilst we understand that space could be a problem, is this omission by design?

Dr Terblanche mentioned at the launch of the book, held simultaneously with a gala dinner to celebrate the bicentennial of Uitenhage that documenting the true history was important for future generations. It is, in fact, this idea that moved us to put another perspective on what has been postulated by some of those that contributed to the book. We assume some of the interviewees having always been opportunists of the first order saw this as a means to justify their political treachery of the oppressed masses, others to a lesser extent and of lesser importance, merely for glorification so that their memory would be immortalised.

To our knowledge, as people who were embroiled in those tumultuous times, Janet Cherry depicted a fairly accurate record of the "Struggle Against Apartheid". Moreover, one could easily identify with whatever is mentioned in her overview of the political struggle at the time. However, it is important to note that prior to the establishment of Uitenhage, during the Wars of Dispossession, the Xhosas and Khoi fought valiantly side-by-side in the area later to be known as Uitenhage. Also, at a later stage, (according to definitive work by Dr Ambrose George) Van der Kemp in an attempt to "teach the heathens" to read the Bible, established the first school in the country at Bethelsdorp and a few years later the second, at their outstation, Uitenhage (The forerunner to the Rose Lane Primary School). These were the first non-racial schools in the country as they catered for "slaves", the children of the Xhosas and the Khoi, as well as the children of the colonists. This situation obtained until Lord Charles Somerset decreed that slaves and the children of the colonists could no longer school together and separate schools for "whites" would be established. The isiXhosas and the Khoi had thus laid the foundation for the unity of the oppressed that was to become so evident, especially during the struggle years in the EC and I daresay in many other parts of the country despite the diabolical attempts of the ruling class to "divide and rule" the oppressed masses.

Let us examine on what basis co-operation was achieved: on a basis devoid of any racial classification. That the only scientific classification accepted was that we were all part of the family of humankind. In addition, if this scientific fact were to be disregarded then the way would be open to classification into different races, which would bring forth the assertion that one race, would be superior (or inferior) to others. This would bring about the "master race" theories of Verwoerd and his ilk. The racist policies of the apartheid regime were based on the myth of a "master race". As an antidote to the poison of racism, the national liberatory movement promoted the principle of non-racialism – based on a scientific fact that there was only one race, the human race. Now Allan Hendrickse just could not understand this and was therefore never part of the liberation movement.

On one occasion on national TV, he opportunistically claimed that he should not be classified (referred to) as coloured. Now some years down the line he proudly claims the Baobab Award for struggle days in the "coloured" community and quotes (at length I may add) his speeches in the coloured parliament. He was and always will be known as a collaborator of the apartheid regime. A Quisling of the worst order. He will always remain a coloured. Hendrickse and Marthinus Van Schalkwyk are two sides of the same coin – both by-products of the ANC's *Reconciliation Policies* (some may label them "*Expediency Policies*").



Bicks Ndoni, Griffiths Sitoto, Visumzi Nikani, Smuts Ngoyama (presidential spokesperson) - the UDF structures and ANC members, AZAPO, the Unity Movement members, PAC members, members of various organisations that sprang up at the time, members and affiliates of the now defunct Uitenhage Sports Board, all ex-SACOS members are aware that the struggle against the Black Local Authorities was inclusive of the struggle against the Coloured Management Committee and the Coloured Persons Representative Council of which Hendrickse was the big Nduna - we all campaigned on a non-racial basis against all these institutions. We were not selective in our approach. *To ignore this is to ignore history.*

Now if the ANC has accepted Hendrickse (I may not agree with this strategy) – that would be their prerogative, but to allow Hendrickse to crow over his collaboration with the Apartheid Regime is sacrilegious in terms of the struggle for which so many people sacrificed their lives. He did not betray the struggle, he was never part of that struggle and he should not be allowed to get away with this despicable subterfuge.

