



New Unity Movement

The Worker is an official publication of the New Unity Movement (NUM)

November 2021

WORKER

No. 85

The Worker

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We Fight Ideas with Ideas

A Brief Glimpse of Paulo Freire's View on Education



Paulo Freire with Dhiro Gihwala, a member of the New Unity Movement, in Minnesota, 1991.

19th September 2021 marked the centenary of the birth of one of the most important educational thinkers of the 20th century. Born in Brazil in 1921, Paulo Freire is renowned for his work on critical pedagogy and adult literacy. The greatest and most enduring aspect of Freire's work is his emphasis on the political nature of all educational activity. Freire saw that education is used as a tool by the elite to elude oppressed people from their rights in order to maintain the status quo. In this regard, Freire asks the teachers to play their role for the emancipation of the oppressed where teachers and students must be made aware of the 'politics' that surround education. His book 'The Pedagogy of the Oppressed' published in 1968 is one of the most widely read books on education. Whether the manipulative ways of a capitalist structure, the cruelty of racism or the tyranny of various others forms of discrimination, they all have one thing in common: they are oppressive. One of the strongest points in 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' is that by attempting to unveil and strike at the root cause of oppression - the consciousness of the oppressors and the oppressed - it offers a model that can be used to fight oppression.

Preamble

In any capitalist society the system of education dictates the needs of that society and reflects the interest of the ruling class. It is designed, structured, supported and elaborated upon to reproduce the society, to preserve the class structure and class relationships. Education can therefore be seen as a function of the socio-economic and political system and reflects that society. The struggle for a change in education is part of the struggle for change in society and this can only flow from fundamental change in the political and economic foundations and relations of that society.

In South Africa the State provides the machinery for the dominant political and economic power to shape public policy - to provide the kind of labour the employers require, to determine the knowledge required by society and conversely to root out any knowledge that might undermine the *status quo*, to prescribe the kinds of attitudes, behaviour and discipline regarded as desirable. Above all, to determine those objectives for the different sectors of society. Education in South Africa has always been characterised by the provision of separate systems for different sectors of society whether dictated by the apartheid laws of the past or covertly, as it is currently

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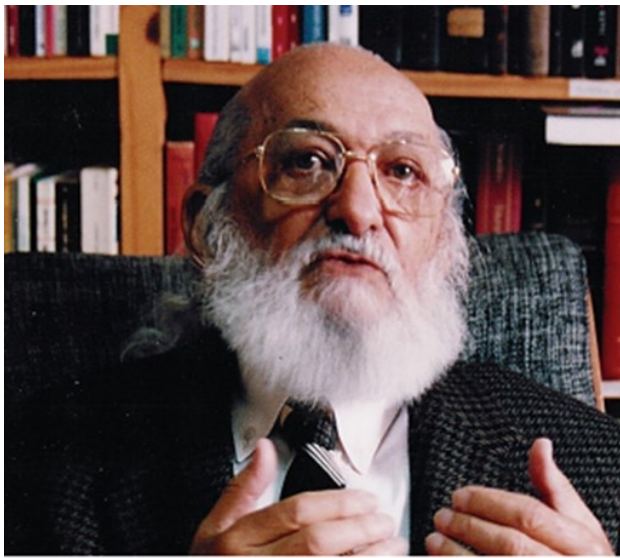
manifested, a continuation of a class-based educational system. So, irrespective of a change of government in 1994, the basis of our educational system has always been "racial" and class-based continuing inequality in our society, with a small minority group forming the dominant citizen group and the vast majority of our population treated as inferior in the socio-economic and political spheres of life.

In its role in the liberation struggle in South Africa, progressive organisations always held that the oppressed masses would have to fight battles on all important fronts. The education of the oppressed is such a front. Therefore, in addition to the very important task of carrying out the political education in struggle, the struggle in the schools, colleges and universities has always been a vital issue from the start in the Unity Movement. The Movement strove, and continues to do so, to get teachers, parents (mainly workers) and their children to conduct the struggle for a non-racial, unsegregated and democratic school system as part of the struggle for political and economic emancipation which is still to be achieved in South Africa and indeed in a world that is striving to be free from oppression and exploitation.

