



The Spark



[Intlantsi yaBasebenzi]

No 11 15 October 2013

Price R3-00 Solidarity Price R10-00

Workers in Cosatu have broken with the alliance even if the leaders have not

1. Editorial (Wasp, US, EFF, Kenya Westgate, IMF and ANC alliance, FET Colleges crisis)
2. Workers in Cosatu have broken with the alliance; 65% support a new workers party
3. The 1000 soldiers struggle continues
4. The federal government shutdown in the USA- revolutionary prospects
5. Our concerns to the Wasp leaders on their electoralism
6. 50 years since Martin Luther King Jnr's 'dream' speech



Metal workers on strike while ANC leaders call for low wages

VOICE OF THE WORKERS INTERNATIONAL VANGUARD PARTY

Contact details:

South Africa: workersinternational@gmail.com

Website: www.workersinternational.org.za – we are also on facebook

Postal address: 1st Floor, Community House, 41 Salt River rd, Salt River, Cape Town, 7925, South Africa.
ph [27] 822020617 ph 021 4476777 fax 0865486048



Editorial

Some thoughts on the US Federal government shutdown

We include an article on the US federal shutdown. The working class and rank and file soldier in the US army is rebelling against the state. This has already changed the world balance of forces. No more can US imperialism invade any country where the masses are rising up- the working class on home soil won't let them. In 2003 the US military invaded Iraq on a flimsy excuse. No such venture is now possible. This means that the masses rising up against their capitalist regimes have a greater chance of not only removing them, but also replacing them with a workers' government. For this reason imperialism has to make increasing use of proxy forces and indirect means of their puppet regimes to weaken revolutions from within and to prop up their agencies when they come under threat. The crisis in the US opens possibilities for the masses of the world and thus for the struggle for Socialism.

The Wasp leadership wants an electoral alliance with the EFF

The Wasp leadership is building up the EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters). On the one hand the Wasp leaders call the EFF 'the most militant and radical voice of the poor', on the other, it criticizes them for having a capitalist programme. They note that the EFF does not even mention the working class once in their manifesto. Despite knowing that the EFF is capitalist, the Wasp leadership wants to invite them to a 'conference of the left'. In other words the Wasp leaders want a working class formation like the Wasp should merge or form an alliance with a capitalist party like the EFF. This is nothing else but wanting to convert the Wasp into a popular front, much like the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance. The DSM comes from an international that has a history of submerging itself as a workers formation within capitalist parties- they entered the Labour Party in Britain, they entered the ANC for decades, refusing to build an independent working class party. Now the DSM and CWI wants to bury a section of the vanguard workers in an alliance with the capitalist EFF.

Now, on the 15th Oct 2013 the Wasp leaders have revealed that they want to form an electoral alliance with the capitalist EFF. To Lenin and Trotsky a united front was a workers' united front, a front of action and class struggle. Here the Wasp leaders make their own interpretation of nationalisation negotiable, as the front can have the same words but different meaning for nationalization. The Wasp leaders are silent just on how nationalization will be achieved- they give the impression that the capitalist parliament can legislate it. We say this is impossible- nationalization can only come under a workers govt that has dispersed the capitalist parliament and set up its own power, based on grassroots councils of workers delegates.

Whereas the Wasp leaders criticize the EFF for wanting to rehash the old 2-stage theory of first national democratic revolution and then a socialist stage- a stalinist programme- by proposing an electoral alliance with the same group that aims for a capitalist stage in future. This is not 'old wine in a new bottle', it is 'old wine in the old bottle'.

We will deal with this in detail in our next issue.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has issued fresh instructions to the ANC government

The imperialist IMF has just instructed the ANC govt to

- * keep wages low (wage restraint) - eg the wage offer of 4.25% that closed the WSU was Blade implementing the IMF plan; state subsidy for universities has been limited to 4% for the next 3 years at least; all public sector workers face 4% or less increases;
- * implement e-tolling
- * resist any attempt at banning or limiting labour brokers

These gems can be seen at the IMF doc, especially the Section on Structural policies points no 41 to 47. It is a long document but essential to study for any activist, these attacks against the working class is what a vote for ANC or DA means in 2014. See <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13303.pdf>



The ANC government has just decided on building more coal and nuclear power stations

The latest Financial Mail reports that it will take another 30 years to pay off the debt for Medupi, Kusile and Ingula, now the ANC govt has approved another build programme that will enslave us all for another 30+ years beyond 2043. Nuclear power is notorious for costs escalating out of control.

The major beneficiary of all of this is Anglo American and to a lesser extent French imperialism, while the ANC's Chancellor House gets thrown a few billion. The government also has plans to close down several power stations to justify the multi-trillion Rand expenditure on the new power stations. Meanwhile the government claims to be promoting 'green' economy, but renewable energy plans actually rolled out amounts to less than 1% of the build plan. There is a potential to use hydro power from the DRC, wind and solar from the North Cape desert to more than cover all the energy needs but the NDP, adopted by the ANC National Conference at Mangaung in 2012, rejects this and supports coal and nuclear power.

The money the ANC received for the 20 000 defective welds on the boilers for Medupi and the entire Eskom scam, will fund their 2014 election campaign.

Our youth and the future generations have been sold into slavery by the ANC and DA governments.....Time for a new revolutionary workers' party.....

On the attacks at Westgate mall in Kenya

The Kenyan military has now admitted that they were responsible for the implosion of the Westgate mall. What can we learn from this?

The US military must have given the order for this implosion, to deliberately kill off anyone inside, aiming to create a 9-11 type of disaster to try and rekindle their global 'war on terror'. Is it really a coincidence that these attacks come just in the period when the US budget is being debated?

In other words, hostages were deliberately bombed to death by imperialism- the involvement of the US military in the 'forensic' operations is to cover up the real sequence of events and whitewash imperialism. While the media claims 72 were killed, a report is one of the Economist-linked papers stated that more than 200 were killed. In the ruins of the imploded part, no body of any 'attacker' had been found.

Down with the Kenyan regime; imperialist troops and their lackeys out of Africa!

Who funded the attacks at Westgate mall?

First National Bank and Standard Bank bankrolled one of the alleged leaders of the Nairobi attacks, ie imperialism bankrolled the attacks; How come FNB and Standard wrote off the debt? If it was you or I, we would have been hounded for years.