### **THE AFFRAY IN THE CHURCH PRECIPITATED BY HENDRICKSE**

Hendrickse had been elected to the tricameral parliament. The Congregational Union led particularly on this issue by former Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA) member, the late Rev. Fred Hufkie from Graaff Reinet, had won the unanimous support of the national body in passing a motion to have Hendrickse expelled as minister of the church if he did not resign from the tricameral parliament. Hendrickse dug his heels in and tried to elicit the support of his congregants. He failed. The youth at the time, led by Cecil Arnolds and Chris Ressouw and others worked tirelessly in an effort to boot him out of the church. Dr Otto Terblanche quotes liberally from Hendrickse's sayings, "*Die Here is goed ....* " And that is certainly praiseworthy. However, what about the quote that was left on the walls when he had to vacate the manse? "God forgives – I don't"

*By the way, and just as an aside, Another piece of church history that needs to be corrected is that The Rev. Charles V Milborough was not the secretary of the Rose Lane Church from 1950 – 1976. All of Rose Lane knows this and Uitenhage knows this. He wasn't even a deacon of the church in 1950.*

*Is it an omission or has the eras of the Reverends CW Maclean, Joey Jasson and Navan Adonis been deliberately left out of the history of Rose Lane and Dale Street churches?*

Despite what Hendrickse states in the history of "coloured" politics in "*Uitenhage 200 The Garden Town*" we would like to give another account of what transpired:

## ***LEST WE FORGET***

Savage laws and penalties were used by the ruling class to counter open opposition to the dummy elections. Inspectors of Education attempted to charge 8 teachers (Two each at John Walton, Jubilee Park, Uitenhage High and Booyesen's Park in PE) with "dereliction of duty" for participating in the anti-election campaign. Despite this, many canvassed against these contemptible institutions. A small group of about eight activists in Uitenhage started the anti-election campaign. At the end of the campaign, more than a hundred activists included students, teachers, parents, not even counting the FOSATU members who not only swelled our numbers but gave financial support as well. Without these dummy bodies, the apartheid regime would have floundered and would have had difficulty in surviving as long as they did. For the ruling class to be seen to be credible in the eyes of the world they needed some people to be seen to be "anti-apartheid" – and Hendrickse led many into this political abyss. The figures quoted by Hendrickse as justification and general acceptance does not (and we do not want to deal with specifics) include the number of people in the townships who did not bother to register at all despite the threats and blackmail that accompanied applications for housing etc. The elections were farcical! However, even that is unimportant - the fact of the matter is that the dummy councils and the tricameral parliament were *boycotted out of existence* – again, to perceive this, as anything else, *is to deny history*. In addition, as for his famous swim – one remembers the swim as well as the dressing down he received from his boss, the finger-wagging Groot Krokodil. He who pays the piper .....

He and his ilk lived off the profits of their collaboration. Some became rich because of business ventures they engaged in. Liquor stores, licensed restaurants, and the like became the order of the day for the collaborating class. Nevertheless, they also became the pariahs of this world.

## **THE SITUATION IN UITENHAGE**

Being in the CPRC was not enough for Hendrickse. His base in Uitenhage was slowly being eroded. He had to do something about it. At first, they had this contradictory stance of being in the CPRC but boycotting local Management Committees. They quickly and expediently changed their stance when they realised that this was not working in their interest. When small men are given a little power (even if not real) they tend to abuse such power. This happened in the case of the Labour Party yes-men.

The late Harry Hendricks (A member of the TLSA and the Unity Movement) principal of Uitenhage High School at its inception in 1964 had left an indelible mark on the educational, sporting and political arena in Uitenhage. The Sports Board (Harry Hendricks became its second president in 1974) was becoming too powerful in their eyes, so they

