



**Director's Report on the Activities
of the Chris Hani Institute
for the period October 2012 to September 2015**

**Presented by
Edward Webster
Director, Chris Hani Institute
and
Professor Emeritus,
Society, Work and Development Institute, University of the Witwatersrand**

to the

Board of the Chris Hani Institute

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1. Introduction

1.1 Objectives

The Chris Hani Institute (CHI) was launched in 2003 to promote the values and principles practised by Chris Hani and others in their struggle to serve the aspirations of ordinary working people and the poor in Southern Africa.

The CHI aims to engage in the battle of ideas, to develop alternatives to neo-liberalism, and to deepen the links between progressive intellectuals in our universities and inside the democratic movement. Our research, educational work and public engagement is from the perspective of working (and workless) people, from the losers rather than the winners in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2 Types of Work

The CHI engages in three main kinds of work:

1. **Public engagement:** Public debates, roundtables and workshops on key socio-economic issues in South Africa such as the work and life of Chris Hani, the Land Question, Township Economies and the National Development Plan (NDP).
2. **Worker Education:** Teaching courses for shop stewards on the global economy, participation in the Global Labour University (GLU) programme for union officials at the University of the Witwatersrand, and presentations to affiliates and worker educators.
3. **Strategic and applied research projects:** The Chris Hani Institute has initiated or participated in research on the following issues:
 - Building a culture of service – household survey to examine work and living conditions in the Chris Hani District Municipality around Sabalele, the birthplace of Chris Hani
 - External review: Repositioning the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) into the future
 - Organising vulnerable workers in South Africa, Ghana and India
 - The changing class structure of South Africa
 - Alternatives to neo-liberalism
 - Hidden Voices: Unpublished scholarly work of left intellectuals between 1950 and 1990
 - Lessons from South America, including publishing *A Lula Moment for South Africa: Lessons from Brazil*
 - Revisiting the National Question

1.3 Beneficiaries

Activists in trade unions, political parties and community organisations as well as NGOs, students and university lecturers in South and Southern Africa.

2. Activities: October 2012 to September 2015

In 2013, the first year of my directorship of the CHI, we initiated a number of activities covering our mandate to engage with the public through seminars and workshops, to undertake worker education and to conduct strategic research in the interests of working people. We have grouped these activities into four themes:

- Comparative Labour and Politics
- Alternative Paths of Development in the Age of Globalisation
- Trends in Left Thought
- Precarious Work and the Future of Labour

In this, my final report, I summarise the progress we have made and the projects that are incomplete.

2.1 Theme 1: Comparative Labour And Politics

2.1.1 Repositioning peak-level social dialogue in South Africa: NEDLAC into the future

This research project revisited the 2006 External Review of the National Economic Development and Labour Council in the light of a shift in policy-making processes post-2007, the global economic crisis that began in 2008, and the increase in both workplace and community protests. NEDLAC constituencies are increasingly concerned about whether the costs of NEDLAC outweigh its benefits as a peak-level social dialogue institution. The research explored the possibilities of repositioning the Council more centrally into the policy-making process, and provided recommendations for repositioning it into the future. The resulting report was presented to NEDLAC's Annual Labour Forum on 20 January 2014. A Task Team has been established to implement the recommendations, which were designed to break the policy stalemate in South Africa and to strengthen NEDLAC.

The research proposed that NEDLAC reposition its role to become not only a bargaining forum but also a space for the social partners to participate in the process of decision-making. This shift in the focus of NEDLAC could provide the basis for a series of multiple pacts at the micro, meso and macro levels. At the macro level, NEDLAC can provide a forum for the debate around the proposal for a national minimum wage, a parallel process to that taking place in Parliament.

2.1.2 A Lula Moment for South Africa? Lessons from Brazil

This collection of essays was launched at COSATU House on 18 February 2014. The publication emerged out of a “Roundtable on Comparing Brazil and South Africa: A Labour Perspective” that was hosted by the CHI at COSATU House in February 2013. The keynote speaker at the book’s launch was Alfred Faad Silho, a Brazilian Marxist economist based at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. Brazil’s combination of rapid economic growth and steady reduction in extreme poverty over the last decade persuaded COSATU that a strategy of income-led growth is possible in South Africa. Inspired by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, president of Brazil from 2003 to 2010, in 2012 COSATU motivated for what they called a Lula Moment in South Africa.