Another storm brewing at Northlink FET College

A principle of our struggle is free, quality education for all. Yet for many, the doors of learning are being shut in their faces. More than 30 000 FET college students who have qualified, are having their certificates withheld because they owe fees or due to some technical problem. They have to spend years trying to repay the debt; many never manage to pay off the debt. So every year the pile of FET certificates increases and gather dust at



the Colleges, while the graduates walk the streets. The only ones who gain are the capitalists who get skilled cheap labour in large numbers.

On Friday 11th Oct, more than 50 students at Northlink College were told they could not write exams which start on Monday 14th Oct- they are being denied a permit by the management because they do not qualify for bursaries. But these very students have been receiving travel allowances from the College. These travel allowances are part of the bursary scheme. So where has their bursary money gone? And why were they only told a few hours before the start of exams that they supposedly did not qualify for bursaries when they have been on the bursary scheme for months?

The students at Northlink FET College are angry. They are demanding that all students be allowed to write the exams and lack of finances should not be held against anyone. Another storm is brewing at Northlink and possibly other FET Colleges. The SACP-led Higher Education Ministry has a case to answer.

Egypt and Syria

Hundreds of anti-regime protestors are still being killed by the military in Egypt. Meanwhile the Muslim Brotherhood leaders play the most counter-revolutionary pacifist role, calling on the masses not to take up armed self-defence against the regime. So desperate is the Muslim Brotherhood leaders of wanting to prove to imperialism that they are a reliable partner to control the masses. The textile workers have returned to strikes and we hope that this will form the core of an independent workers movement that could lead the resistance to the regime; however what is required is a revolutionary workers' party to be built to spearhead the fight for working class power.

In Syria, with the help of a mass threat of the working class of the US, the threat of an imperialist invasion has been stopped. It is necessary to give support to the independent grassroots committees and their militias, building up its own co-ordination council independent of the FSA leaders, while driving out the al Nusra. Here too it is necessary to form an independent revolutionary working class party. It has emerged too that if it had not been for the Hezbollah and Iranian militias, the Assad regime would long ago have fallen. Here we see that when faced with the threat of a workers' revolution, the capitalist alliance becomes more open, that the Iranian regime and the Hezbollah leaders are on the same side as imperialism. They cannot allow the workers to take power as every regime in the Middle East comes under immediate threat, as indeed would any regime, even in the imperialist centres.



Workers in New York also went on strike



Cosatu members have broken from the alliance with the ANC and SACP, even if the leadership has not; Prepare the way for a new vanguard, working class party

The Forum for Public Dialogue (FPD) and the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) conducted a survey of Cosatu shopstewards from April to Sept 2012. They compare results with a similar survey done in 1991. The change in workers' views show that members of Cosatu have broken with the ANC and regard it as capitalist. There is a strong view that a new workers' party has to be built. We examine some of the results. The wave of strikes breaking out across SA and Namibia reflects the reality that the masses have broken from the traditional leaders of the workers movement- a development that holds much promise for the development of a revolutionary working class party and the struggle for Socialism.

Strong support for a new workers' party

65% of those shopstewards interviewed in 2012 said they would vote for a new labour party if Cosatu formed it. For another question, 44% of the shopstewards said they would vote for the SACP if it stood in elections. Both of these results show that most Cosatu members reject the ANC and they regard it as capitalist.

In 1991 workers saw the ANC and SACP as virtually the same, now more workers distance themselves from the ANC

In 1991 only 1.3% declared support for the SACP while 96% of Cosatu members supported the ANC. This did not mean that Cosatu members did not support the SACP but that they saw no difference between the ANC and SACP and what they stood for. In 2012, about 8% declared their membership of the SACP- this shows a growth in class consciousness as workers begin to distinguish themselves more from the ANC. It is a conscious policy of the SACP that all their members should join the ANC, yet, these 8% listed their primary allegiance to the SACP. In 2012 the 44% of the shopstewards said they would rather vote for the SACP than the ANC; this shows a growth of working class consciousness and a deeper growth in class independence from the ANC, much more than the 1.3% in 1991.

Many ANC and Cosatu members have lost faith in the ANC

In 2012 about 68% of the shopstewards declared their membership of the ANC. The fact that 65% of the shopstewards declared their willingness to support a new workers' party, means that many ANC members have lost faith in the ANC to represent their interests in government. Only 28% of the shopstewards said they would *not* support a new workers' party. This 28% includes those who would support the ANC, DA, IFP, PAC and those who would support the SACP if it stood on its own. Thus we can conclude that much less than 28% of Cosatu shopstewards would support the ANC in elections if Cosatu set up its own workers' party. This confirms what we have been saying for years, namely that without the Cosatu support the ANC would be based on the black middle class only and would indeed be a very small party, smaller even than the DA. When Mandela came to the Cosatu Congress to shout at delegates to accept the imperialist plan GEAR, or the ANC would dump Cosatu, his challenge should have been accepted. The ANC is nothing without Cosatu, despite the ranting and raving of Mandela.

Many in the SACP have also lost faith in the ANC

Considering that only 28% would *not* vote for a workers' party, we can also conclude that many SACP supporters would rather support the workers' party than the SACP. This shows that the SACP has also been largely exposed due to its



policy of justifying and supporting every move of the ANC in government, even its openly capitalist policies such as Asgisa and NDP (National Development Plan). It also shows that the majority of workers do not see the SACP as an alternative to the ANC.

Workers are critical of the alliance

The rejection of the ANC and the SACP is also reflected in 35% of the shopstewards saying that the tripartite alliance was in a poor state. On the other hand the 53% that said the alliance was in good shape includes those who felt that Cosatu leaders stood up to the capitalist ANC.

Workers will not just move to any other party

On the other hand, 88% of the shopstewards say that they would still support the ANC in the next national elections. This appears to be a contradiction but is not. Cosatu has not created another workers' party and there is no mass alternative to the ANC that workers could place their faith in. In the absence of an alternative, workers are saying 'better the devil that they know' rather than the apartheid relic the DA or any other electoral party.

81% say that Cosatu should continue as a member of the tripartite alliance but this does not remove the fact that the workers have identified the ANC as a class enemy and thus they regard the alliance as the best way of disciplining the emerging black capitalists. But once Cosatu or a significant part of Cosatu called for the formation of a new workers' party, then the support for the alliance would change significantly, overnight.