tried to start an alternate Sports Board (as alluded to by Janet Cherry). Their attempts failed miserably. They denied the sports people the use of the facilities – *these were used without their permission*. They went to court *and lost*. They locked us out of the facilities. An urgent court order brought by Ronnie Pillay (now Judge Pillay) instructed by Silas Nkununa (former SARFU chairperson) on behalf of the Board *reversed that decision*. They (Hendrickse) transferred three teachers to parts of this country only known to us by dots on the map. The people in Uitenhage, across the artificially created racial divide, from Rosedale to Kwa Nobuhle, from the UDF, FOSATU, SACOS and civil society, all took up the cudgels and beat the Labour Party into submission. The late Dulla Omar (former minister of Justice and later Transport) and Joe Ebrahim (now a judge at Bisho) took up the legal case (of the teachers) whilst organisation went on at grassroots level. We were told that the case would be made easier if we had grassroots support. (We remember Dulla Omar saying – “Why did we not go this route with the teacher transfers in Cape Town in the ‘60s?”) Frank van der Horst, the first teacher to be transferred in the ‘60s, and SACOS president at the time virtually destroyed Hendrickse in his backyard. RO Dudley (Unity Movement president) visited Uitenhage in 1985 to add weight to the political skirmish that was playing itself out. This was against the backdrop of the anti-election campaign waged in Uitenhage in 1984 on a door-to-door basis. The bullyboys from Hendrickse’s Coloured Affairs Education Department threatened students and teachers, and finally closed down schools. This just served to firm the resolve of parents and students who demanded that schools be reopened. The FOSATU offices were a hotbed of organisation – John Gomomo, Daniel Dube, Fred Sauls, Les Kettleidas, Jurie Harris, Aunt Non, and Ashraf Karodia and a host of others were all working at different levels. Meetings were held in Rosedale, Kwa Nobuhle (at schools and in private homes), in PE and New Brighton. Two principals (Labour Party yes-men) at 2 high schools (Uitenhage High and John Walton) were put on “permanent sick leave”. We would have closed down Uitenhage if Hendrickse had not capitulated. At 17:00 on 7 March 1985, we had to go to the Jubilee Hall to stop a decision by shop stewards of all factories in Uitenhage to go on strike. Fred Sauls delayed the meeting decision until the agreement by Hendrickse had been hammered out with Joe Ebrahim. Joe Ebrahim normally could and in this instance drove a particularly hard bargain.

In any political struggle, things do not run in a straight line and events at times occur concurrently. One event impacts on the other. Whilst we were concentrating on this issue, it paled into insignificance as during this period; on 21 March of 1985, the tragic Langa shootings occurred. (Excellent documented in the book by Janet Cherry) This then took precedence as schools from Uitenhage to Port Elizabeth cancelled/postponed Athletic meetings in sympathy with those that had fallen. This was also a definitive political act (the cancellations) and had the effect of precipitating tensions. Structures were in place and collaborators were on the run. ‘Necklacing’ and the ‘Kinikini affair’ had put Uitenhage on

the front pages of the world's newspapers. The organisation of the UDF structures in Kwa Nobuhle was at a peak. UDF structures were emerging in the Rosedale/Gamble area. As in 1976, the oppressed realised (for the second time in their history) that the apartheid enemy and its lackeys could be beaten – and in their time.

And Hendrickse? What is this nonsense of having this or that percentage in the dummy elections and being elected unopposed (more unwanted and unloved) when they were in hiding (when they were not chaperoned by the Special Branch) from the oppressed in their little funk holes! Hendrickse had disappeared into oblivion only to be resurrected and given a new lease of life by the bicentennial celebrations of Uitenhage and the Baobab Award.

**THE UGLY FACE OF THE NAT-SACP-ANC “ALLIANCE”**

**WHERE THE REAL STRUGGLE LIES**

Since the publication of the earlier Bulletin in March 1990 many things have happened in this country. It is being said optimistically that South Africa “will never be the same again” and that the changes that have been taking place cannot be reversed! On 2 February 1990, the State President unbanned several organisations and persons within the broad freedom movement. Then Nationalist Government ministers met representatives of the ANC, the South African Communist Party and the United Democratic Front. This meeting gave rise, after secret discussions, to the “Groote Schuur Minute.” This document set out in so many words the first stages of bargaining between the Congress Movement and the local ruling class representatives. Behind all the carefully chosen wording of the “Minute” lie some simple truths. The oppressed masses of this country have not been told these truths by those who met at Groote Schuur on May 2-4. The ruling class press, television and radio and the many newspapers spread around in the locations of the oppressed have done everything possible to hide the real truth.