How did Lula manage to reduce inequality in a country that has long been one of the world’s most unequal societies? How was Brazil able to increase formal employment during one of capitalism’s worst economic crises? How did Brazil win the support of labour for their neo-developmental approach? This collection of essays by leading experts on Brazil and South Africa explains how the Lula Moment came about, its contradictions, its limits and its possibilities. We conclude, surprisingly, that the socio-economic transformation that Lula brought about in Brazil lies at the core of the African National Congress’s historic mission in South Africa. The collection argues that space exists for South Africa’s own Lula Moment, but that the window is rapidly closing.

2.1.3 Militants or managers? COSATU and democracy in the workplace

This is a chapter for a book, *The Future of Labour in South Africa*, based on a survey of COSATU shop stewards undertaken by the Forum for Public Dialogue and to be published in October 2015. The chapter demonstrates how the “managerial” role of shop stewards has been deepened by the creation of full-time shop stewards who are removed from the shop floor and given managerial status (an office, a cell phone, an increase in salary, transport, etc.). On average 12% of the shop stewards in COSATU are full-time, with some unions, such as the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), having 24% full-time shop stewards. We show how this can lead these full-time shop stewards to identify with management, drawing them into the structures of management.

2.1.4 The Global Labour University ENGAGE teaching programme for trade unionists

This project is a partnership on worker education, and involves the CHI and the Global Labour University. The Engage Course of the GLU took place over six months in 2013 at the University of the Witwatersrand; it focused on the challenge to labour arising out of neo-liberal globalisation. Professor Webster taught a week-long course on Global Governance and a two-week course on Research Methods. Trade unionists who participated in the course learned how to use mapping for recruitment and organising which would allow them to return to their home unions and transfer their new skills in order to revitalise their organisations. The CHI worked with the GLU at the University of the Witwatersrand, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Southern African office did a follow-up study in SADC countries

to examine the extent to which the participants were able to implement what they had learned. Participating countries included Malawi, Tanzania, Swaziland, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa.

The Engage Transfer Project has been completed; the participants reported back on 25 and 26 November 2014 on the results of their research, and are working out a Plan of Action.

2.1.5 A diagnostic tool for the realisation of decent work

An article was jointly published by Edward Webster, Deborah Budlender and Mark Orkin, entitled “Developing a Diagnostic Tool and Policy Instrument for the Realisation of Decent Work” in the prestigious journal of the International Labour organisation (ILO), the *International Labour Review*, in July 2015. It is based on the findings of a research report commissioned by the Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED), and submitted to the GDED in September 2012.

Using the ILO decent work indicators, the report develops a diagnostic tool to measure decent work in the province of Gauteng. Through a quantitative survey instrument, supplemented with qualitative in-depth interviews, research was undertaken into working conditions among vulnerable workers in three sectors: the private security industry, agriculture and the hospitality sector. In contrast with the standard ILO decent work index, which is an instrument designed to measure decent work for the country as a whole, this research instrument focuses on individual workers at sector level. By using a diagnostic tool at sector level, key actors in the sector will be able to develop evidence-led strategies to overcome the decent work deficits. The diagnostic tool can be used to monitor the implementation and realisation of the goal of decent work.

We have been invited by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to use the diagnostic tool in a pilot study to monitor the implementation of the goal of decent work in the contract cleaning sector over a three-year period beginning in 2015. Funds are being sought for the implementation of this innovative response to the challenge of informalisation of the labour market.

2.1.6 Farlam Commission on the Marikana Massacre

I made a presentation on 16 April 2014 to the public seminars run by the Farlam Commission on causes of the strikes on the platinum belt. The presentation was titled “Strike Violence in Industrial Relations: Alternative Avenues”.

I was invited to present a version of my evidence at a conference on “Labour Conflicts: Russia in the Global Context” at the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow on 14 November 2014. This is to be submitted for publication in a special edition of the Global Labour Journal on Collective Labour Conflicts in Russia in Comparative Perspective.

2.1.7 Ditsela

The Director has been a regular keynote speaker at the annual Ditsela certificate ceremonies.

2.2 Theme 2: Alternative Paths of Development in the Age of Globalisation

2.2.1 The Futures Commission

The goal of the Futures Commission is to formulate proposals for an alternative, fair-trade regime which includes a national policy space allowing countries to develop their own industrialisation strategies, and is based on the principles of food sovereignty, resource sovereignty and self-determination. This project is funded by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung.

