

**THE WORKING CLASS AND THE UDF**

Unity initiatives among workers continue as witnessed by the 5th trade union summit in Athlone. On their own workers can only elaborate trade union consciousness on the basis of their daily experiences at the point of production. By their nature trade unions are heterogeneous. Their daily experience is the only thing which unites them against the exploiter. A democratic union must be judged by its attitude towards the grievances of workers, the position it assumes in the event of action by the workers and by its policies as enshrined in its constitution.

Ideological differences among unions retard workers' unity and cannot be emphasised at the expense of the points that unite workers. The same with the tactics of registration and non-registration which affect unions equally through the Labour Registration Act. The UDF cannot supersede workers' unity. Instead the unity of the workers lays a wide basis for the success of the UDF.

The workers are a leading force in our struggle, not only because of their numerical strength, but because of the objective position they occupy in the South African society. They are the producers of material wealth, while being denied the leading position in the production of this wealth, moreover they are denied political rights. Because of this and their organisation and political consciousness, they are a decisive force in the struggle for the destruction of the racist colonial structures and to ensure that: *"ALL SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH."*

The workers therefore must contribute this revolutionary courage to the UDF by supporting and joining it. The numerical strength of the UDF depends on the extent to which the workers are unionised and politicised. The participation of the rural masses depends on the understanding that the rural people and farm labourers are the workers' time-tested allies in the struggle for change. Only when the co-ordinating centre of

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***OUR ARMY NEEDS A DYNAMIC  
POLITICAL PROGRAMME***

- ISAAC MAKANA

The article written by comrade Amos Aluko entitled *"Mastering the Art of Winning Victory"* raises topical problems of our revolution. In the article the comrade discusses, among other things, the important question of political education in the ranks of our revolutionary army. He argues, and correctly so, that in order to master the dynamic situation developing in our country, we must work out a political programme which will be geared towards producing political organisers, propagandists and agitators who will give solutions to the day to day political problems agitating our people

the workers has been achieved shall all unions and the UDF be able to reach the far flung areas of our country.

### THE TOUCH-STONE OF PATRIOTISM

The strategic aim of the national struggle is enshrined in the Freedom Charter. Meanwhile that the implementation of the Charter has not yet been achieved, the national character of the present phase shall dominate and the Charter shall continue to be our basis for unity. All patriots must advance only those tasks which are warranted by the people's experience and must keep in step with the people. Only when we act, keeping with the tasks of this stage shall we be able to raise the consciousness and organisation of the people to utilise the revolutionary energies and potentials of all classes and social groups for people's victory.

To defend the Charter is to defend the broad class and national interests of the main social forces in the South African revolution during the democratic stage. The Freedom Charter is the touch-stone of patriotism. Today in South Africa there can be no patriotism outside the Freedom Charter.

The ANC and the entire people know from experience that the mass army of the revolution can only be created in the course of struggle. The people must be convinced through their own experiences that unity in action is correct. Persuading the people on the correctness of the policy of the ANC and those of the UDF on the basis of their experience is the most important tactical principle.

Change becomes visible only when the people become conscious of the need to effect revolutionary change. To avoid a determined fight with the enemy is to alienate oneself from the people and to condemn the struggle to failure. The masses derive their political and organisational lessons in struggle. Unless this struggle is conducted it is impossible to muster the people, and prepare the masses for the advent of democracy. Unity is built in struggle.

## S' VIEWPOINT

and chart the way forward to the revolutionary seizure of power from the oppressors and exploiters. (*The article herein referred to appeared in DAWN Vol. 7 No. 6*).

The basis of that programme would naturally be lectures on our pre-colonial history, wars of resistance, history of our liberation movement, theory of the South African revolution and the basics of Marxism-Leninism. This is done in our ranks to a considerable degree of success. However, we must guard against the danger of becoming prisoners of complacency. There is obviously still more room to improve the quality of the material we impart to our cadres. In our lectures we must guard against concentrating on the superficial elements of any issue, but must delve into the depth of its aspects, penetrate its essence in order to single out the roots, connections, problems, strong and weak points, achievements and set-backs for the purpose of isolating and

eliminating shortcomings and mistakes, consolidating achievements and strong points for the advance of our revolution.