The Groote Schuur Minute was hailed worldwide as a “historic” document. But for the oppressed, it was, in essence, the first stage of a sell-out that is wrapped in the sweet-sounding words “negotiated settlement.” What, then, did the Groote Schuur Minute say in truth? That the African National Congress, the Communist Party and the United Democratic Front would help the de Klerk government to establish “peace and stability” in the country. That the ANC and the SACP would bring back from outside the country certain members of Umkhonto we Sizwe to do the job. The idea, according to the “Minute,” was to make it possible for the rest of the negotiations to go ahead. In return, the rulers agreed to release certain political prisoners and to allow some 40 exiles to return to SA to do the “Groote Schuur” job. Arrangements were also made to set up a special committee to decide which prisoners were to be released and when. This committee was supposed to report by July 10. Its report was delayed and was due to be considered after the first week in August. On May 20, de Klerk gave permission for 40 exiles to return and to remain until August 19 to complete the Groote Schuur job. They were put on 3-months’ probation.

In plain, simple language, the Groote Schuur bargainers agreed to subdue the anger and oppression of the oppressed and exploited—just as firemen hose down the flames of burning premises. What for? To make it possible for the de Klerk government to get a new grip on the country. He gave the ex-Robben Island political prisoners and forty exiles those three months in which to prove that they can keep their end of the bargain.

Shortly before the Groote Schuur meeting, the Government and the “mass democratic movement” together staged a dramatic coming-out for Mr Nelson Mandela at the Victor Verster prison in Paarl, Cape. Great expectations were aroused among the oppressed that, suddenly, there was a chance of

“freedom” — a release from years and years of savage oppression, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, chaos in the schools and terror in the townships.

Hours after his release from jail Mr Mandela told the oppressed, South Africa and the world that his latest jailer, Mr de Klerk, was a “man of integrity.” After the Groote Schuur meeting he told the world that he was determined to honour every syllable of the “Minute.” This promise he repeated on August 1 in Johannesburg.

In the next few weeks, it was revealed that for more than three years secret talks had been going on between certain Robben Island-Pollsmoor-Victor Verster prisoners and Ministers in the governments of PW Botha and FW de Klerk. To this day, no details of what went on behind prison bars in the name of liberation had been discussed with the oppressed.

### **Caught In Their Own Intrigues**

Even before the Groote Schuur meeting, de Klerk made it clear that there could be no question of having a united, non-racial South Africa with a common franchise for all; that the capitalist order of society was to stay (that is, “a market economy”) and that Group Rights would have to be recognized. On the other side of the negotiators, it is said that “everything is negotiable” (including the full franchise!), that “whites” can have their own schools if they want to; and that the huge investments of foreign exploiters will be quite safe.

It has become only too clear that the negotiators have been caught up in a spider web of their own pitiful intrigues. They have tried to pretend that Mr de Klerk agreed to negotiate because the Congress Movement scored a “victory” by armed struggle and sanctions. Nothing could be further from the truth. The leadership in the freedom struggle must be honest: they must tell the raw truth of what has happened and not bluff the oppressed. The liberation movement has been hammered by the ruling class. Naked violence was used against organisations, workers, students and the leadership. Thousands lost their lives. Divisions were sown among the oppressed. Mistakes were made among the oppressed themselves which weakened the trade union movement and the student ranks. Years of bitter struggle exhausted the oppressed.

### **ENEMIES WITHIN OUR RANKS**

But an equally important defeat was suffered by the oppressed at the hands of liberals and the so-called intelligentsia. Under the umbrella of the “united democratic front” the liberals built up herds of wooden horses among the organisations of the oppressed. They were freely helped by certain church leaders and by hundreds of political and social workers from every imperialist country. Their job was to influence the thinking and actions of the oppressed to suit the rulers. One of the first assaults was launched more than 20 years ago on non-collaboration as a political policy. For non-collaboration as pioneered by the Unity Movement since 1943 had all but destroyed the network of collaborators in the racist dummy councils. Those new layers of highly-paid collaborators in the tricameral dummy councils, “homelands” and in the local councils had proved useless to the rulers. The university liberals and their foreign helpers then launched an even more savage assault upon the policy of non-collaboration and the

demand for nothing less than full democratic rights in a united non-racial South Africa. The formation of a "united democratic front" was the concrete form of the new liberal war against fundamental revolutionary change. It had to create a class of collaborators.