The aim of this project is to bring together leading left-wing scholars and key union leaders from the Global South to set the agenda and begin work on modelling an alternative economy, politics and society together with change strategies (immediate, medium-term and long-term goals). In June 2013, we brought together forty-five unionists and left-leaning intellectuals from Brazil, Argentina, India, South Korea, Africa, Australia, Canada, UK and South Africa. The Workshop Report was presented at a conference organised by the Southern Initiative on Global Trade Union Rights (SIGTUR) in Australia in December 2013. The presentations feature on their website.

A successful follow-up workshop was held at the end of March 2015 in Cape Town on Alternatives to Neo-liberalism. Participants were drawn from India, Korea, the Philippines, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, South Africa, UK and Canada. The COSATU International Office and SIGTUR were involved. The focus of the workshop was on strategic deliberation around four key areas: the Transpacific Partnership Agreement (a new global free trade agreement currently being formulated); public-sector restructuring; tax justice; and the environment. These themes emerged from the SIGTUR conference which preceded the workshop, as delegates articulated the dangers of new legal structures, threats to public services and the lack of state revenue for redistribution because of corporate tax avoidance. Central to each of these areas is the role and abuse of corporate power. Corporations are securing new legal rights through trade agreements, destroying public services through privatisation and subcontracting, and undermining state efforts at social justice through tax avoidance.

The key papers will be published in an edited volume which will be used for educational work in unions across the Global South. Our intention is to have it translated into Spanish, Portuguese and possibly Korean. This project will be completed by the end of 2015.

2.2.2 Building a culture of service in the Chris Hani District Municipality

The CHI is engaged in a project in Chris Hani's home village, Sabalele, and the surrounding villages in the Intsika Yethu Local Municipality of the Chris Hani District Municipality (CHDM)

in the Eastern Cape. In May 2013, the CHI partnered with the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Rhodes University and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC). The aims were firstly to develop a link between the Chris Hani Institute and Comrade Chris's village, and secondly to work with unions and the local Alliance structures to strengthen the concept of public service and accountability in public-sector occupational groups such as teachers, nurses, the police and municipal officials.



Photograph by Anthea Metcalfe, April 2014.

Figure 1. The Hani memorial at the entrance of the Chris Hani Development Centre

Phase 1: We completed a survey of 200 households in Sabalele and the four surrounding villages, and interviewed key stakeholders working in the public sector. The research findings were presented to the Mayor and officials of the CHDM in Queenstown on 13 February 2014, and to the participants and other interested parties at the Chris Hani Development Centre (CHDC) in Sabalele on 10 April 2014. The final report was presented at an ISER seminar at Rhodes University in October 2014.

Phase 2: The central idea underlying this project is that local leadership is crucial but that it should be understood as a social process where the possibilities of developing a culture of service are shaped by the values of the local activists and the organisations within which they are active. We are sensitive to processes of social differentiation and class formation that are taking place. The plan is to host two workshops with key union officials in the area – nurses, teachers, police and municipal officials, where we will embark on a community development programme with the Chris Hani Development Centre in Sabelele.

The first workshop will deal with the history of underdevelopment in the area, including the political economy and climate change. The second workshop will discuss accountability of public sector officials, and try to find ways to encourage current service providers to become more accountable for the work that they are mandated to do by drawing on the iconic status of Chris Hani as a servant of the people to take it forward. CHI has funding from FES for the two workshops, but will require further funding from Government if this project is to become a viable and sustainable intervention. In order to take this forward, we have had initial discussions with two NGOs in the area, Rural Urban Livelihoods (RULIV) and Ntaba ka Ndoda.

The idea of the study was to imitate methodologically what Ruth First did in Mozambique, as described in her book *Black Gold: The Mozambican Miner, Proletarian and Peasant*. She went out into the villages with young field workers from the Centre of African Studies in Maputo, and in the evenings would reflect on different strata and classes in the rural areas. Extensive interviews were conducted with returning migrants as well as recording their songs and photographs.

There are five forms of “capital” at work in the area, most of which still have to be examined:

- Physical capital: health, education, social grants, etc. The Phase 1 survey tool identified these issues.
- Social capital: To uncover the social capital available to the area, we need to determine the social configuration of the area. Who are the power holders and power brokers? When are they active in these communities? This would mean revising some questions from the original survey for a broad scan and the need to consider the local contexts. The Integrated Community Development Process (ICDP) should try to strengthen the strong points of the community and build capacity in areas that have a deficit by using focus groups.
- Human capital: Retired miners in the community have knowledge and skills, as do the old men and women in the villages, women’s organisations, etc.
- Natural capital: Climate change.
- Finance capital: Resources available to make things to happen, money lenders.

