



New Unity Movement

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We Fight Ideas with Ideas

ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEMS IS REVOLUTIONARY

In several municipalities, particularly in the North West, the administration has completely collapsed. Civil unrest, burning of tyres, looting of shops, xenophobic attacks on what they call “foreign nationals” and protests marches are daily occurrences. Then we experience the tragicomedy in Ditsobotla where we have two Mayors, two Speakers, municipal premises barricaded to shut out rivals and bank accounts being frozen as warring factions strive for dominance.

Finance Minister, Tito Mboweni stated in his recent budget speech that little or no service delivery has taken place in several municipalities; Sixty-three municipalities are in dire financial difficulties, 40 have severe service delivery crises and 102 have adopted budgets that they cannot finance. There are 278 municipalities in South Africa. In the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, protests are currently all over the city – are these only service delivery protests?

Protests generally revolve around the resolution of the land question, the demand for adequate planned housing, the demand for adequate water and sanitation, poor service delivery and of course, government corruption.

Come local elections in October, despite the protests, the ANC will again be triumphant. This will continue until we are catapulted into an insurrection.

What is the real meaning of freedom that was ushered in post-1994? Is SA a democracy with the “best

constitution in the world”? If so, why is SA classified as the protest capital of the world?

Phyllis Ntantala-Jordan (mother of ANC stalwart, Pallo Jordan) had the following to say: “*The Agreement cobbled by the South African regime and the ANC at Kempton Park is one of the biggest frauds that was ever sold to a people . . . It was agreed to give the reins of power to the ANC on condition that . . . the Economic Structure was left intact. This meant that besides the conglomerates that own the wealth of South Africa, the 11% of South Africans would still control 80% of the economy.*” (From NTANTALA, PHYLLIS: (2003) *Mistakes and Miscalculations: The Agreement*, unpublished article)

If the above is true, then surely SA cannot have a constitution that is democratic and upholds human values and ethics. All South African-loving citizens are searching for solutions to the problems that beset SA, before, and post 1994, yet none

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has been realised.

Ruling class politicians are often heard to speak about the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) that occurred in SA. Either they are trying to mislead the citizens of this country or they are guilty of the adage popularised by Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Minister of Propaganda that if you repeat a lie often enough, it becomes the truth. ***A revolution is defined as the overthrow of one class by another.*** Has a revolution occurred in SA?

lution occurred in SA?

The ANC has never sought to overthrow the bourgeois government. They have sought to become part of that class, they intended to and succeeded in joining the ruling class. It is in this sense that they cannot be called revolutionary. This of course does not imply that there were no revolutionary elements in the ANC, but the class that has dominated the ANC has always been the petit bourgeoisie.

The aims of the ANC and the liberals were conjoined. Both wanted to establish a bourgeois democracy. On an ideological level, this will always bring the working class and the poor into conflict with the ruling class. The current regime has been characterised by service delivery protests, violent crime, and cadre deployment with the resultant ineptness and rampant corruption spawned on an

unprecedented scale.

Further, the economy is in a mess with 2.2 million jobs shed during the pandemic. The unemployment rate according to Stats SA has increased to 32.6%, with the expanded unemployment rate reaching



Cde. Mda Mda with Phyllis Jordan (Ntantala) addressing the AC Jordan conference at Fort Hare on 2006/06/28

43.2%. According to the latest Quarterly Labour Force figure released on 2021/06/01, 201 000 citizens have stopped looking for work. Youth unemployment is at 63% with the expanded rate at 74.7%.

This is a crisis of

gargantuan proportions.

In addition, the tax regime is skewed, with the constituents of South African tax receipts being Personal tax (38.3%), VAT (25.2%), Company tax (16.6%). In addition, VAT was increased to 15%. The corporate tax rate in South Africa is a flat rate of 28% for all companies (27% from 1 April 2022). (In the apartheid years, circa 1990, the corporate tax rate was approximately 40%)

The Land and Agrarian Question (*Land expropriation without compensation – LEWC*) has not been attended to with any degree of seriousness. There is a dire need for adequate and decent housing. In addition to this, the provision of water and sanitation, as well as electricity should be a priority. Can the present regime provide free health care for its citizens, a free education system able to produce a

well-educated literate nation?

