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WE FIGHT IDEAS WITH IDEAS

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AMADIBA CRISIS COMMITTEE (ACC) UNDER ATTACK- AGAIN !

Amadiba Crisis Committee 2024-03-24: The Hungry Lions of Eastern Cape tried to stop Human Rights Day rally in Sigidi (see link to ACC on Facebook on our website: www.newunitymovement.co.za)

The above is the heading of a press release from the ACC which makes for most disturbing reading signalling, as it does, a further escalation in the onslaught against this organisation which has been embroiled in a near life and death struggle with the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) and an Australian mining company on the one hand, whilst on the other hand it has led a campaign in opposition to the building of the N2 toll road by SANRAL which is planned to pass through Sigidi and Mdatya villages on the Wild Coast, rather than further in-land. This struggle has been on the go for nearly two decades now.

It may be recalled that villagers in the area led by the ACC have been resisting plans by an Australian mining company, Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources to mine a 22km long and 1.5km wide stretch of the Xolobeni coastline, mainly for titanium-related minerals such as ilmenite. The proposed mine would encroach on five villages and some 200 households of the Amadiba area.

The ACC announced the holding of a rally to commemorate the heroes and heroines of the struggle on Freedom Day on 21 March.

As detailed in the press release referred to above, the rally was a success despite the efforts of what they call the "Hungry Lions" or a "joint venture" of malign forces bent upon either disrupting or preventing the holding of the rally. This was done by blocking the road leading to the rally venue with large boulders. This is but the latest in a long list of disruptive actions against the ACC, over the years.

The ACC's press release identifies "the hungry lions" or the "joint venture" as being made up of individuals and entities that are vehemently opposed to the existence of the ACC and its leading of a campaign in opposition to the planned mining concession and the N2 toll road.



Ilmenite - titanium related mineral

The persons and entities involved are said to be: "A former ANC Ward 28 Councillor; the present ANC Ward 28 Councillor; a Ward 28 committee ANC member; SANRAL's Public Liaison Officer for the Mtentu bridge build, a leader of the mining lobby for two decades and this day brandishing a gun on his hip; a member of SANRAL's "Public Liaison Committee" for the new N2 Toll Road and SANRAL's paid security guards for the N2 project."

The press release explains how these worthies plotted and instigated what they called a "spontaneous protest of Sigidi village" against the ACC which they claimed was "blocking development". The plot included targeting Nomhle Mbuthuma the spokesperson for the ACC.

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The plotters got community members to participate in the blocking of the road by threatening them: *“If you don’t participate in blocking the road you will not get a job by SANRAL!”*

This mafia-like activity on the part of these plotters calls to mind the assassination of the chairman of ACC, Bazooka Radebe in June 2016 following which the executive members have had to have permanent bodyguards.

It goes without saying that this blatant show of downright thuggery by affiliates of the government and by corporate entities needs to be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

We salute the leadership of the ACC for their bravery in not submitting to this blatant intimidation but rather standing firm in resisting the government’s trampling on the rights of the people of Pondoland in order to obtain financial gain for various vested interests at the expense of the wellbeing of the people of the region.



In 2002, rare minerals were discovered on the Xolobeni coast. Mineral Sand Resources (MSR), a subsidiary of Australian company Mineral Commodities Ltd (MRC) applied to mine them. Over a lifetime of 22 years, the mine would extract 9 million tons of ilmenite, titanium-iron oxide, rutile, zircon, and leucoxene.

“Without land, we are nothing.” Bekeni Danca, 40, was born in Xolobeni village and fears that if the project of an Australian-based company to mine the mineral sands along the coast of her village goes ahead, she will lose everything.

ZIONIST DESTRUCTION OF PALESTINE

The sheer, unbridled ferocity of Zionist Israel's genocidal assault on the people of Gaza since October 7 has overshadowed the no less heinous attacks on Palestinians by illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank. While global attention is focused on bringing about an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, there has been an acceleration of illegal land grabs in the West Bank.

In a move that amounts to a thumbing of the nose at the international community on 22 March, Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich announced the seizure of 800 hectares (1 977 acres) in the occupied West Bank as state land for settlement-building. This is the single largest land grab since the 1993 Oslo Accords, and happened at the very time that US secretary of state, Anthony Blinken was visiting the area. Clearly, it matters not to the Zionist regime that its chief handler, the US government, favours a less brutal approach, nor that the ongoing expropriation of land in the West Bank is an act of blatant criminality.