When the communities understand how these five forms of capital integrate, there will be a comparative advantage for the success of community projects.

2.2.3 Class analysis of South Africa

This research undertook a class analysis of the South African social structure. It attempts to identify the different class forces in South Africa and the possibilities of new class alliances, especially the class location of the black middle strata. A report has been completed titled “The Changing Colour of the South African Middle Class”. It was funded by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

2.2.4 Neo-liberalism: Its crisis and alternatives

A seminar on this topic was co-hosted with the Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI) at Wits University on 19 February 2014. The guest speaker was Alfredo Saad Filho, Professor of Political Economy at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. This renowned Marxian economist has many research interests, including the political economy of development, industrial policy, neo-liberalism, alternative economic policies, Latin American political and economic development, inflation and stabilisation, and the labour theory of value and its applications. He is a co-author of *Marx's Capital*, 5th Edition, 2010.

2.2.5 BRICS Academic Forum

A research report on innovative social policy initiatives in South Africa was presented at the annual BRICS Academic Forum in Rio de Janeiro during the week of 18 March 2014. The Director formed part of the South African academic delegation and presented the report. The report was published in December 2014 in the BRICS Academic Forum, "In Brazil", under the title, "Quiet Revolution in Social Policy? A Case Study of a Community Work Programme (CWP) in rural South Africa".

2.2.6 Seminar on township economies

A successful and well-attended seminar was held on 3 December 2014 in Cosatu House. It was addressed by the MEC for Economic Development, Lebogang Maile, and the Gauteng Provincial Secretary of COSATU, Dumisani Dakile. Plans are in progress to run a series of seminars on Township Economies.

2.2.7 World Association of Political Economy Annual Conference

The CHI hosted the annual conference of the World Association of Political Economy (WAPE) from 19-21 June 2015 at Cosatu House in Johannesburg. WAPE is an international association of Marxist and development economists, based at the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Beijing. Over seventy papers were presented in this three-day conference, and over forty Chinese academics attended as well as many South Africans. The keynote speaker on the opening day was the deputy-general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Jeremy Cronin, who presented a paper on the revisions he has been developing on the concept of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and Colonialism of a Special type (CST). All tendencies of the South African left attended and lively discussions took place in the sessions. Three South Africans were honoured for their contributions to Marxist political economy – Martin Legassick for his magisterial volume *Towards Socialist Democracy*; Jacklyn Cock for her book, *The War Against Ourselves: Justice, Nature and Power*; and Vishwar Satgar for editing *Marxisms in the 21st Century: Crisis, Critique and Struggle*. The CHI was presented with a beautiful bust of Karl Marx for their contribution to the success of the conference. The next annual conference is to be held in Delhi, India, and three South Africans have been elected to the council of WAPE.

2.2.8 Seminar on the Euro Zone and Greece

Together with the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, the CHI hosted a seminar on 23 June 2015 on the Euro Zone and the austerity policies imposed on Greece. Sabina Zimmerman, a Member of the German Parliament from the Left Party (Die Linke) spoke on their demand that Greece's debt should be cancelled and that the rich should be taxed. However, she stressed that a low-wage sector has emerged in Germany, and the electorate are increasingly reluctant to finance further loans to Greece. A lively discussion followed over how best solidarity could be expressed to the people of Greece.

2.3 Theme 3: Trends in Left Thought

The Chris Hani Institute is running a research project titled "The National Question under Apartheid: Hidden Voices, Unpublished Work from 1950 to 1990", on behalf of the Ministerial Project on the Future of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS). The overall aim of the ministerial project is to recover some of the lineages of knowledge production from 1950 to 1990.

2.3.1 Hidden Voices Phase 1: The unresolved national question

The first phase of this project examines the way in which sixteen strands of left thought have addressed the National Question under apartheid.

The key challenges for embarking on this project were how to:

- identify, select from and account for such lineages (as well as particular texts);
- bring these into the academic mainstream (this implies questions of access and dissemination on the one hand and validation, credibility and legitimacy on the other);
- avoid reproducing a narrow, linear and racial/ethnic South Africanism;
- ensure broad representivity in participation.