In this brief article, some key concepts on education of Paulo Freire are presented. His extensive writings provide a rich tapestry of interlinking ideas that addresses a diversity of issues. He was one of the first internationally recognized educational thinkers who fully appreciated the relationship between education, politics, imperialism, and liberation. His ideas are universal and must be used by those of us who continue the fight for freedom for all the people in the world.

On Critical Pedagogy

Paulo Freire identifies two forces in action in education. One enslaves and the other liberates. He argues that through traditional education, students were being '*dehumanized*', and in order to reassert their own humanity, a different educational model was needed. In his critique of traditional pedagogy, he talks about the '*banking concept of education*'. He points out that too often, students are asked to memorize and repeat ideas, phrases and formulas without understanding the meaning behind them. This process '*turns [students] into 'containers' to be 'filled'*' by the teacher. As a result, students are treated as objects, as receptacles to receive, file, and store deposits. Put simply, they become containers for what the teacher has deposits in their 'banks'. *The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world*' In our present society, the perception derived by banking methodologies is that the more completely a teacher fills the receptacles, the better a teacher is and the more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be

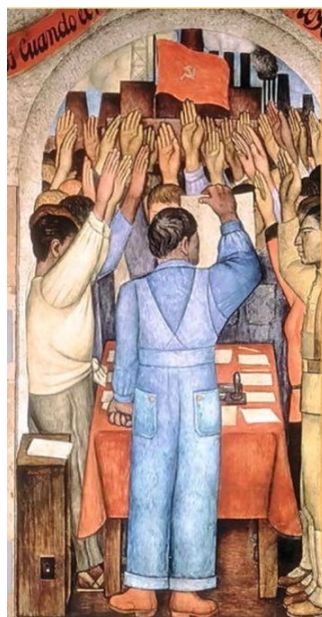


filled, the better students they are. Banking education, which emphasizes the teacher's role as the active one and student's role as passive makes the teacher-student relationship worthless and anti-democratic. Freire argued that the education in the hands of the oppressor is used as a tool to domesticate the oppressed through banking education. It serves the oppressor by denying the learner an active role in the learning. It does not engage students in critical thinking - which is compulsory in a democratic society - instead, it requires the students to be passive and to adapt thereby serving the purposes of oppression.

In sharp contrast to the alienating system that the banking concept is, Paulo Freire proposes an emancipatory system which attempts to regain humanity and respect students' experiences. Emancipatory pedagogy supports a radical change in the power relationships in the classroom and suggests that teachers and students need to learn from each other. This he states to be a more authentic education system and he developed the idea of '*problem-posing education*' (*liberatory education*). Problem-posing education begins with the idea that students need to recognise their oppression. He says '*The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom*'. This is why education for critical consciousness or *conscientization* is needed. Freire's method of conscientization centres around students and the teacher involved in dialogue and learning with and from each other. The reciprocity of roles means that students teach teachers as teachers teach students. The oppressed thereby use their own experiences to explain and surmount their oppression. The teacher and the students identify their own problems and concerns and seek answers to them in the group dialogue. This dialogue encourages everyone to teach and everyone to learn together. This permits teachers and students working together to understand the problems identified by the poor and to propose actions to be taken to rectify. These student-teacher engagements have four basic elements: 1) problem posing, 2) critical dialogue, 3) solution posing, and 4) plan of action. Freire wanted learners to be able to '*read the word*' - to end illiteracy, and also to '*read the world*' - the ability to analyse social and political situations that influenced and especially limited people's life chances. The political nature of education does not mean that the more practical, instrumental side of education should be neglected. Indeed, it is possible to combine '*the reading of the word with the reading of the world*' and '*the reading of the text and the reading of the context*' - a methodology that many of our own progressive teachers used in the past.