The ANC has been increasingly identified as the class enemy

That 76% of the shopstewards believe that conditions have improved since 1994 does not mean that workers are happy with the few improvements that have been made. This is shown by 67% of the shopstewards who believe that service delivery is poor. Also 81% of shopstewards believe that too many people in government are corrupt. These reflect that improvements have come through workers' struggles, and workers are increasingly realising that the improvements are coming through their struggles and indeed through struggles against the ANC government.

For example, the ANC government has criticised strikes, they have called for wage restraint, for wages to be within the 3-6% target range set by imperialism, while workers are fighting for double digit (10%+) increases; the ANC wants e-tolling, the workers oppose it; the workers want to ban labour brokers, the ANC wants to keep them.

71% of shopstewards want to have a say on who leads the ANC, but this is assuming that there is no other party that Cosatu creates to represent workers' interest. It is logical that workers' would want to influence the leadership of the ruling party. Zuma only received 43% support which was more reflective of an 80% support in Kwazulunatal-based shopstewards than general support among shopstewards. [in fact in 6 other provinces, Motlanthe was more popular]. If the survey was conducted today (after Marikana, Guptagate, Inkandlagate, the re-opened Arms Commission) support for Zuma would be considerably less. On the other hand the 6% support for Vavi to lead the ANC is not a vote of no confidence in him but reflects that workers do not regard workers' interests as being best served in leadership in the ANC but outside of it and indeed against it.

That more than 52% supported a vote for party rather than directly for president or mayor or MP shows a relatively greater class consciousness, supporting collectivism rather than for individualism- this is also an indicator of growing class consciousness.



Declining support for Cosatu leaders

Only 2% of shopstewards trusted Cosatu leaders during periods of no strike, while only 13% of shopstewards trusted the Cosatu leaders during strikes. This great lack of trust of workers in the Cosatu leaders was also demonstrated in the mineworker strike revolt in Aug-Dec 2012 when Vavi was chased away from the strikes by workers and in other cases could not persuade workers to end their strikes. Importantly, the SACP leaders were even less able to impose their will on workers to end the strikes.

This means that the workers regard the Cosatu leaders as being too close to the ANC and the corruption in government is also reflected within the Cosatu leadership. Thus the workers' break from the ANC and the formation of a workers' party also means, for the workers a break from the current Cosatu leaders.

So when workers say they would support a workers' party, they mean that the vanguard workers in Cosatu would need to organise and lead the formation of this party, against the current leadership, against the ANC government.

The crisis of regime

Imperialism has a crisis, as the very regime which has successfully controlled the masses for the past 19 years, is fast losing its ability to play this role. The ANC and SACP leaders are discredited and the Cosatu leaders prove unable to control from within. Imperialism cannot allow a political vacuum to arise anywhere on earth, they cannot allow workers to seek out their own destiny and take their future in their own hands. This is especially under current world conditions when every capitalist regime is under threat from the masses of the world. Even one place on earth where the workers took power by their own mass action methods, could spark a world revolt and point the way to a series of Socialist revolutions even in the imperialist centres. The situation cries out for a new International, a unity of the vanguard workers across the world, it cries out for the vanguard workers to unite in South Africa, Southern Africa, Africa and the world. The red flag of Socialism deserves to fly around the world, in every corner. This what imperialism will try to prevent at all costs. This is why they will try all their tactics and tricks to prevent a revolutionary leadership from developing and succeeding.

So do workers in Cosatu want a revolutionary working class party or an electoral party (a labour party)?

Well, the survey didn't ask if workers preferred an electoral party (a labour party) or a revolutionary working class party. It only asked if workers' wanted a labour party. This is not an accident as this is a limit of the view of the Foundation for Public Dialogue and CASE, which are both capitalist institutions and both have an interest in preventing a revolutionary working class party from developing. In fact, seeing that imperialism realizes that they now have a crisis of regime, they need another agency to control the masses. They are hoping to shape the future party by limiting it to an electoral one. So, if the masses have broken from the control of the alliance or indeed are rapidly breaking from it, imperialism needs to prepare a reserve force to once again bring the masses under control. This is why imperialism is promoting reserve forces like Agang, EFF and the Wasp to, from apparently different angles, to chain the masses to the capitalist parliament. [We will write more on the Wasp in due course].

74 % of shopstewards regard the police as corrupt; after the Marikana massacre it is likely that even more distrust the police. The guardians of the capitalists and their system is the police, so the great distrust that the masses have of them, is a great step forward to break from parliamentary illusions. If the masses do not trust the police, who do they trust? The next step for the masses is to self-organise and build their own self-defence committees, which opens up the way



for an opposing power of the workers, against the capitalist state. This will open the path to revolution, but a Socialist revolution cannot succeed without a party.

83% of shopstewards believe that all public representatives should subject themselves to lifestyle audits. Underlying this is a belief that capitalists should not be public representatives. This another great step forward towards Socialist consciousness of the masses.

65% of the shopstewards believe that not only should the government own the companies in key sectors, they should also control them. 84% of workers believe that workers should share in the profits of the companies. Taken together, this is already the basis for a strong Socialist consciousness.

Thus there is already a strong basis for the formation of a revolutionary working class party that organises itself outside of parliament and against it and would be based on using mass action methods to achieve working class power.

There are many challenges such as the indication that 81% of shopstewards regard the SABC as a reliable source of news, when it is a capitalist organ, despite the work of some sympathetic journalists within its ranks. There will never be 'perfect' conditions, but the indicators are of a strong basis for a Socialist consciousness from which to move forward from here.

So how do we build a revolutionary working class party and where do we begin?

In 1924 when workers revolutions were failing, Trotsky wrote **The lessons of October** as a contribution to what should be the class character and method of the working class party. He wrote:

'But the events have proved that without a party capable of directing the proletarian revolution, the revolution is rendered impossible. The proletariat cannot seize power by a spontaneous uprising. Even in highly industrialized and highly cultured Germany the spontaneous uprising of the toilers- in November 1918- only succeeded in transferring power to the hands of the bourgeoisie. One propertied class is able to seize the power that has been wrested from another propertied class because it is able to base itself upon its riches, its cultural level, and its innumerable connections with the old state apparatus. But there is nothing else that can serve the proletariat as a substitute for its own party. '

Thus, even if the masses rise up in revolt, if there is not a vanguard party of the working class that represents its class interests, the revolt will peter out and the capitalist class will regain control. The capitalist class has massive resources and centuries of institutions and culture and training and a successful struggle against this can only be waged by a vanguard party of the working class, organized on a highly centralised basis, with iron discipline, studying and schooled in the art of conquest of power, capable of mobilising and leading the proletarian army against the capitalist forces, knowing when to organise a retreat and when to advance and when to seize the moment for the seizure of power by the working class.