The Israeli military and armed militias of illegal settlers have acted with impunity in their attacks on Palestinian residents of the West Bank since at least 1967. In an article on the NPR website on 22 March, Eleanor Beardsley tells us, "The U.N. humanitarian affairs office has recorded 650 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank since October 7, harming residents and property. It says settlers have killed at least nine Palestinians in the territory and Israeli security forces have killed more than 400 Palestinians in that time." We know from graphic images in Aljazeera broadcasts that these attacks have not been lacking in crude and murderous brutality, and have primarily targeted vulnerable men, women and children. Acts of murder, assault, vandalism and outright theft have become a norm. Any criticism is labelled "anti-Semitic" – surely the most abused and hackneyed phrase of all-time!

The US (and now France) has threatened to "sanction" individual settlers who go against instructions not to act without proper authority.

"Sanction individual settlers?" The harshest effect of such sanctions would be denying such "individual settlers" entry to the USA. So, while we see criminal acts of historical proportions being committed, the worst punishment is the pettiest of wrist-slapping. How shameful!

But should we expect anything less? The USA has been Israel's chief backer from the very beginning of the establishment of the Zionist state; it is clear that Israel acts for and on behalf of US self-interest in the region. Israeli dominance means American dominance. Reports have been surfacing in the media of multiple underlying objectives for the obliteration of the Gaza Strip. These include building an alternative to the Suez Canal, exploiting Palestine's rich mineral wealth, and setting up resorts along the Gaza coast. All these require the annihilation of the state of Palestine. Within the space of 7 months,

thousands of Gazans have been murdered and/or maimed, and the territory reduced from the world's largest open-air concentration camp to the world's largest urban pile of rubble.

Ominously, Biden is half-heartedly attempting to rein in the wild Israeli dogs of war by gently persuading them to be less brutal in their destruction of Gaza. Even more ominously, he is using the feeble excuse of delivering food aid to Gaza via the building of a pier on the Mediterranean coast of Gaza. In the first place, he didn't even think of obtaining permission, and in the second, this pier is going to be the bridgehead for American ground forces to enter and secure Gaza for the US – it is the iron heel on the throat of Palestine.

The tragedy of Palestine has brought into sharp focus what the balance of forces is in the world today. Global impotence has been starkly exposed in the inaction of the vast majority of national governments. America, along with its western capitalist allies reigns supreme, and is powerful enough to discourage intervention by other nation-states on the side of Palestine. This makes acts of solidarity by a country like Yemen all the more heroic.

On the positive side, there has been a global anti-Zionist response from millions of ordinary people across the world. What the exterminationist strategies of Israel and the US have precipitated is a movement on the scale of similar oppositional movements like The Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement of recent years.

For progressive, freedom-loving people around the world who cannot counter Israeli aggression with military force, our only viable options include ongoing mass protests, countering of Zionist propaganda, exposure of elements collaborating with the Zionists, and BDS.

BDS includes boycotting and isolating companies complicit in and sympathetic to the Zionist war on Palestine. It includes action by national governments to close their embassies with Israel, and to prosecute their citizens who are enlisted in the Occupation forces.

Above all, we must build a momentum that will sustain resistance beyond a ceasefire. Large tracts of land in the West Bank have been expropriated, and Gaza has been destroyed. The Zionist post-war aim is absolute hegemony in Palestine. Their aim is to rebuild and re-populate Palestine in accordance with their self-interest. This cannot be allowed to proceed unchallenged.

FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!!!

WHAT DEMOCRACY?

With the elections scheduled for May 29, there has been much talk of what has been achieved or alternatively, from the opposition ranks, the failures over the past thirty years. From the ruling elite the oft-mentioned “*National Democratic Revolution*” (NDR) is bandied about without any really meaning being attached to it. The NDR is a transitional system between capitalism and socialism. However, what really transpired in SA is neither revolutionary, nor democratic.

