

Draft Theses on the Current Situation

1. A new political situation is rapidly developing in South Africa characterised in the main by:

1.1. the February 2nd speech by FW de Klerk which amongst others unbanned the ANC, SACP, PAC, and other organisations. The speech also declared a temporary moratorium on the death penalty, committed the regime to negotiations and to " a new, democratic constitution; universal franchise, no domination, the protection of minorities and individual rights, freedom of religion " and other social welfare measures. The regime also committed itself to the concept of pursuing "politics freely".

1.2. the regime has now followed up its promise to release comrade Nelson Mandela by releasing him on Sunday, the 11 of February 1990.

1.3. the manner of comrade Mandela's release and the overwhelming electric impact that his release has had on the South African political situation, shown inter alia by: an unprecedented level "festive mood" at the SABC, the regime's ideological mouthpiece in the previous period, which made live coverage of the process of Mandela's release, punctuated by songs (including Nkosi Sikel' Africa and the pop song Free Nelson Mandela), the reading of Mandela's history + passages from his speeches, and so on.

1.3. statements coming from the regime show an unusual willingness to chart an unknown path forward, deliberately minimising hostility to the ANC, not wanting to antagonise the ANC but saying, "the ball is in the ANC's court". A commentary on SABC (RSA) on the 12th February, said that it is now up to Mandela to lead South Africa into the future. (note that they say it is up to Mandela and not FW de Klerk!). The regime is in a political, economic and ideological crisis at the moment, and the initiative can stay with the ANC. Apartheid is no longer defensible even by the Nationalist Party.

1.4. there continues to be confusion amongst the soldiers and the police on what is actually happening and how they are expected to "perform their duties". Indications are that police action depends on a number of factors: the politics of the immediate commander, the particular state of affairs in an area (eg the Cape Town looting by the lumpen proletariat and agent provocateurs) etc.

1.5. there are signs of vacillations and confusion amongst politicians of both the liberal opposition (DP) and members of the governing party. The white community is also in a state of uncertainty and is concerned about its future, particularly given their socio-economic and political history. Their politics are in a state of historical flux, capable of moving in the winning direction. The right-wingers are threatening open warfare but

their base is constrained by the nature of the political situation.

1.6. Because of the above (1.4 + 1.5), the conditions are ripening for a concerted effort to switch loyalties of the major organs and personnel from the previous moribund regime to the new emerging South Africa. We must vigorously pursue a political posture aimed at winning the soldiers, the police and sections of the administrators in the organs of the state. We must reach out to whites, the business class, vacillating forces, addressing their fears, pushing forward our slogans drawn from our political positions.

1.6. The mood of the majority black people has never been so high. The presence inside the country of the senior leaders of the ANC has provided immense political opportunities for the forces of liberation in South Africa. There is confusion in the bantustan administrations, most of whom are showing signs of willingness to join forces with the ANC and the victorious cause of the people.

1.7. The international situation is still favourable to the positions of the liberation movement despite attempts by the Thatcher regime to weaken these positions. The mood is one of support for the steps taken by the ANC and all liberation forces. There is also a concentrated media focus on South Africa away from eastern Europe in the light of the release of Mandela. This gives instant coverage of our situation to the international audience on a daily basis.

2. The situation calls for bold and decisive steps to be taken by the ANC and the whole liberation movement. These steps must be put out before the people in the form of tactical slogans for mobilisation around which mass insurrectionary mobilisation can be carried out. The fundamental question is that of democratic state power. The political processes towards this fundamental objective will not be straight forward.

3. The tactical slogan in the current period should be that of the immediate convocation of a Provisional Government. Such a government will be drawn from the major contestants in such a way as to maintain political authority and act against the right-wingers who want to abort our revolution. Some of the personnel from the present regime, who are visible and whom participation in the Provisional Government will constrain (desperate forces) should be included in such a government. Such a government must have a clearly defined mandate to run government affairs for a given period of time only. During such a period, free political activity, freedom of association and speech, and other freedoms imperative in pursuance of politics must be guaranteed and protected.

4. The medium-term demand is that of a democratically elected Constituent Assembly whose main task will be the drafting of a National Constitution for a free, non-racial, united and democratic

South Africa. Election to this assembly to be on the basis of one-person one-vote on a common voters' roll for all adult persons in South Africa. This is the forum for "negotiations".

5. The strategic slogan should be for the establishment of a democratic, united non-racial South Africa. As we fight now for a Constituent Assembly, this strategic slogan, which represents the objectives of the national democratic revolution must not be clouded. But there should be no confusion between the tactical and strategic slogans around which political activity is organised.

6. This is not the period to hesitate and waste time. This is the period to be bold and throw our energies into decisive political action. Time must not be lost because as we lose time, the reactionary forces who are disorganised by current political events are regrouping, regaining confidence lost and preparing an assault against those forces committed to a democratic South Africa.

7. The various levels of political organisation must not be collapse into one, but deepened even further. The mdm, the democratic forces in the racist parliament, patriotic forces in the enemy created institutions, the legal ANC, the ANC underground; all must continue to operate (granted that certain organisational adjustments will be necessary, the major focus remains true) and consolidate their alliances for the victory of the democratic cause. The strength of all the revolutionary forces + the forces for change as a whole, will undoubtedly play an important role in the contestations for both the Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly.

Towards a Provisional Government for SA....> Constituent Assembly.....> Democratic National Constitution.....> Democratic Society/Government of the people.....>.....!!!!

ends

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