Lenin writes in **State and Revolution**:

'By educating a workers party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming and of *leading the whole people* to Socialism, of directing and organising the new order, of being the teacher, guide and leader of all the toiling and exploited in the task of building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie.'



Thus, the working class party is not a 'labour party' which gathers all workers irrespective of their consciousness, but it is a party of the politically advanced workers, the vanguard. Take for example, the leading of a strike or community struggle, it is not led by everyone but by the most advanced fighters within the workplace or community. The workers party has support among the masses and it is with this support, with the masses learning from the vanguard and the vanguard learning from the masses, that the struggle for Socialism, for the working class to take power, advances. Thus while the party would be a vanguard party, it has mass support and has to build its support among the masses, something that is only gained over time and through hard battles against the capitalist class.

Trotsky writes further in **Lessons of October**:

' Had we failed to study the Great French Revolution, the revolution of 1848, and the Paris Commune, we should never have been able to achieve the October revolution, even though we passed through the experience of the year 1905.' 'yet no such work has been done with regard to the victorious revolution of 1917'.

Thus it is important for us to study all revolutions, whether the working class was victorious or was defeated. We need to study the transition of 1994, the role of the SACP in holding back the masses from seizing power, we need to study the role of Stalinism in holding back revolutions across Africa and the rest of the world, we need to study the role of the left at the time and in its defeat, what were its shortcomings, what were the strengths, how can we learn from this and build a working class party that is capable of learning and of leading the masses to the seizure of power.

One of the first things we have to do is have a dialogue with the worker in the SACP and the members of the YCL (Young Communist League) about the role of the SACP and how it has played a pivotal role in chaining the masses to capitalism, building up the capitalist ANC when there was every possibility of uniting the working class, including the white worker, to overthrow capitalism through mass action methods. In 1991, 70% of workers thought that Cosatu represented their best interests and only 21% thought the ANC represented their best interests. Here was the opportunity for an independent revolutionary working class party to lead the fight against capitalist relations. Instead the SACP directed the workers to join and support the ANC, ie to put their faith in the black middle class to lead the fight for the democratic aspirations of the masses for housing, work, free education, free health care, etc; the past 19 years of continued suffering and exploitation was the result of burying an independent working class line and organization. The black middle class that is leading the ANC has become the main agency for sustaining tribalism, for sustaining apartheid group areas (through the house-build programme in the ghettos and not integrating housing), and now collapsing public education and pouring in public funds for private education (such as Curro private schools), to rolling back gains in the Labour Relations Act to make it easier for bosses to dismiss workers, privatizing roads through e-tolling, for shooting down unarmed mineworker strikers at Marikana who were only standing up against the intolerable hardships on the mines. The black middle class leading the ANC are the very embodiment of counter-revolution. At the same time the SACP has become the tool of the monopoly capitalists, by justifying the leadership of the ANC through its theory of a National Democratic Revolution, ie another stage of capitalism under leadership of the black middle class, to its theory of a 'second stage of the transition', ie another phase of capitalism despite the history of the past 19 years where the ANC leaders have shown themselves to be in real alliance with the capitalist class, and not the masses.

The central task is to develop a programme for this workers party for the Socialist revolution. Thus there should be a process towards a conference of the left to develop and adopt the programme of the new party. There should be discussion groups in factory, mine, farm level, as well as industrial area and in each working class community on the programme. ***The key here is how is nationalization under workers' control to be achieved.*** It is important for us to dialogue with the members of the Wasp, with all the activists fighting the capitalist system.



Honestly and forthright questions should be asked- is the ANC going to nationalise the commanding heights under workers control? The Marikana massacre of 16th Aug 2012 gave the answer- when the mining bosses had their wealth threatened, the ANC leadership organized their police to shoot down the workers. The ANC and DA agree on youth slavery, wage restraint, the NDP, labour brokers, in essence, despite superficial differences, they have the same programme. Is the SACP capable of nationalizing under workers control? The SACP leadership are government ministers running the machinery under which the mining bosses steal hundreds of billions every year. The SACP leaders even have their own investment company that has shares on the mines, the very ones that are continuing to exploit workers. The EFF mouths 'nationalization' but its economic model is Singapore, which is a military dictatorship where unions are smashed- the EFF also stands for mining 'entrepreneurs', in other words, they stand for the development of a new class of mining capitalists. The WASP also calls for nationalization but under 'democratic control', but the mining rights are already under 'democratic' control of the ANC govt and this does not prevent Anglo American and BHP Billiton from continuing to rape and plunder the mineral wealth. Can nationalization of the commanding heights ever come through parliament, when the Constitution is based on preserving the private property rights of the existing capitalists???

After consideration of all these different arguments, only one reality remains, namely that nationalization under workers control will only come through mass action of the organised working class against the capitalist class and against the capitalist parliament. This should be the first principle of the new working class party. The fundamental question is which class has the interest to fight up to the end for all the democratic demands of the masses- it is only the working class. This means that once a revolutionary programme has been adopted, which is based on the lessons of the past struggles in Southern Africa, Africa and the world, the vanguard workers need to form structures of the revolutionary working class party on this basis and to begin to develop concrete action programme steps to take the next step on the path for the working class to take power into its own hands so that nationalization under workers control will be achieved. This immediately raises the question of the unity of the masses in Southern Africa, all Africa, the masses in the imperialist centres and indeed the whole world. If possible, the Socialist conference should be held before the next Cosatu Congress, provided that there has been sufficient discussion among the vanguard workers and should include Socialist forces that are outside Cosatu as well.

4.10 2013 amended 12.10.2013

Workers International Vanguard Party ph or sms 0822020617 email workersinternational@gmail.com website: www.workersinternational.org.za we are also on facebook.

[We will be writing more on the Wasp, the EFF, and on the question of revolutionary vanguard party versus a reformist party, in the near future].