It is not strange that this new force used progressive slogans and demands to lure the oppressed to its ranks. That is the style of liberalism. The Congress Movement muscled in on this movement. That, too, was its style. And it now finds itself a prisoner in the political company it chose to join. What is truly abominable is the fact that certain trade union leaders drew the trade unions into this tragic conspiracy. The unions were tied to "negotiations" by the "Conference for a Democratic Future" held in December 1989. It is no accident, therefore, that the ANC, the UDF which has been retained as a separate home for a rag-tag bag of white and black liberals, a section of COSATU as well as the Communist Party find themselves sharing conferences with capitalist bosses, imperialist agents from the United States, Britain, Germany and France, and with local agents of imperialist interests. In this area, the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (IDASA), the van Zyl-Slabberts and Boraines, with Messrs Crocker and Cohen of the American Foreign Department now direct the course that the so-called Mass Democratic Movement follows from day-to-day. Huge meetings in Dakar and Paris saw the final plans being made.

## **ROLE OF SACP**

All this is not uncomfortable for the Communist Party either. The collapse of governments in Europe has seen the Soviet Union and China's support for the armed struggle and the funds they supplied largely fall away. The Eastern European countries likewise have withdrawn their support; their communist parties have been ousted in most cases by reactionary parties in the name of "democracy." Moscow and Beijing told the exiled movement to negotiate. Bush, Thatcher, Mitterand and Kohl did the same. The SA Communist Party passed itself off as the "vanguard party" of the South African workers. But in its two-stage policy, it sought to establish first an exploiting capitalist democracy in South Africa! That is why it found no problem in negotiating a process of forming an alliance with de Klerk and Co. They hobnobbed with the exploiting bankers and big business here and overseas. They pressured new groups of collaborators to work with the dyed-in-the-wool discriminators and oppressors. Even the sportspersons have been double-crossed. For the NSC (now called the National Olympic Sports Congress) is no more than a heavily-financed machine to draw cash-strapped sportspersons into making their peace with the Cravens, Bachers, Bhamjees, the banks and the rich companies which sponsor "multi-national" sport.

After this, argues the SACP, it will have a chance to move forward to "socialism." This is the same argument used after 1948 to "get the Nats out" and for working dummy "Native" and "Coloured" and "Indian" representation right up to 1982. In fact, de Klerk, IDASA and the Democratic Party see every chance of getting the ANC-SACP-COSATU-UDF front to accept fresh forms of dummy representation. The front has never accepted the policy of non-collaboration; it is still wedded to the folly of "fighting from within."

## **IMPERIALIST AND RULING CLASS MANOEUVRES**

The matter does not end there. The tour by high-profile ANC groups headed by Nelson Mandela himself has been doing the rounds of all the major imperialist nations. These are the countries which are destroying the newly-independent countries like Angola and Mozambique. They used Savimbi's and Renamo's murderers and bandits to do so. They smashed Panama and Nicaragua. They laid Vietnam waste. They are bullying Zambia and Zimbabwe into following economic policies which the International Monetary Fund lays down. The imperialists welcomed the ANC. They showered 300 million rands on it to carry out the "Groote Schuur Minute" to the last syllable.

And within South Africa, just before the next meeting of the ANC and de Klerk, the ruling class is roughhousing the ANC and SACP with arrests and detentions and claims of armed conspiracy. Despite all this, the ANC-SACP-COSATU leadership is determined to go ahead with "talks." What times! What political morals!

It is with this saddening array of factors that "negotiations" are held out as the "only" option for the oppressed. It is certainly not that for the ruling class! Even as the rulers "negotiate," they use civil war in Natal, the police and the army, hit-squads and a cunning "three-months' probation" stunt for its opponents-turned-partners-to-be to prove that they can control the masses. And Mr de Klerk becomes daily more acceptable to world imperialism without all the high-powered and decorative public receptions that imperialism provided for ANC officials.