Throughout its history, the ANC had debated the question of non-racialism. The structures of the parliamentary political parties continue to reflect the racial and ethnic divisions that are in line with the divide-and-rule strategy of the previous apartheid regime. Dennis Brutus and Barney Desai were refused membership of the ANC and were referred to the Coloured People's Congress. Nothing much has changed. The ANC still thinks in terms of the "four races" paradigm, in terms of which we are a nation of "Whites", "Blacks", "Coloureds" and "Indians".

Neville Alexander averred that it was the termination of the social revolution that 1994 ushered in that again brought about the racial outlook of the ANC. However, the Freedom Charter (Clause No. 2) in its provision for equality of "national groups" denotes a state of multi-racialism, not of nonracialism. The concept of a multi-racial democracy is a contradiction in terms. This is not accidental. The situation was accentuated by the further slide of the ANC in the period 1991 – 1993 to the adoption of the neoliberal prescriptions of the World Bank for the South African economy.

In 1993 the ANC adopted the views of the National Party government as well as that of big business that later, became ANC policy. South Africa now still has tribalism, systemic, grinding poverty, escalating unemployment, collapsed education and health systems, deteriorating and decaying cities and towns, xenophobia, and general social and economic crises.

The 98-year old Cde Mda Mda at the launch of his book "*Struggle and Hope – Reflections on the Transkeien People*", at Walter Sisulu University shocked students in his response to a question about 'voting and power' by saying; "*I have never voted before, and I don't think I ever will*".

In the concluding paragraph, he writes,

... It is evident that the ANC has outlived its usefulness and is now an encumbrance. It is aiding and abetting wrongdoers and criminals. Although it is in power and in control of the arms of the law, it is now the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the media that expose and ferret out lawbreakers. The ANC does not seem to know its duty anymore.

What is our historic task? We have to launch a campaign at enlightening the masses to the fact



Cde Mda in full flight on the Land Question - Conference, Dec. 2012

that whilst it is the ANC government that is responsible for implementing the dehumanising exploitative system that has condemned millions of people to degradation, poverty, illiteracy, ill-health and joblessness, it is the parliamentary system that operates within parameters dictated by capitalism-imperialism which is ultimately the cause of the problems. The situation can only be changed when we eliminate the profit-driven system and replace it with an economy that ensures that all human needs are catered for based on equity and justice.



New Unity Movement



Commemorating June 16th, 1976

Young people, we need to regain our future!!!

Forty-five years ago, thousands of schoolchildren in Soweto marched peacefully in protest against the forced use of Afrikaans as a compulsory medium of instruction in schools. The march was violently attacked by the apartheid police using teargas and live ammunition. This unleashed mass anger and a nationwide rebellion against the apartheid regime that ultimately resulted in its downfall.

Following almost two decades of sustained mass action, apartheid finally crumbled and gave way to the new parliamentary dispensation which was inaugurated in 1994. high levels of crime and corruption, poor healthcare and a range of other social; injustices. Racial discrimination has never disappeared, and in fact, is stronger than ever before.

Was 1976 the start of a revolution? Some would say “yes” and point to the fact that apartheid-based legislation has largely been expunged from our statute books. Others, like the late Dr. Neville Alexander would disagree on the basis that (to quote his words): “*If anything the post-apartheid state is more capitalist than its apartheid parent.*” There has been no change in the economic relations which govern society (except perhaps that the rich have grown richer, and the poor, poorer) or in the way that the state is managed. In short, if June 1976 triggered a revolution, then that revolution was interrupted or way-laid by an element whose purpose was not fundamental social; change, but simply regime-change. For most South Africans, the county was “liberated “ from an apartheid nightmare to a neo-liberal hell-on-earth. Today, we are one of the most unequal societies in the world. Our reality is characterised by mass poverty and unemployment, lack of decent housing and service delivery,