Metal workers are spearheading the political break with the capitalist ANC



The struggle of the 1000 soldiers victimised by the state, continues

On the 7th October 2013 the SA National Defence Force Union, Sandu, took another step in its battle to get all 1000 soldiers victimised in 2009, reinstated. A part of the case was put to the Military Court, outlining 4 basic areas:

- Calling for all the charges to be dropped;
- Calling for the awol charges to be dropped;
- Challenging the multiple charges such as linking awol and public violence
- Requesting further details of the charges (there is no detail of which soldier has done what and when)

The judge quickly dismissed all of Sandu's pleas. Thus the vast majority of the 1000 soldiers are still on suspension with full pay since 2009. Sandu is planning to take the matter further in the courts.

Summary of the case of the soldiers:

1. The rank and file soldiers were mostly underpaid, several were living in shacks; many also lived in army quarters which were (and still are) run down and in a terrible state of repair. The generals, meanwhile, were highly paid (and still are) and many of them were overnight capitalists, beneficiaries of the ANC's BEE schemes;
2. For years the soldiers' representatives tried to raise and correct these problems;
3. Matters came to a head when frustrated soldiers organised a march to the Union Buildings to raise their grievances; Sandu applied for and obtained permission for the march; the soldiers obtained permission from their superiors for time off for the march; during the night before the march, the generals obtained an interdict to stop the march; the march organisers tried to gather soldiers as they arrived to brief them of the court's decision, aiming then to disperse them; while this process was happening, the military police violently intervened and broke up the gathered soldiers; even police reports of the march are clear that the soldiers were peaceful before the police acted against them; there are reports of agent provocateurs having entered the march and either instigated acts against the military police vehicles or themselves having engaged in such acts. The aim of this instigation was to discredit the protesting soldiers so that the state could crush the revolt and then gain absolute control over the armed forces.
4. About 1000 soldiers who had gathered for the protest were suspended; initially Sasfu (SA Security Forces Union, a Cosatu affiliate) condemned the protest until they realised that some of their members had also participated and were also suspended; then the Sasfu leaders started to raise criticisms of the way the state handled the matter.
5. There was immense grassroots anger among the soldiers; instead of organizing more protests, Sandu turned to the courts where the matter has been stuck for the past 4 years, despite on the odd occasion that the union won orders of court for the soldiers to return to work; at every occasion the top command of the army opposed the return to work of the 1000 soldiers; some 70 have been allowed back but even they are under pressure. Meanwhile the state dramatically raised the wages of the rank and file soldiers and begun to address some of the housing problems (a call went out for all soldiers who were unemployed to register, then they were fast-tracked and given RDP houses). While seeing to the benefits of the soldiers, the state also accelerated their attempts to smash the military unions.



So if the soldiers have done nothing wrong, why are they being victimized by the state? It raises the question: who really controls the state and why do they act this way?

The nature of the capitalist state

First let us turn to Lenin to help describe the nature of the state in his work **State and Revolution**:

‘...the state is an organ of domination of a definite class which *cannot* be reconciled to its antipode (the class opposed to it)’

‘it consists of special bodies of armed men who have at their disposal prisons, etc’

‘A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power.’

‘The exploiting classes need political rule in order to maintain exploitation, ie, in the selfish interests of an insignificant minority, and against the vast majority of the people’

The state is not neutral, it acts for those who have the wealth in capitalist society and its chief instrument of control is the standing army and the police; the aim of the state is to keep the masses in domination for the capitalist class.

International monopoly capital owns and controls the wealth in SA

Before 1994 and indeed since then most of the wealth on the JSE (Johannesburg Stock Exchange) and most of the mines, commercial farms, banks and factories are in the hands of 5 monopolies: Anglo American, Liberty Life, Old Mutual, Rembrandt and Sanlam. The dominant player is Anglo American, ie US imperialism.

Before 1994, the SADF was used as an armed instrument to discipline capitalist governments across the entire Southern Africa to keep the masses under the control of US imperialism.

The core that protected Anglo American before 1994 is still there

In the lead up to the 1994 elections, the SACP’s Joe Slovo made the case for the so-called ‘sunset clauses’, namely that all the members of the apartheid state would remain within in for at least 5 years after the elections. Thus the core of the security apparatus and armed forces that protected the domination of the masses by Anglo American, would be retained.

The integration of the MK, Apla, SADF and old Bantustan forces started at the negotiation talks (Codesa) and officially ended in 2003. This process was overseen by the British military (BMAT). Although most of the generals come from the ranks of the ANC, their selection depended upon approval by British imperialism, ie they had to show that they had unshakeable loyalty to act as an instrument of violence in the service of the capitalists against the masses.

The Codesa talks lay the basis for the army to continue the role as the last resort of protection of Anglo American and other monopoly capitalists. One of the fundamental principles that was adopted at Codesa and that is still enshrined in the SA Constitution, is the property clause. This property clause states that the state should protect existing private property, ie the wealth that was gained through theft and plunder, by the monopoly capitalists, should remain in their hands and that ultimately, if this property came under threat, the army would act to protect it against the masses, ie protect the handful of capitalists from the majority of the masses.



The rank and file soldier from the old SADF was not represented at the Codesa talks- the corrupt officer caste that was loyal to big capital, was represented at these talks; the rank and file MK, Apla, Azanla and self defence committees were not represented at Codesa, the ANC middle class elite was represented. Many ex-MK, Apla and other rank and file forces were sidelined in the integration process; many who were integrated, were harassed and frustrated so that they took the package and left the armed forces. Thus, the minute the integration process started, imperialism, through its control of the top of the armed forces started to undermine the progressive elements within the army. Even the clause of the Constitution that no member of the security forces should obey a 'manifestly illegal instruction' is being daily undermined by the imperialist control of the state (see for example, the overnight creation of a militarised police division and its use in planning and executing the Marikana massacre). This shows that when imperialism is faced with a revolution, they will pose as ultra democratic, in order to maintain their control, but when the tide of revolt weakens, they undermine every concession they made.