Conscientization rests on value assumptions of equality of all people, their right to knowledge and their right to criticise their situation and act upon it. Individuals must not accept that social reality cannot be questioned and changed. Freire had faith that students were able to form their own views, to challenge, to speak, to disturb and to interrogate the ideas of their teachers. He knew that students would be able to find their own

perspective on an issue even when a teacher expressed a political position of his or her own.



"Education
does not
change the
world.
Education
changes
people. People
change the
world."
- Paulo Freire

On Progressive Teachers

Progressive teachers help students to reach conscientization. Conscientization means breaking through prevailing banking methodologies to reach new levels of awareness, in particular, awareness of oppression. Problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor. *'In problem-posing education, teachers and students develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world in which they find themselves'*. In this regard, we are reminded that long before Freire proposed his methods of conscientization, many progressive teachers in the schools of the poor in South Africa intuitively used this methodology to educate their students. The official subject content was veneered with a *'hidden curriculum'* and in the process of teaching, students were able to engage dialogically with the teacher on matters that affected their lives.

Progressive teachers should increasingly prepare themselves to be heard by students. By listening to students and learning to talk with them, progressive teachers teach the students to listen to them as well. Education should raise the awareness of the students so that they become subjects, rather than objects, of the teaching learning process. This is done by teaching students to think democratically. This is done by teaching students to continually question and make meaning from (critically viewing) everything they learn.

While acknowledging that teachers need to exercise some authority in any teaching situation, Freire believes that progressive teachers have a role different from students and should exercise their authority without being authoritarian, in a democratic and respectful manner. Democracy, however, does not mean a *laissez faire* model in which students are left alone in their learning. Teachers are expected to recognize the knowledge and experience of their students and to be guided by an ethic of love and humility. Teachers are also expected to have control over their subject matter, not their students. They should not only help students to critically apprehend knowledge but also awaken their curiosity and act as role

models and support. They should not hide their stance on issues but should respect students who think differently, *'disclosing but not imposing'*.

Progressive teachers should recognize the dominant values that are present in society, in themselves, and in their students. They should not only be critical but also competent, because professional incompetence destroys the legitimate authority of the teacher. Teaching is a profession that should be treated with dignity, and teachers deserve respect from society and support from the government.

Freire believed that it was possible to democratize the formal education system by creating inclusive structures of participation, deliberation, and decision making that involved teachers, parents, students, administrators, staff and community members. A democratic education system requires schools to be not only more democratic but also more effective and enjoyable. Educators who are seeking a more just, democratic world should reject determinism (the idea that the only possible role of education is to reproduce the dominant ideology and has no significant role in social change). Moreover, they should have an ethical commitment to side with the oppressed and to encourage liberatory education efforts.

On the Dialogical Process

For Freire, like Marx, questioning and understanding the world was not enough; education should lead to action as well. Education therefore is a *'praxis'*. It must be a combination of action with *'serious reflection'*. This reflection or *'reflective participation'* takes place in dialogue with others who are in the same position. Freire was critical of action alone, which he calls *'activism'*. Whereas the banking method directly or indirectly reinforces a fatalistic perception of the situation, the problem-posing method presents the situation as a problem and affirms men and women as being in the process of becoming, who can transform themselves and their world. Only critical understanding of situations can lead to critical action.

Freire regarded education to be a democratic and a dialogical process because the act of knowing their world is a mark of all free human beings. Like Marx, Freire saw society as characterized by a struggle between those with power and those who are powerless, the oppressor and the oppressed.

On Taking a Position

Educational processes domesticate people where there exists a dominant culture of silence. In many instances, people accept what is handed down to them by the ruling elite without questioning. Hence, their understanding of their social reality is limited to what they are taught and told to accept and believe. Freire points out that: *'In a culture of silence the masses are 'mute', that is, they are prohibited from creatively taking part in the transformation of their society and therefore prohibited from being. Even if they can occasionally read and write, they are nevertheless alienated from the power responsible for their silence'*.