We had a successful two-day workshop in Johannesburg on 10–11 June 2014 to discuss the format of papers and the publication of a book-length manuscript. A researcher was commissioned prior to the workshop to develop a concept paper which formed the basis of the discussions. The CHI has encouraged potential authors to bring emerging scholars onto the project. A follow-up workshop was held on 18–19 May 2015 where the commissioned papers were presented and discussed. A book containing the essays, provisionally titled *The Unresolved National Question in South African Left Thought*, will be published next year. Currently the Director and Publications Manager are editing the eighteen chapters and hope to have a manuscript ready to show to potential publishers by the end of September 2015.

2.3.2 Hidden Voices Phase 2: Unpublished works

The aim of the second phase of the project is to bring to light unpublished theses, manuscripts, academic and scholarly texts, as well as personal diaries, oral archives and field notes (that often originated outside the universities), and to bring them into the academic mainstream. The project will also consider republishing relevant material that was previously published but is now out of print.

Funding has been secured for the first year of this phase of the project from the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS). The project will be housed in the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP) at the University of the Witwatersrand.

2.3.3 Liliesleaf Colloquium

The CHI participated in the Liliesleaf Colloquium to celebrate twenty-one years of democracy and sixty years of the Freedom Charter; the colloquium took place on 24–25 June 2015. The Director presented a paper entitled “Recovering Collective Memory: Intellectuals and the Politics of Labour, 1973–1985”. The colloquium was jointly organised by the Rivonia Trust and the NIHSS.

2.3.4 Chris Hani biography

The CHI hosted, with the University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop, a successful launch of a new biography of Chris Hani by the historian Hugh Macmillan, entitled *Chris Hani*. The launch took place on 23 April 2015 at Cosatu House in Johannesburg. The workshop-style event featured presentations by Hugh Macmillan (the author), Arianna Lissoni (a historian from the Wits History Workshop) and Mavuso Msimang (a former MK comrade of Chris Hani and currently Director of the Oliver and Adelaide Tambo Foundation). The presentations were followed by a lively and protracted discussion.

2.4 Theme 4: Precarious Work and the Future of Labour

2.4.1 Edited volume on precarious work and the future of labour

This is a joint research project with the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) at Kassel University in Germany and the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP) at Wits University. It involves a comparison of organisational initiatives among vulnerable workers in Ghana, India and South Africa. A workshop co-hosted by COSATU, SWOP and the ICDD was held at COSATU House from 2–4 December 2013 on research that was undertaken during 2013 on organising agricultural workers and street traders in India, oil palm workers in Ghana, and farm workers and municipal workers in South Africa. Further research on vulnerable workers was undertaken and presented at a second workshop in Ghana in August 2014.

Four research interns were appointed in 2014 on four-month contracts to undertake research on precarious work. Jesse Wilderman, a graduate student from the Global Labour University, produced a chapter for the volume on the 2012 farm worker uprising in the Western Cape. Janet Munakamwe, also a graduate of the Global Labour University, produced a chapter on illegal gold mining. Lefa Lanka, a student from the University of Pretoria, assisted in the survey of Worker Advice Centres. Christopher Smith, a student from Rhodes, worked on the Overcoming Inequality Project and the survey of Worker Advice Centres.

The strategic issue raised here is how to give an institutional voice to precarious workers, those not in standard employment relationships and “own account workers”, and those employed in survival-type economic activities such as street traders. The ICDD in Kassel, Germany, is funding the research and the workshops.

2.4.2 COSATU task team on vulnerable work

An important activity that the CHI has participated in over the past three years is COSATU’s initiative to reconnect with its members and overcome the representational gap among vulnerable workers. A presentation on Overcoming the Decent Work Deficit was presented at the COSATU Bargaining Conference held in 2013, and the CHI was invited to join the Task team on Vulnerable Work set up later in 2013. In 2014 the CHI was commissioned to produce a report on Worker Advice Centres. The report was presented at a workshop of trade unionists. It is funded by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

2.4.3 Establishment of the Chris Hani internship/fellowship programme

We have established a modest Chris Hani Internship/Fellowship programme for non-graduate, graduate and post-graduate students. The internships/fellowships are short-term, four-month appointments funded by the ICDD in Germany where the director was a Visiting Professor. The director also put money into this fund from honoraria from outside lectures that he undertakes. We would like to develop this into an on-going project to which supporters of the Chris Hani Institute could contribute and so build a substantial fund.