Still we have yet to ask ourselves a question: *can a political programme of the character and scope described above be adequate to produce the political organisers capable of galvanising and welding our embattled people into a solid block that would crush the apartheid monster and build a South Africa of the Freedom Charter?* Such a programme would certainly fall short of its objective, so long as it does not address itself to the current political problems confronting our people and movement - problems connected with the political mobilisation of the millions of the masses of our people.

We usually say the people are the real makers of history. Yet we must never be hostages of the illusion that they make that history automatically, spontaneously. No, the people need a vanguard, they must be led. They must be organised, united and their consciousness must be elevated. It is precisely here that the role of Umkhonto cadres comes in as political organisers and propagandists. Concretely speaking, there are two related questions of crucial importance to which our political programme has to address itself. These are the politics of revolutionary trade unionism and the theory and practice of United Fronts.

One of the basic tenets of the theory of the South African revolution is that for it to be victorious, the working class must play the leading role. Our theory also moves from the premise that the maximum mobilisation of our people is the essential prerequisite for our victory. In our situation, the mobilisation of the oppressed and exploited people is in a real and significant way the mobilisation of the working class because the majority of our people belongs to that class. This statement must never be construed to suggest that only the working class must be organised. Such a position would be a sectarian approach to our revolution and it is alien to both theory and practice of our liberation movement. It further negates the very essence of the concept of United Fronts.

The political line of our movement is clear, all classes and strata of our people must be organised and drawn into the mainstream of our revolution. Here we are singling out one factor - that in our country unlike elsewhere in Africa - the working class is not only the most revolutionary class of all classes opposed to racist and capitalist tyranny, but also the most numerous of all those classes. But the working class cannot fulfil its role unless it is organised, unless its political and class consciousness is raised.

Who is going to do that? It is surely not only the comrades in SACTU. The cadres of the African National Congress must do it. We must devote some hours in our programme to the arming of our cadres with the necessary political weapons, and when doing so we must guard against the danger of divorcing the abstract from the concrete, of isolating theory from practice. These lectures on trade unionism will have real meaning only if they shed light on the problems at home, if they assist in solving those problems. Otherwise they would degenerate into old clichés. Where the situation allows it, experts on these problems could be called to give well-researched papers.

Many of us must confess that we are not so well versed with the chemistry of the trade union movement at home. That ignorance comes out clearly when we have to analyse the question of the different trends, problems of unity, manoeuvres of reform-

ist and reactionary international trade union bodies like ICFTU, AFL-CIO, AALC and strategy and tactics of the bosses and the state. The problem with some of our cadres is that instead of examining the situation soberly as it is, they are quick to hurl reactionary tags at an organisation or individual. One for instance, often hears that FOSATU is reactionary. When one asks for reasons for such a conclusion, it is said because its (FOSATU) unions are registered. Such an assessment is fraught with grave mistakes and is undoubtedly incorrect. FOSATU is definitely not reactionary, at least not at the moment. Of course we may not agree fully with some of its statements and actions. Our liberation movement has now and again raised such points of divergence. It is not the purpose of this article to discuss them. Anyway even if FOSATU was reactionary we would be doing violence to history if we were just to dismiss it and leave the whole thing there. A vanguard really worth that title has to take people as they are, with their prejudices, moods, fears and political backwardness. It will never find ready-made people. It must organise, educate and show them the way forward. Our attitude then to FOSATU would be to extend to that federation our influence of revolutionary trade unionism.