The army is really being controlled by Anglo American

The re-organization plans (2010 and 2020) were designed precisely to undermine the progressive remnants within the army and to strengthen the reactionary element, these were plans to roll back the progressive gains forced by the masses up to 1994. These plans and the victimization of the 1000 soldiers are part of an alliance of the elite of the ANC and PAC in the army, with the old reactionary top officers from the old apartheid regime. Anglo American realizes that if the masses revolt, their last protection is the army- they require absolute loyalty- they do not want any soldier who will question whether defence of Anglo American is legal or not, is right or wrong- Anglo American wants soldiers to act as unthinking robots to shoot down the masses, including the mine workers, if ever there is a revolt against them. ***This is why we say that it is Anglo American that is the main decision-maker that is behind the victimization, not only of the 1000 soldiers, but of the whole process to undermine, frustrate and remove all the progressive soldiers from the army. Anglo American will not stop until all progressive soldiers are out of the army. This is why they will not stop until all the soldier unions are either smashed or turned into elements that support the aims of imperialism, namely a conveyor belt to ensure that when the masses rise up, that the soldiers will not question the imperialists' commands to shoot them.***

The way forward

The virtual disappearance of the peasantry and the greater proletarianisation of the masses means that the rank and file of the army is made up of workers in uniform. Thus the class divisions in capitalist society reflect themselves in the army structure- the rank and file against the generals. Every rank and file soldier is also a victim of high food, transport, housing, electricity and education costs. The children of the soldier have no future under capitalism.

Anglo American is plundering the DRC, plundering Africa. The soldiers should become more organised to refuse deployment as a security force for Anglo American across Africa and indeed, in SA too. We call for rank and file committees of soldiers to be established- the reinstatement of the 1000 soldiers should be the starting point, but the end of the victimization of the rank and file soldier should be the unifying call.

The heads of the armed forces were implicated in the corruption in the Arms deal, in Guptagate, in the Marikana massacre- they should all go. The rank and file soldier's place is in the struggle against the capitalist system. Anglo American wants the soldier to be deployed on the mines against the mineworkers- we say that soldiers should support the total expropriation of all the mines, without compensation, and for these to be placed under workers' control.



The place of the rank and file soldier is in the struggle against capitalism, uniting with the masses in struggles for decent housing, for jobs for all, for an end to exploitation, etc. On the other hand, the broader workers' movement needs to champion the cause of the soldiers against the generals. Workers, (employed or unemployed, or local or immigrant) and soldiers unite, we have nothing to lose but our chains! We have a world to win. **Forward to Socialism**

Issued by Workers International Vanguard Party, 1st floor, Community House, 41 Salt River rd, Salt River, 7925. Ph or sms 0822020617 or email workersinternational@gmail.com, or find us on facebook.

12.10.2013



The crisis in the US has opened the path for the working class to challenge their capitalist dictators

The crisis of US imperialism capitalism and the federal shutdown- a pre-revolutionary period is opening up in the USA.

On the 1st October 2013 the US Federal government went into partial shutdown, apparently due to a failure to pass a new budget. 800 000 federal employees were sent home and a further 1.3 million were ordered to work without any guarantee that they would be paid.

The US economy is in deep crisis

Wages of male workers in the US have not increased since 1962, which reflects the deep state of crisis in the US economy. Much of the manufacturing industry has shut down and the work sent, by US corporations, to slave labour in China. Even the small industrial base that there is, the military industrial complex, is under severe pressure. The military budget for 2013 was cut by \$46 bn. Even the multi-trillion dollar wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were financed through loans. The military budget will have cuts of \$500 bn over the next 10 years. Thus the US economy is based mainly on the service sector, ie through pure parasitism on the extraction of surplus product (profits) from the rest of the world. The rate of plunder by US corporations and banks around the world is coming under threat due to the global rebellion of the masses.



Thus there are signs that the US imperialist empire, much like the Roman empire in its last days, is about to implode. The Roman empire, in its last days, was no longer based on expansion of production, but on the naked theft and destruction of the productive forces in its outer conquered lands. There are over 3000 US military bases around the world that oversee the theft and plunder and destruction by US banks and corporations. The wars in the DRC and the Central African Republic are examples of the destruction of the productive forces as imperialism rakes in the wealth of the land.

Since 1917 the debt ceiling for maximum borrowing has had to be raised 72 times. So what is different now? The destruction of real production in the USA has led to a situation where, even if taxes on the worker is raised and massive cuts take place in social expenditure, there will not be enough funds available to cover the debt payments to the banks that the US government is controlled by. The US state has to borrow just to pay off the interest on the debt; it has to borrow just to pay the military expenses. So if the debt ceiling is not raised, the US government will default on its debt to the banks. Rather than not pay the banks, the US government prefers to put workers on short time (furlough), ie send them home without pay.

The 1% is divided as to how to maintain control over the masses

The mass media has portrayed the differences between the Democrats and the Republicans as being over the 'Affordable Health care' plan- supposedly the Republicans want to remove state funding for it and make the worker pay its full cost, while the Democrats want the state to pay a portion of the health care plan. The main beneficiaries of the health care plan are the health insurance companies who are owned by the same banks that control the US regime. So there is no difference in allegiance between the Democrats and Republicans- both are loyal servants of big capital. So why the fight?

There is a real difference over tactics as to how best control the masses- the Democrats reflect that faction of big capital that says: The US military budget is the size of all the other military budgets of all the other countries in the world, put together. They say, there is no serious competitor anywhere in the world. The US military budget is 6 times the size of the next country, China and the EU is even much smaller than that of China. To the Democrats, the major threat is from the US masses themselves, and thus there is a need to make a show of some benefits and to make the cuts in social expenses more gradual. The Democrats favour a bigger cut in the military expenses.

The Republican faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie, on the other hand, say that the US regime has always been able to deal with any threat through brute force and thus the military budget needs to be sustained and expanded so that the repressive forces are at the ready to smash any threat whenever and wherever it raises its head. The Republicans therefore, are for a more accelerated cut of social expenditure, relying on the repressive apparatus to be ready to crack down on any resistance.

The Democrats do not hold the key

The biggest industry in the world, if not the second biggest, is the military industrial complex. The military industry is the core of modern capitalism. Deep cuts in military expenditure will leave the capitalists in this sector very unhappy. No capitalist will want a fall in profits. Cuts in military expenses will also put more pressure on rank and file soldiers and increase the chances of a revolt against the regime. Already there is deep disquiet in the military as demonstrated by Manning and Snowden revolting against the very essence of US imperialism. The families of the soldiers who died in Iraq feel abandoned- they only received \$12 000 as a 'thank you' once the body arrived back home. Many veterans marched in the streets as part of the Occupy Wall Street movement and threw their war medals away. A slower cut in social



expenses will not hide that no new jobs are being created in the US- it only, at best, attempts to postpone the coming revolt of the masses.