Remembering June 16, 1976

*Student Uprising in Soweto
They are coming back:
through woodsmoke weaving from fires
and swirls of dust from erratic breezes
you will see
ghosts are returning
ghosts of young men, young women,
young boys, young girls,
students:
and if you look closely
you will see
many of them have torn flesh
have wounds bright with fresh blood:
and there is blood in the sands of Soweto
the ghosts are coming back
past barking police dogs
through shifting veils of smoke
those who oppose oppression are coming
back
demanding dignity
challenging injustice
they return to join a new generation
they chant:
resume the fight, resume the fight,
resume the fight*

Dennis Brutus (Oct 2002)

And we have a form of democracy that ensures that power remains in the hands of the agents of capitalism.

June 16th is celebrated as Youth Day, but what have the youth got to celebrate? It is estimated that half the children who start out at school never make it to matric. Despite the heroic struggles against the indoctrination of the youth, education standards have remain debased. The permanent political crisis that dominates the country is reflected in the permanent crisis in the schools of the oppressed. A staggering 74% of the country's youth are jobless - even graduates cannot find jobs! Youth unemployment is one of South Africa's intractable challenges, made worse by the covid-19 pandemic. Throughout the country, there is a lack of cultural and recreational amenities and opportunities, leading to further impoverishment of the lives of our youth,

What is to be done?

Is the answer to vote for this or that political party? Should we petition government to spend more on poverty-relief programmes? What about taking to the streets in our masses? Or should we engage in a campaign of targeted boycotts?

There is no single, simple answer. The challenge facing young people who are seriously concerned about rescuing their future is to immediately and urgently engage with the issues that are dominating their lives and that are condemning the youth to a future of bleakness, poverty and want.

It has been observed that *“Practice without theory is blind. Theory without practice is sterile. Theory becomes a material force as soon as it is absorbed by the masses.”* Perhaps herein lies a guideline to youth activists. Let’s not blindly race into action without a proper understanding of the conditions which face us. Similarly, let’s not lose ourselves in theorising about our problems without acting to change society. Theory and practice, then, are two sides of the same coin.

Questions which should be engaging our youth today include:

- How do we contribute to the building of a united anti-capitalist movement?
- If 1994 signalled the end of racial discrimination why is society still so obsessed with “race”? If capitalism is the true enemy, should our discourse not shift to one of **class** relations in society? Should we not be pondering on how to build working class consciousness and power?

- What is “true” democracy? Is it not “government of the people, by the people, for the people?” If so, then it is as clear as daylight that we are not living in a democracy. How do we change this round?
- The anti-capitalist struggle is a global one. Does this not imply that we need to unite in struggle across national boundaries?

On a day-to-day basis there are many practical things that young people could do.

For one, young people need to read, and read avidly – the classics such as *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Fontamara*, *Animal Farm*, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists...* The list is endless. In the apartheid era young people read as a way of resisting the system, as a defence against the enslavement of their minds. It should be no different now. What is needed above all is independent critical thinking.

The New Unity Movement urges the youth generally to continue to play their historic role as part of the cutting edge of revolutions. Young people should also take and create opportunities to organise – at our schools, in our communities - SRCs, PTSAs, Civics, Cultural Societies, Debating Groups, Sports Clubs, and other structures. We need to instil a culture of democracy, one that respects and enlists the wishes of all. It is ultimately on the basis of mass, nationwide peoples-democracy that we will succeed in taking back the bright future promised by the sacrifices of our forebears in 1976.

“NO REAL EDUCATION IS POSSIBLE IN AN ABNORMAL SOCIETY”

A PEOPLE DESIRING TO EMANCIPATE ITSELF MUST UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF ITS ENSLAVEMENT

June 16th, 2021 and the Education Struggle continues!



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