Domesticating education denies people the power to think for themselves and become architects of their own destinies. It does not provide them with a critical perception of their own social reality which would enable them to know what needs changing and actually take action to change. On the other hand, education that liberates, shatters the silence and makes

people become aware of their condition and their democratic rights to participate in changing the social system to be just, equitable and free from exploitation and oppression.

He also believed that teachers should never remain politically neutral. For him, education was never and would never be without politics. He believed it was important for teachers to name their political position on issues that concerned them and stake a claim for a just education system. This is expressed by Freire in his book, *Pedagogy of Freedom*, where he writes on education as a form of intervention in the world. *‘Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral’*.

On Illiteracy

Because of the many decades of debased education, a staggering 29% of South African children remain illiterate with 58% not learning to read fluently and with low levels of comprehension in any language by the end of Grade four. It is expected that this situation will be exacerbated because of a large drop-out rate of students from the school system over the past 2 years due to increased poverty, the impact of the pandemic and a worsening education system. This education deficiency is carried through into adulthood and illiterate or semi-literate adults tend to be apathetic and accept their reality. They are inclined to believe that they cannot do anything to change it. This is reflected, for example, in their behaviour during political elections, not questioning the opportunism of politicians that they vote for or whether their vote will address issues of their fundamental human rights.

These conditions or circumstances provide a context today in which Freire's conscientization literacy could be applied in order to raise the critical awareness of the majority of adult population of the country so that they can understand why they are poor and how they can act in order to change the situation for themselves. There is therefore no doubt that the literacy method founded on the notions of conscientization is relevant to present day South Africa.



On Education as the Practice of Freedom

For Freire, liberation from exploitation and oppression requires us all to be active subjects in the making of history; in other words, it requires us all to be critically conscious of our relationship with the world, with knowledge and with the forces of oppression. It is only through this critical awareness that the necessary conditions for revolution can be formed. In the final analysis, Freire argued that educational processes are never neutral. They can either be an instrument of domination or liberation.

Freire's love of humanity was regularly shown in his rage about the impact of neoliberalism and its costs to those who were most disadvantaged, *‘my abhorrence of neoliberalism helps to explain my legitimate anger when I speak of the injustices to which the rag pickers among humanity are condemned’*. On this note, Freire encouraged teachers to stand strongly in an ‘armed love’ of resistance against the impact of neoliberalism on teaching and teachers’ practices, on the demands from bureaucracies and schools that prevent creative and imaginative work with students. He encouraged teachers to stand in solidarity with their colleagues to resist, any changes to progressive pedagogy. *‘It is indeed necessary, however, that this love be an armed love of those convinced of the right and duty to fight, to denounce, and to announce. It is this form of love that is indispensable to the progressive educator and that we must all learn’*.

On Power

Influenced by Marx, Freire believed that the prevalent ideas of a society are always the ideas of those groups who hold power. He says that sometimes teachers operate on the belief that they teach in a vacuum and that they can close the classroom door on outside influences. Instead, he argues that teachers must recognise the political role of education and how education reproduces the dominant interests and ideologies. *‘As educators we are also politicians. When we confront this, we are forced to confront the subject of power’*.

Freire argues that those in power expect education to reproduce the dominant interests and ideologies, but there is another task which education can accomplish. This is the task of human liberation. For Freire, education must be centred upon developing critically conscious, ‘humanized’ learners who act to liberate themselves, and the world, from injustice.