The Republicans also have no answer

On the other hand, sustaining the military and accelerating social cuts will lead to increasing revolts against the state. No state can control only through force. They need a base in the population to sustain its existence. There is no artificial divide between the US military and the rest of the population. The soldiers have families and these families will be hit by accelerated cuts. Thus in the case of a widespread revolt, the rank and file soldier will be torn between the command of the generals and loyalty to his/her family. The army may split if used against the masses. The myth of the American dream will, ironically, lead to the soldier to revolt against the generals and the 1%- this is not what America stands for, he/she will say.

A pre-revolutionary situation is developing in the USA

A split in the ruling class is one of the conditions for a revolutionary situation to develop; a second condition is the loss of trust of the masses in the apparatus and its leading parties- polls put blame on Republicans at 19% , blame on the Democrats as being at 16%, but blame on them both at 46% of the population. Thus a huge section of the masses are breaking from both of the main parties and do not trust them. Whatever step is taken- a temporary agreement or even no agreement, will lead to greater mass revolt. The basis is there for a much greater and deeper revolt than the Occupy Wall Street movement. Already, 80% or more of the masses have said no to any imperialist invasion anywhere- they are the ones who threatened the regime if they dared attack Syria. The masses are asking who benefitted from the trillions borrowed for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars- certainly not them, so why should they support any other war in their name.

But if the masses rise up against the regime, however heroic they may be, without a revolutionary working class party, the struggle will eventually be defeated. Thus the main tasks to advance the struggle for Socialism are as follows:

- The formation of a revolutionary working class party in the USA and immediate steps to build links with the workers in all the countries plundered by US imperialism
- This means steps towards the setting up of a revolutionary International
- The setting up of workers committees in workplaces, mines, farms and factories- electing delegates, subject to instant recall, irrespective of being permanent or part-time, local or immigrant
- For a determined struggle for the expulsion of the current union bureaucracy, breaking the unions from the Democratic party
- The formation of an Occupy White House movement.

We remember, in 1963 Martin Luther King turned the mass revolt against the system, from a fight against the White House, to a peace march to the Lincoln monument. The time has come to bury these decades of betrayal, let all workers and rank and file soldiers join hands to fundamentally change this system. Forward to working class power! Forward to Socialism!

15.10.2013

Workers International Vanguard Party WIVP, 1st Floor, Community House, 41 Salt River rd, Salt River, 7925 South Africa
ph or sms 27 822020617 email workersinternational@gmail.com, website www.workersinternational.org.za ; we are also on facebook



20.9.2013

The Interim Executive

WASP

Dear Comrades

Re: **Apology, a proposal and note of concern**

It is with regret that we inform you that we are unable to attend the special executive meeting of the 21st Sept. Please keep us informed of developments so we can discuss how we can link up with you. The central point for us is that wherever possible we will support United Front actions with you of class struggle. For us, the revolutionary use of the parliamentary platform is a tactic, not a principle. To this end, we request that you discuss our letter to you of the 24th Aug 2013. We request that you reply to our points raised there as this would help to clarify points of agreement and difference.

To explain further our concerns over electoralism that we see from the approach of the Wasp Secretariat, let us quote from Lenin's ***State and Revolution***:

*'A democratic republic is the best possible shell for capitalism, and therefore, once capital has gained control (through the Palchinskys, Chernovs, Tseretelis and Co) of this very best shell, it establishes its power so securely, so firmly that **no** change, either of persons, or institutions, or parties in the bourgeois republic can shake it.'*

We see from this and other writings of the Marxist movement that any participation in a bourgeois parliament is to expose it, discredit it and to prepare the way to disband it, to counterpose it to the self-organization of the masses *outside* of it. Unfortunately, we do not see this approach being taken by the Wasp Secretariat. 'Get rid of the fatcats' you say, as if putting in some 'thin cats' will change the lives of the masses. We should be saying that whatever cat is sent to parliament, the cat and parliament will always be a hostage to the capitalists.

If we want to build Wasp as a fighting organization, we need to look at the most important challenges facing the working class today. Thus Wasp needs to take a position on the recent exposures that the police deliberately lied and falsified evidence at the Farlam Commission.

This immediately raises the question as to who gave the instruction for spending 9 days to falsify the evidence and why. Thus the line of blood leads to Ramaphosa, the ANC NEC, the entire Cabinet, the heads of the police, the bosses of Lonmin and the bosses of Anglo American. It also leads to the Cosatu and SACP leaders who are directly linked to the Cabinet. We also need to immediately warn the mineworkers and the masses that Farlam is postponing the matter to give the police and the state to come up with a new explanation for the lies; perhaps they may even arrange a hit on the policeman who spilt the beans on Monday.

Let's face it, Wasp is small and cannot lead a general strike, but what Wasp can do, is expose the recent developments, analyse its implications for the masses and call for a preparation for a general strike.

This is really what should be the central discussion at the meeting on Sat 21 Sept, not elections.

If elections are also discussed then, the approach should be about how to link current class struggles and exposure of parliament, for example:



- Calling for the entire Cabinet to step down and for their arrest; calling for the arrest of the police involved in the planning and carrying out of the massacre; the arrest of the Lonmin and Anglo bosses; the disbanding of the police and the general arming of the masses
- Call for the arrest of all the apartheid operatives that were involved in the killing and/or attacking of the masses who were fighting the system
- Withdraw all SA troops from all over Africa, especially where they are involved in protecting mining operations of capitalists and imperialists; cut all links to Africom and all imperialist militaries; arrest those SA mercenaries operating for capitalist companies as a private army in Iraq, Libya and elsewhere
- Stop all diamond and coal exports to Israel
- For the immediate reinstatement of the 1000 soldiers, an end to the victimization of the rank and file soldier and for the right of soldiers to belong to unions.
- Calling for the immediate expropriation of all the mining companies, without compensation, to be placed under workers control, linking this to the trillions taken out by them over the past 40 years plus, through transfer pricing and other theft mechanisms
- How to reach all the masses? Why stand in provinces? Why not only stand on the central ballot; call for the disbanding of the provinces as they are mostly on the lines of the old bantustans; call for direct representation and all representatives to only receive the wage of an average skilled worker, and be subject to instant recall;
- No to multi-year agreements, wages should rise when prices rise
- Share all the work among all who can work
- Ban labour brokers
- Scrap e-tolling
- Make all vacant hotel space, empty buildings (that should be refurbished) and sections of unused housing space in the mansions of the upper middle class and capitalists available to those without proper housing
- Expropriate all the large construction and allied companies, without compensation, to be placed under workers control
- Nationalise the land, expropriate all large commercial farms , large food producers, large distributors and large retailers, without compensation, to be placed under workers control
- For the immediate reinstatement of all victimized farm and mine workers.
- Free quality health care- expropriate all the private medical companies, without compensation, to be placed under workers control
- Free, quality, liberatory education up to the highest level
- Close all the immigration prisons

We await your considered reply. Comradely greetings For the WIVP



Greek workers on the march against fascism



The revolt of 1963 against the capitalist system

August the 24th marked the 50th anniversary of the mass march in Washington when Martin Luther King jnr made his famous (infamous) 'I have a dream' speech. The fundamental question to be asked is: 'Was the march against racism or against the capitalist system?'