In classic terms “revolution” refers to the overthrow of one class by another, thus the ANC can never be classified as a revolutionary organisation. The ANC has never sought to replace the existing bourgeois order. Negotiations to end apartheid were held at the World Trade Centre, Kempton Park and called the “*Convention for a Democratic South Africa*” (CODESA). The sell-out of the Working Class of SA began with the Harare Declaration in 1989 (by the Commonwealth countries) and continued in all seriousness at Kempton Park in 1991.

Mandela and the ANC had fought against the apartheid system and for equality and freedom for all people. This was the focal point of the struggle of the ANC. CODESA was about retaining the institutions of capitalist exploitation while erasing discriminatory legislation from the statute books. Essentially, it was the deception of retaining a “multi-racial” order, but renaming it, “non-racialism”.

IB Tabata’s “*Awakening of a People*”, when first published in 1951, was meant as clarification of the real issues facing the country and specifically the oppressed. It was also intended as a guide to new methods of struggle. The tenets so ably contained in the “*Awakening of a People*” were in direct contradistinction to the ideas expressed on democracy by the ANC and Mandela.

In 1999 Sedick Williams almost fifty years later, as president of the Teachers’ League of South Africa (TLSA), in a profound statement in his presidential address, avers

“In the years ahead, teachers will have to fight a much more difficult battle than the one waged in the apartheid era. This time the poison is much more insidious – and thus more difficult to identify and combat. For the money ethic has replaced the racial ethic as the tool to undermine concepts and strategies that promote socio-economic justice; there is now an economic determinant to separate the privileged from the disadvantaged.”

Universal truths encapsulated in the writings of Tabata and Williams, seemingly unrelated, cultivate fertile ground for a “*Re-Awakening of a People*” and are diametrically opposed to what Mandela and the ANC had espoused as being the focal point of the struggle.

The present parliamentary system, hewed at CODESA by the apartheid regime and the ANC (and their sidekicks), is based on the remnants of a Westminster system introduced by erstwhile colonial masters. It is not representative of the people who, despite through their votes directly and indirectly elected members of parliament, cannot demand accountability from parliamentary “representatives”. ***The members of parliament are only accountable to their parties.***

CODESA did nothing to disturb the economic distortions in society. There was no appropriation of the wealthy, not even via a more just tax regime. The new constitution included personal freedoms such as freedom of speech, but more importantly, also encompassed the “freedom” to accumulate private property. The essential purpose of CODESA was then to “*change things but keep them the same.*”

Thus, we have a constitutional democracy that is a watered-down version of the real thing. The fatal flaw in SA’s so-called democratic process is that it creates a minor, virtually inconsequential role for us, ***THE PEOPLE***. All that is required from the masses is to stand in queues every five years and cast ballots. The real process of ruling and decision-making is then taken over by the political parties. They are then free to appoint their own people (parliamentary representatives) to positions of power and rule according to their own needs and interests. The only time they would be willing to listen is when things get out of hand, when communities reach boiling point and take to the streets to protest their grievances. Even then, very little is done to address the needs of the people. That is why, over time, nothing really changes.

Human rights enshrined in the Constitution are regularly trampled upon or ignored by the SA government. Despite the provisions of Section 27 of the SA constitution that caters for adequate supply of potable water, the Hamman-skraal debacle (cholera outbreak) in May 2023 caused untold number of deaths. The Life Esidimeni scandal that resulted in more than 140 deaths and of course ESKOM failing to provide uninterrupted electricity to customers are examples of a failed state.

The one-party dominant system (ANC) always acts in the

interest of the party. The president elected by parliament is always the chairperson of the dominant party. The president wields enormous powers; to appoint the cabinet ministers, premiers, judges, and army generals and need not have any mandate from anyone, not even from his own party. The parliamentarians therefore, by favour of belonging to a political party, become the lawmakers, NOT by being elected by the citizenry.

The democracy is thus fatally flawed. This one-party dominant state has given rise to a ruling class that has accrued control, also tremendous wealth and influence through acts of corruption and state capture. The Zondo Commission has probably merely scratched the surface of the extent of the corruption in society. The extent of the corruption will probably never be known.

Therefore, despite the fact that we have a so-called “non-racial” constitution, the contours of poverty remain in line with pre-CODESA social structures. The elections in 2024 will not change this. The goal of all parties contesting those elections will be to increase the number of places at the feeding trough. They are all “in it” for the same reason as the ANC.