Summary

The greatest and most enduring aspect of Paulo Freire's work is his emphasis on the political nature of all educational activity. In his view, there is no such thing as a ‘neutral’ education. Education can domesticate individuals, contributing to their acceptance of or passivity in relation to the *status quo*. Alternatively, education can liberate, providing the disposition to engage in a dialectical relationship with knowledge and society. This is part and parcel of a critical reading of the world. Freire's work on critical education is more important than ever. The validity and relevance of his ideas on education founded on conscientization assume a strong belief and faith in the need for equality and social justice. This implies acceptance of liberatory education as a viable means for achieving freedom and change. And that liberatory education frees people from the bondage of the culture of silence. Freire's education is concerned with the development of a just society. And just societies are far from being achieved in a world today where we have economically and socially ordered patterns of dominance and subordination that are constituted and reproduced through the existing educational practices of the capitalists. South Africa tended to perpetuate these unequal arrangements of power through educational practices. Hence, a critical dialogic education which is liberating and challenges and disrupts these entrenched structures of domination and leads to social change is relevant to South Africa today.

LET US LIVE FOR OUR CHILDREN

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WILL CHANGE NOTHING

With the much-hyped local government elections done-and-dusted, perhaps the stand-out statistic is that a mere 30 percent of South Africa’s almost 40 million eligible voters cast their ballots. That means a massive 70 percent of South Africans have boycotted these elections.

The people have spoken. Resoundingly.

In the days following the announcement of the results, all the opportunistic parties were scurrying about to form coalitions to settle who would govern the 66 “hung” municipalities (where no party scored an outright majority). For these parties, going forward, it will be business-as-usual. For them, governing is not so much about the welfare and needs of the people as about who gets to hold power – and of course, the privileges and opportunities that go with it.

Interestingly, there has been much talk in the media in favour of reforming the proportional representation system to one that is constituency-based, which is where voters in a constituency get to vote, not for a party, but for a specific candidate of their choice. While such a change might certainly be an improvement, tinkering with change at the level of piecemeal reforms will have little if any long-term effect.

There is no reliable stat on how many South Africans could be categorised as “working class.” However, according to the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity group approximately 30.4 million people in South Africa live below the old upper-bound poverty line of R1 268. This is some 55 percent of the country’s total population. If one considers that 3 500 adults own more than the poorest 32 million people in this country of 60 million people, then clearly the overwhelming majority of South Africans have an interest in revolutionary transformation of the socialist kind.

It is not merely that for years we have had the highest level of income inequality in the world. We also have woeful service delivery; rampant, runaway corruption at all levels of government and the public service; out-of-control levels of crime; and high and rising levels of unemployment. Eskom is failing; SAA has had to be rescued. Food insecurity is rising. Water shortag-

es are rising. Homelessness is rising. The country is not failing, it is disintegrating.

Whatever one might read into the causes and consequences of the wave of unrest in KZN and Gauteng during July this year, one thing is certain: if the working class of this country could unite and organise itself for sustained resistance, then victory



Job seekers at street corners - a daily occurrence all over SA

would be certain. George Orwell’s classic parable comes to mind:

I saw a little boy, perhaps ten years old, driving a huge cart-horse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the proletariat.

We need to become aware of our strength, our power. It is in unity that it will be realised. We need to build class consciousness. Nobody has put the task facing the working class better than Marx himself when he emphasised that the “emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves.” We cannot look to the petty bourgeois members of parliament and the municipal councils to overthrow the system for us – they have a vested interest in

maintaining it. The leader of the ANC and president of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa's personal fortune is estimate to be in the billions. How can we expect him to lead the revolution? Is it any surprise that his strategy for reducing unemployment is to try to turn this country into a capitalist investment haven? Are we surprised that the ANC's way of reducing inequality is Black Economic Empowerment – in other words, cushy jobs and deals for their own well-connected buddies?

In the hands of the ANC the Freedom Charter is meaningless.

Do the EFF or the DA or the IFP or any other mainstream political party offer any better hope? Well, seventy percent of the population think not. All these parties are equally committed to the status quo – which is the market economy that has served their personal interests so handsomely. Not only do seats in parliament and the municipal councils provide comfortable income and career opportunities with virtually no accountability, but there is also the host of procurement and other money-making deals which suddenly open up.