2.4.4 CHI–Wits partnership on the politics of inequality

The University of the Witwatersrand has agreed to a partnership with the CHI on the theme of the politics of inequality. It will focus on overcoming inequality and will be launched later in 2015 with a one-day workshop on Inclusive Growth. Recent mainstream economic research by Thomas Picketty confirms that market-led growth deepens inequality and that good redistributive policies improve growth. Picketty has agreed to speak at the workshop. The iconic status of Chris Hani will provide a powerful symbolic figure to take forward his memory and the work of the CHI.

3 The Way Forward: Four Steps Required

It has been a great honour serving as the director of the Chris Hani institute over the past three years. Much has been achieved in building an independent left think tank in Cosatu House, but it is time to assess its future.

The members of the Board and its principals, COSATU and the SACP, will need to decide whether they wish to close the CHI at the end of my contract or whether they wish to appoint a successor. This is not a decision I can make. Each decision will have implications, and should not be entered into lightly. The simplest way forward would be to undertake a strategic review of the CHI, during which its future could be decided and new members of the Board be appointed if the decision is that the CHI continue

I propose to the Board that the following four steps require attention:

- The board undertake a strategic review.
- A successor is appointed.
- Long-term funding is established.
- Staffing requirements are met.

Each of these steps is discussed below.

3.1 Undertake a Strategic Review

The Chris Hani Institute was conceived by the SACP and COSATU as a project to institutionalise the memory of Chris Hani through the establishment of an independent left think tank and to offer an alternative to the neo-liberalism that emerged in the ANC in the context of the 1996 class project. The common political project between the SACP and COSATU has been eroded in recent years, threatening the functioning of our Board.

At the centre of these conflicts are pressures to reconfigure the Alliance, with the possibility of the different partners redefining the nature of the Alliance. I believe that a Strategic Review of the role of the CHI is necessary, especially since the decision to expel the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) from COSATU. I believe that such a review has now become urgent as the divisions within the left have undermined my vision of the CHI as a space for the non-sectarian engagement of all tendencies of the left.

At the centre of this vision is the CHI as interlocutor, bringing two components – left intellectuals in the universities, and left intellectuals within the Alliance and in civil society – into conversations around a feasible alternative to neo-liberalism in post-apartheid South Africa. To capture this vision, I dedicated the CHI Boardroom to the late Richard Turner, a central figure in developing the idea of a socialist democracy in South Africa, who was assassinated by the security police in Durban on 8 February 1978. Turner was the co-

founder, with his partner Foszia Fisher, of the *South African Labour Bulletin* which celebrated forty years of active publication on 21 November 2014.

3.2 Appoint a Successor

I have been working part-time since my appointment in September 2012. My three-year secondment from my research unit at the University of the Witwatersrand, the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP), will end in September 2015 and I am returning to the University. It is imperative that a succession plan should be put in place, and that someone be appointed to take over as Director by the end of 2015. If the CHI is to continue as an independent left think tank located within the democratic movement, this senior appointment is necessary.

3.3 Secure Long-term Funding

Currently, the Institute's core funding comes from COSATU. It is used to cover operational and staff costs – that is, a full-time Administrator, a post for a Project Manager (which was filled by two part-time individuals for most of 2014 and 2015), and a part-time Director. However, owing to the current situation in COSATU, not all the affiliates have paid up their share of the Political Levy; we did not receive our full allocation in 2014, and have not received any monies from COSATU so far this year. This has threatened our sustainability, forcing us to draw on our limited reserves.

We have successfully secured funding for all the projects we ran during 2014 and into 2015, but there is a need to secure substantial long-term funding if the CHI is to become a sustainable unit. It is difficult to develop a vision and agenda for the CHI if we are forced to raise funds on a project-by-project basis. The question of long-term funding must be a central issue at our strategic planning workshop.

3.4 Staffing Requirements

The model that the CHI is developing is that of a small organisation with a highly efficient core staff that enters into partnerships with a range of organisations inside South Africa and beyond. To function effectively and carry out its envisaged work, the CHI needs the following staff:

- Director (full-time)
- Project Manager (full-time)
- Senior Researcher (full-time)
- Office Administrator (full-time)
- Publications Manager (part-time)
- Financial reporting (contract)

4. Requirements for an Independent Left Think Tank in South Africa at this Conjunction

Eight days before Comrade Chris was assassinated, he was interviewed by Luli Callinicos. In this interview, on the eve of the 1994 democratic election, he said that South Africa faced a “new enemy” and a “new struggle”. That enemy, he said, was socio-economic; the fight would be about the struggle for jobs, houses and schools, so that we could build a society that cares.