There is a long history of black and white workers uniting in struggle against the capitalists. In 1908 thousands of black and white coal miners in Alabama went on strike and marched jointly against the bosses. Earlier in 1963 there were many protests breaking out demanding jobs and an end to racism. A much bigger march took place on the 23rd June, uniting black and white workers, demanding jobs. The momentum was growing and the masses turned their struggles into a political fight, wanting to march against the White House. The march organisers changed the intention of the march and directed it to the Lincoln Memorial instead. There had been many protests throughout the US. The rebellion was threatening to direct its energy at the political apparatus that keeps the masses in chains for the capitalists. There was mass protests against racism, against police attacks, against rat-infested housing, segregated schools and unemployment. These protests were spreading throughout the country. The promotion by the march organisers and the capitalist media of Martin Luther King jnr, was deliberate to neutralise the revolt and to turn it into a march for the co-option of the black middle class into the very system that caused the unemployment and suffering of the masses.

Even Lincoln did not sign the Emancipation of Slavery Proclamation because of the kindness of his heart. There had been many revolts by slaves that had forced this step. After the ending of slavery, the workers still lived in poverty, suffered at the hands of racism and the harsh laws of the capitalist state.

In his speech, Martin Luther King said that they (the black middle class) had come to cash a cheque, ie a bribe to allow the black middle class to become part of the political machinery of their own oppression and exploitation, saying: 'the sons of former slaves and former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood'. Thus MLK signalled that the black middle class leaders would control the masses and in exchange they should be allowed to become part of the political apparatus. Thus the speech of MLK was to divert the working class in the USA from their struggle to take power. The class nature of reconciliation is exposed because the workers are still living in poverty, segregation, unemployment is higher now and victimization by the police continues.

In a period of mass uprising, imperialism creates and person or a structure to sidetrack it- in this case, it was MLK to calm the masses. Recently, in this period of deepening crisis, it was an Obama who was built up by the capitalist class to divert the masses from revolution, not only in the US but around the globe. In the context of the global revolt against US imperialism and against capitalism in general, Obama was created to head off revolution. He is the chief agent of imperialism who now continues to plunder the world. But this task of neutralizing the revolution becomes more difficult each day as the masses begin to see through Obama, seeing him for what he is, another imperialist agent. Even the workers in the imperialist centres are standing up as they did in their millions: you want to fix Syria, but you can't even fix Detroit' sums up the hatred of the masses for the agent of the 1%.

We can only overcome capitalism and the racism that it uses against us, through the unity of the working class. In this period of world wide revolts against capitalism, there is a chance for Socialism. For this to happen, a new revolutionary International is required. We dare to dream. Let us work to make this a reality.



Internationale

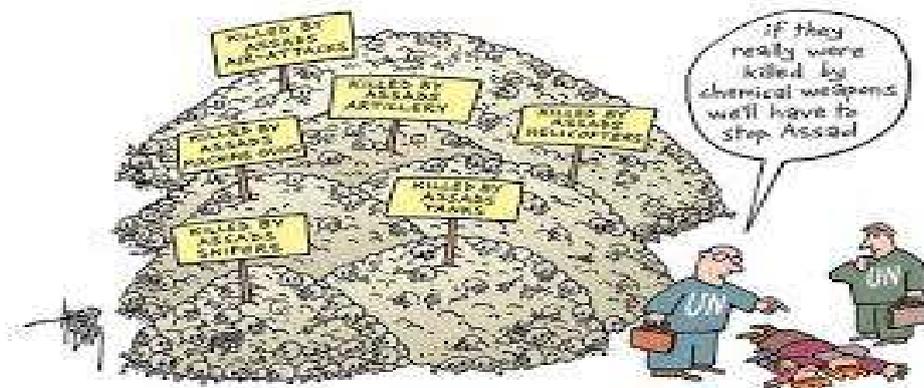
Words by Eugene Pottier (Paris 1871) Music by Pierre Degeyter (1888)

Arise ye workers from your slumbers
Arise ye prisoners of want
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Away with all your superstitions
Servile masses arise, arise
We'll change henceforth the old tradition
And spurn the dust to win the prize.

So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.
So comrades, come rally
And the last fight let us face
The Internationale unites the human race.

No saviour from on high delivers
No faith have we in prince or peer
Our own right hand the chains must shiver
Chains of hatred, greed and fear
E'er the thieves will out with their booty
And give to all a happier lot.
Each at the forge must do their duty
And we'll strike while the iron is hot.

The Internationale was written to celebrate the Paris Commune of March-May 1871: the first time workers took state power into their own hands. Representatives were mandated on policy questions by their electors, they were recallable at any time and were paid wages that reflected those of their constituents. The distinction between legislative and executive arms of government was abolished.



Herman Wallace, a leader of Black Panther movement, held in solitary confinement for decades, died within days of his release; he was part of the Angola 3



The Spark

Subscription form

I/we enclose For my subscription.

Cheques/Postal orders payable to :

Workers International Vanguard Party

Send your subscription together with this form below to our head office address.

.....

Your name.....

.....

Your address.....

.....

.....

.....

Annual Rates [including postage]:

- a) South Africa & Zimbabwe [workers]....R60
[other].....R120
- b) South Africa & Zimbabwe [including pamphlets]
[workers and pensioners]..R80
[other].....R160
- c) Rest of Africa.....R300
- d) Outside Africa [rest of the world]
\$100

Where to contact us:

1st Floor, Community House, 41 Salt River rd, Salt River, 7925. Cape Town, South Africa Ph 021 4476777 Ph: 0822020617, fax 0865486048 Email: workersinternational@gmail.com website: www.workersinternational.org.za or on our facebook group is called Workers International Vanguard Party WIVP