Moleketi, who also happens to be sister of correctional services commissioner and former spy boss, Arthur Fraser.)

We appear to be witnessing a similar strategy at play in respect of Eskom. When Eskom boss Andre de Ruyter described Eskom as a dead horse, he was stating what many have taken to be obvious. The key question is: How did it come to this? In an insightful article published in the Cape Times on 11 November, former statistician-general Pali Lehohla states that there are four well-orchestrated strategies that undermine South Africa's development effort:

The first is Eskom's manufactured terminal disease; the second is the spirited support for the onset of Independent Power Producers; the third is US President Joe Biden's praise for South Africa as exemplary in leading the so-called just transition, which his own country is considering with great care; and the fourth is the miserly pittance, call it "a noose" of R130 billion to South Africa, a Trojan Horse of sorts, to which South Africa is lured to ground-zero its industrialisation, energy and rail efforts.

We, the working class of this country, right now are powerless to stop these kinds of shenanigans, which have been going on for decades. The need for us to organise ourselves as a decisive force to be able to intervene in and take control of our own and our country's destiny has never been more urgent. The challenge for the working class if we are to be-

come the agents of our own emancipation is to fundamentally change our thinking. We need to increasingly see ourselves – organised in united, democratic people's organisations across the length and breadth of the country – as our own liberators. Let's heed the stirring words of the Internationale:

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise ye wretched of the earth!



The Living conditions in townships all over SA

On one thing all these parties are united – that is, the preservation and enhancement of the capitalist system.

The way the government neglected SA Airways, allowing it to self-destruct is instructive. After deciding to repay SAA's debt of R16.4 billion, and undertaking to pay R10.5 billion to fund SAA's rescue plan, the government then, in June, sold 51 percent of the airline to a private consortium. A member of the board of this private consortium happens to be former deputy finance minister Jabulani Moleketi. In 2006, as chairperson of the Public Investment Corporation (PIC) Moleketi approved seed funding of R17 million to a company called Harith General Partners. Well, Harith General Partners is a member of the consortium taking a majority shareholding in SAA – and Moleketi is Harith's chairperson. (And, by the way, he is also husband of former cabinet minister Geraldine Fraser-

The Pageantry of the Elections

Now that the pageantry of the elections of the ruling class is something of the past, we can get down to the real politics of South Africa. Inequality, homelessness, unemployment, load-shedding, racism, lack of on-tap water and sanitation with endemic corruption that scars the South African political landscape. All the political parties have promised to “hit the ground running after the elections” and work on repairing roads, electrifying the townships, attending to drought-stricken areas, building homes and focussing on cleaning the refuse-stricken dormitory townships of the poor.

Can this be done?

The ANC has decided that all they have to do is self-correct. *“Just give us another chance; we’ll do better this time around”*. When one hears Cyril Ramaphosa utter these words (or something to that effect), it sounds exceedingly hollow. Even he doesn’t believe in what he is saying. Similarly, the DA with the unctuous John Steenhuisen comes across as unconvincing in his

on an upward trajectory. Unemployment at 44.4% is reaching unprecedented levels, youth unemployment at almost 70% is reaching levels not experienced anywhere else in the world and shacks are blighting our metros. Almost 15 million people are unemployed in SA. Our country is lurching on a precipice of disaster. In the meanwhile, the middle class is going ahead as if nothing will disturb their livelihoods.



The Pageantry of the Elections - At the IEC Centre, commonly known as the ROC (Results Operation Centre)

all too regular denunciations of the ANC with little or no content or effect..

Lack of housing is a cause of major concern: 1.9 million people live in backyard shacks, 2 million on farms belonging to others, and 17 million in communal areas, this means that an estimated 22 million people, nearly 37% of all South Africans live on land or in dwellings held outside of the cadastral (land for the purposes of tax) system. This excludes those living in all RDP-type housing.