The ANC-SACP-UDF-COSATU front has only one real option it can follow in terms of political integrity: to discontinue this path of collaboration for which the "nice" word is "negotiation." There is no basis whatsoever, no justification, for pretending that the ruling class can be persuaded to hand over political power to a majority government. Even less to hand over the restructuring of the economy, the schools, residential amenities, etc, etc, in a non-racial mould.

Imperialism is still imperialism. Capitalism is still capitalism. Their political, military, racist and exploiting record is a story of the cruel, pitiless degradation of more than three-quarters of the world's population.

## **THE STRUGGLE MUST CONTINUE**

Our struggle must continue: not by begging for concessions, not by mutual back-slapping by master and slave, or oppressor and victim. The struggle must continue by building our principled political unity, building organizational unity and strength upon the worthwhile ideas contained in the political programmes like the 10-point programme and the workers' charter that is struggling to be born. In simple terms, we must weaken the ruling class and its supporters, and strengthen the democratic movement of the workers, peasants and rural poor. We must revise constantly the ideas by which to guide our actions. We must learn from our mistakes and our successes. We must learn from the mistakes and successes of workers and peasants in other parts of the world. We must know why imperialism coupled with the tragedy of Stalinism and the military schemes of generals in Washington and London, could bring the infant socialist societies of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to disaster.



There is no substitute for the independence of the National movement in its organisation, finances and ideas. Non-collaboration is the most necessary weapon for us. The setback we now face springs from the corrupting influence of liberal agents who have swamped the "mass democratic movement." Now the oppressed are being told that guerilla war, student protests, ungovernability and ten thousand lives lost were used to "force" the minority government to the "negotiating table!" What an unpardonable crime! People have been led to believe that imperialism's use of sanctions was meant to advance the struggles of workers and landless peasants still groaning under the weight of oppression and exploitation here!

The lessons of two hundred years of struggle by workers against colonialism-imperialism and its capitalist exploiters can be ignored only to speed up the defeat of the freedom struggle on the green lawns and marbled halls of Groote Schuur.

### **PRESS STATEMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF TALKS BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE SA COMMUNIST PARTY HELD IN PRETORIA ON MONDAY 6 AUGUST 1990**

The outcome of the lengthy talks between the Government and the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party shows once again the simple truth that negotiations bring the oppressed people of this country no nearer to liberation.

The principle points of "agreement" (or no bargains struck) confirm this.

On the side of the State will remain certain sections of the Internal Security Act which follow on the unbanning of certain organisations. This is no more than a process of tidying up the law, removing such sections as the "listing of communists" as some clauses are no longer needed and cannot be sustained in the law courts to support any charge. That this should have been the issue of any "agreement" relating to the freedom of the oppressed is no more than a shoddy piece of political chicanery.

The other side has agreed to suspend the armed struggle. Without in any way reflecting on the preparedness of freedom fighters to resort to arms to liberate the country from oppression and exploitation, we would say that the decision simply sets out formally as a bargaining chip in talks a position which had been forced upon the ANC's external forces by the logistics of warfare, since the nearest base had to be removed to Rwanda. On the other hand, the suspension of armed struggle means that the United States, the leaders of world imperialism, will now give the ANC some R26 million to carry on the "negotiations," while Sweden and Australia contribute some R47 million.

The stage is set for sanctions to be removed, not in the interests of democratic progress but because foreign investments will now be regarded as safe and profitable. We reiterate the \*statements made by ourselves in regard to violence in Natal and elsewhere. The oppressed are entitled to PEACE, including freedom from State violence. But the State and the negotiators have failed to address consistently the PRIMARY causes of unrest and the SECONDARY causes which rest on an alliance between the State and Warlords and Racketeers against the suffering masses and their leaderships.

The New Unity Movement supports neither the “spirit” of the talks which we regard as a tragic pantomime and a hoax nor the acts of bargaining with the rulers for concessions. The further reference to a “new constitution” under prevailing conditions is no more than an extension of the make-believe that permeates the “talks.”

## **OUR FREEDOM IS NOT NEGOTIABLE!**

**\* 8 June 1990: Statement on the Partial Lifting of the STATE OF EMERGENCY. Republished in the August Bulletin of 1990.**