Now the question of *United Fronts*. Nowadays we are witness to a powerful upsurge that is unfolding throughout the length and breadth of our country. In the theatre of this political ferment, there are more than a dozen organisations and trade unions with different ideological orientations. On the whole, all of them are anti-racist and democratic, all strive for the elimination of the apartheid system. Of course the organisations differ in so far as their militancy, consistency and readiness to confront the common enemy is concerned. Some of them have already given their unqualified support to the Freedom Charter, others have not. The formation of the United Democratic Front recently is a practical realisation of the thesis that the maximum mobilisation and unity of our people is the fundamental requirement of our victory over the forces of racism and reaction.

### TASKS

What are the tasks then in the context of the UDF? The ANC as the vanguard must consolidate, strengthen and broaden this front. It must deepen the consciousness of the thousands upon thousands of the people who swell its ranks. The political organisers must be in the front-line of these mass struggles in order to give the day to day direction and leadership. But to be able to do so effectively, these political operatives must be equipped with the necessary tools, with the proper theoretical knowledge. Practice is blind without theory. We must therefore educate our cadres on the role and significance of United Fronts. Our comrades must discard the dangerous practice of placing organisations under abstract categories of progressive and reactionary. Sometimes it is easy to say for instance AZASO is progressive, AZAPO is reactionary, SAAWU is progressive, CUSA is reactionary. But is it useful? Subjecting organisations to abstract revolutionary formulae is not a reliable criterion to judge whether an organisation is revolutionary or not, but rather what that particular organisation does in actual life. We must learn to adopt a concrete historical approach to problems, "a concrete analysis of a concrete situation".

Organisations might have different ideological inclinations, but that should not be a

barrier to united action. The experience of freedom loving forces the world over has confirmed more than a hundred times that ideological differences cannot be an obstacle to unity. The most important thing is to agree on a minimum programme of action against the main enemy and that programme must spell out categorically clear who that enemy is. Moreover, it is absolutely vital that in practical action, in the day to day battles, the main blows are directed at the common enemy. The organisations must have the inalienable right to safeguard their organisational and ideological independence. Nobody, for example, is saying to AZAPO that before it can join the UDF it must renounce its ideology of black consciousness. Although most of the organisations comprising the UDF subscribe to the Freedom Charter, they do not and cannot put it as a precondition for joining the UDF. On the other hand, they would naturally and rightly so resist any attempts aimed at watering down their ideological stand as organisations. In future there might be a further proliferation of organisations in our country. Some will appear only to fade away, there will be vacillations and betrayals. Yet others will endure. We must be ready and able to identify even the smallest pockets of resistance and draw them into the mainstream of assault on the common enemy.

In conclusion, it must be strongly suggested to have as part of the political programme lectures on research material based on the experiences of other revolutions. Problems connected with mass mobilisation, alliances, forms of struggle, propaganda and agitation would feature in that programme. Works by Lenin such as "Left-wing Communism - an Infantile Disorder" and writings by Vietnamese revolutionaries are a rich store-house of experience.

## DEFENCE OF APARTHEID

Under the 'new constitutional proposals' the executive President, who is also the chairman of the cabinet is given dictatorial powers. He decides on the common issues which are to be discussed by the cabinet.

Falling under these common issues is what they term defence - the defence of apartheid; the defence of white racist privileges. Defence is common only in as far as it means increased repression against the people, detention without trial, bannings, deaths in detention, massacre of South African refugees and the destabilisation of Southern African states.

This is exactly the terms of the homelands, so that who says that the constitutional proposals are wrong and unacceptable because they exclude blacks is wrong. He may as well say that bantustans were wrong because they excluded Coloureds and Indians, because what the new constitutional proposals of 1983 stand for is what the old bantustans dispensation of 1929 stood for.

If the bantustan dispensation was able to boldly declare a conglomerate of scattered barren farms and dilapidated townships a country called Bophuthatswana, what can stop a racist mentality from declaring Allen Hendrickse a president of a certain Bophuthacoloureds and Rajbansi a president of Bophutha-Indians?

**Radio Freedom - Luanda**