At present, the government is characterised by ineptitude and corruption. The wealth gap is growing and the inequality gap is

The problem with SA is that its democracy promotes passivity among the electorate. It is specifically so designed. It is an indirect form of government, in terms of which the masses are not required to engage in self-government, but in a representative form of government. We choose any one of the 1 181 registered political parties and the parties choose the candidates who will represent “us”, the people. The candidates, in very well-paid cushy jobs, are then accountable to the parties (actually their employers) and not to the people of the country. How can this be the will of the people or more bluntly, how can this be democratic?

At present, the representatives pay lip service to carry out the mandates of their constituencies and just act in the best interest of their parties, even if they purport to consult their constituencies. The recent elections (well-meaning though some of the 99 116 candidates may have been) were littered with candidates who were there just for the money.

As the political pantomime displayed at the announcement of the election results boards the train of deception with the destination of renewal and a “*better life for all*”, the masses will soon realise the unfulfilled promises of those in power.

- ◇ How many of the representatives have mentioned the question of landlessness and redistribution of the land
- ◇ the unresolved national question
- ◇ the right to work and living wages
- ◇ free health care and free decolonised education – the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill has been put on the backburner Those without medical aid are just allowed to die.
- ◇ the promotion of an unjust economic system that favours the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie – in other words, little or no attention was given to the poor and oppressed.

Whilst not similar, in the 1984 tricameral elections, the participants, the Labour Party and the other collaborationist parties were boycotted out of existence. Let us look at the present situation. 13 million people did not bother to register. 26,3 million voters were registered and only 12,1 million of those participated in the elections. There was no call for a boycott, yet this means less than a third of the eligible voters took part in the elections. Surely, this cannot represent the will of the people.

The Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) as announced by Minister Godongwana for 2022/2023 on Thursday, 2021/11/11 is less than the budget provided for in the year 2019/2020. Cuts in the expenditure over the next three years include:

- social grants by more than 15%
- basic education by approximately 9%
- health care by more than 13%

The attack by the treasury on public sector wages is going to have a devastating effect on service delivery. Not only is this a strategy to freeze wages, but wages in real terms will be cut. This will result in fewer teachers and health care workers being qualified. Already there are approximately 40 000 vacancies in the health sector.

At present the country has 27,8 million grant recipients, just less than half the South African population, this includes the 9,5 million people on the starvation Basic Income Grant of R350 p/m – nothing has been budgeted for these people as of March 2022. **What is going to happen after March? What about the unemployed youth?**

When the “Fallist Movement” emerged in 2015, it shook the very foundations of post-apartheid SA. Students, firstly, at UCT and later at Wits rebelled against the ANC’s rhetoric of the “*rainbow nation*”. The ANC had set SA on an unstoppable path resulting in the demise of apartheid but in essence, the sell-out of the Workers’ struggles. This Movement faltered as students revolted within the parameters of the ANC struggles and protests occurred with students in ANC t-shirts. The Fees-Must-Fall and anti-colonialist Rhodes-Must-Fall movements resulted in a call for decolonised, free education for all. Anti-capitalist structures emerged but were quickly shut down by government agencies. The 1976 Soweto uprisings, the political mobilisation of the youth in the 1980s that eventually lead to the destabilisation of the country and the overthrow of apartheid remain a shining example of the awakening of the sleeping giant that is the youth of our country.

The protest of hundreds of workers, students and supporters at parliament with the reading of the MTBPS is evidence of stirrings within the Worker’s Movement that may eventually lead to an avalanche that will catapult the country into chaos. The supporters were demanding a restructuring of the economy by demanding a basic income grant of R1500 that caters for the immediate needs of the unemployed. Several other demands were made that included adequate public transport, an end to inequality, proper sanitation, decent housing – they were demanding a way that prioritises the people’s needs. Will any heed be given this call?

The Worker was produced by the Publications Collective of the New Unity Movement.

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