The leadership of the post-1994 ANC government (Mandela) was fêted by governments on both the right and left of the political spectrum, by liberals, international bankers, the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The ANC eventually capitulated to their demands emanating from the Washington Consensus of imperialism. In 1991, to hoodwink the masses, the ANC led a general strike to demand a role in governing and an *end to value-added tax (VAT)*. As we know, the ruling elite have never scrapped VAT and in fact have increased VAT to 15%, thus further impoverishing the poor.

According to the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity Group’s Household Affordability Index, the average price of a household food basket in March 2024 was a whopping R5 227, 93. Only the top salary earners can afford this. This excludes transport, rates, electricity, general household maintenance etc. – this just means that more of our citizens will be living in abject poverty.

In 1994, South Africa had an external debt of \$29.7 billion and an internal debt of R753 billion. The two combined formed the SA national debt. This was debt amassed by the previous regime. This was debt raised despite the political and financial sanctions imposed on SA. Most of this money was used to enhance the military force of the government in the oppression of the people

of South Africa in their legitimate demands. Instead of denouncing this debt, the post-1994 government accepted the apartheid debt and made massive loans from the WB and the IMF to offset these debts. As at September 2023, the external debt has increased to 156.1 billion USD. The national debt is forecast to increase between 2023 and 2028 to reach 435,46 billion US dollars and therefore a new peak in 2028. Whilst Godongwana and his predecessors have ostensibly managed to keep the bright side up, SA has been reeling on the verge of a financial crisis and state collapse for many years.

This is particularly significant for the youth of the country – more than half of the South African population is under thirty. This age group could be of great benefit to the country, yet more than 60% of the youth between the ages of 15 – 25 are jobless. The schooling system in the country has failed our youth with many learners being unable to have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills and thus find it difficult to get employment.

The rich in our country get richer the poor, poorer.

And so, for us the struggle continues.



What Has Happened to the Dust

Victor Wessels (Non-European Unity Movement NEUM)

Much of Gaza has been reduced to rubble and dust by Israeli bombing and the United States is using the rubble as fill material for the floating jetty being built on the Gazan coast, ostensibly to allow aid into the area from the sea. It is very possible that there may be human remains among those bricks and concrete. Victor Wessels wrote this poem after the second Nakba (Naksa = setback) took place in 1967 and refers to Nelly Sachs, a Jewish poet who wrote about the pain, suffering and yearnings of the Jewish people.

What has happened to the dust
 Oh, Nelly Sachs?
 what has happened to the dust
 now that your sons
 storm the land
 and in arrogance
 and in pride
 of nation and race
 make conquest
 not merely
 of corridors of land
 but of home
 but of hearth
 what has happened to the dust?

Weep, Nelly Sachs,
 weep for the dead
 but weep, Nelly Sachs,
 weep for the living
 who trampling on others
 are mocking the dead
 and dishonour the dust

Strike the Aeolian harps
 pluck the strings harshly
 jangle a discord
 women are weeping
 in the unsettled dust.

(15 February 1969)

The Power of Social Media

Mickey Titus 22nd March 2024

Mainstream media which is controlled by the rich and the powerful, has the power to indoctrinate us and capture our minds. This poem is a reminder that we can take back that power by innovative ways of using social media.

If, a year ago, you would have asked
 Someone from Kenya or Ghana, from Mozambique or
 Senegal
 From South Africa or Namibia
 If you would have asked them a year ago
 What is an Imperialist
 Many an African would have said
 An Imperialist nation
 Is a benevolent nation
 A benevolent nation from North America or from Europe
 Who give us USAID and EuropeAid
 They give us EuropeAid and USAID
 To develop us

If, a year ago, you would have asked
 Someone from Kenya or Ghana, from Mozambique or
 Senegal
 From South Africa or Namibia
 If you would have asked them a year ago
 Where is Rafah
 Where is Khan Younis
 Where is Al Shifa Hospital
 Many an African would have said
 I don't know

If, today, you should ask
 An African
 Where is Rafah
 Where is Khan Younis
 Where is the Shifah Hospital
 Many more Africans might say
 Rafah, Khan Younis, Al Shifa Hospital
 Are in Palestine
 Where USAID and EuropeAid
 Have committed genocide
 Where EuropeAid and USAID
 Have brought death and destruction
 Where USAID and EuropeAid
 Have brought pain and sorrow.

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