What I understand Comrade Chris to be calling for was a culture of public service – a culture where nurses are guided by an ethic of care, teachers by an ethic of learning, police by an ethic of community safety, and local government by an ethic of public service. The new enemy, he said, was corruption, and “we in the SACP have been discussing how we should cut down on salaries of ministers, of parliamentarians, so that if you are in Parliament in Cape Town, you actually rent a flat like everybody”.

Importantly, he said in this interview in 1993, we must allow “the formation of many democratic formations in this country, organs of civil society, like the civics, independent trade unions, students’ organisations, teachers’ organisations, organisations of housewives, women, gays ... so that we are kept reminded of the needs of the people on the ground”.

Chris Hani was the second most popular political figure to Nelson Mandela at the time of his assassination. It is quite likely that he would have succeeded Mandela when he stood down in 1999. But that was not to be. Fearing a possible left shift by a newly elected government, two right-wingers assassinated Chris Hani.

I believe this was a turning point in our post-apartheid history. Not that Hani would have led an insurrection. On the contrary. He had begun to rethink his politics now that state power had been won, and embarked on what Antonio Gramsci called a war of position. In Gramsci’s words:

.... war of movement increasingly becomes war of position, and it can be said that a State will win a war in so far as it prepares for it minutely and technically in peacetime. The massive structures of the modern democracies, both as State organisations, and as complexes of associations in civil society, constitute for the art of politics as it were “trenches” and the permanent fortifications of the front in the war of position: they render merely “partial” the element of movement which before used to be the “whole” of war... (Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, 1972: 243).

Hani’s death created a vacuum on the left in post-apartheid South Africa that has not been adequately filled. It is this vacuum that motivated the SACP and COSATU to establish the Chris Hani Institute as an independent left think tank eleven years ago.

The CHI's intellectual point of departure is captured best by Harold Wolpe, the doyen of South African Marxists, whose classic analysis of cheap labour power provided the basis for a new generation of Marxists to understand the nature of apartheid as a system of cheap labour. Later, in an analysis of the left-oriented Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) adopted by the ANC on the eve of our first democratic election in 1994, Wolpe rejected the view that consensus existed within the ANC, and with considerable foresight questioned whether the RDP would be implemented. Instead he suggested that the Alliance should be seen as a contradictory site of contesting classes. To quote Wolpe:

While the RDP operates on a deeply contested terrain, in crucial respects it eradicated sources of contradiction and probable contestation and conflict by asserting harmony; and secondly, on this basis it constructs a consensual model of society which is the premise for the accomplishment of the goals of the RDP; and thirdly, on the basis of this premise it also conceptualises the state as the unproblematic instrument of the RDP (Wolpe, 1995, "The Uneven Transition from Apartheid in South Africa", *Transformation* 27: 88–101).

For Wolpe, the winning of state power was not the end of the struggle; the class struggle had taken on a different, democratic form. A year later the RDP was abandoned and South Africa embarked on a path of fiscal neo-liberal orthodoxy.

Michael Burawoy, in a memorial lecture in honour of Wolpe, took Wolpe's cheap labour thesis a step further, showing how South African capitalism is reproducing cheap labour under new conditions through recreating a cheap and flexible workforce of casual workers and growing numbers of low-paid workers, particularly women, in the service sector – in the private security industry, in the hospitality industry, and in the retail industry.

In setting up a think tank of the left, we have learned a lesson from the right and how they successfully led a counter-revolution to Keynesian economics after the Second World War through the creation of right-wing think tanks. Richard Cocket was the first to document the way in which right-wing think tanks emerged after the Second World War to challenge the hegemony of Keynesian economics over economic and social policy-making in the advanced capitalist world. The process began, Cocket argues, in 1944 with the publication of Friedrich Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*, a critique of the state interventionism then in vogue. It was a passionate plea for "market freedom" and was largely ignored until Hayek met Milton Friedman and established a think tank, the Mont Pelerin Society. This was to become the basis of the economic counter-revolution.

A similar argument has been put by Jamie Peck in his *Constructions of Neo-liberal Reason*. He focuses on the complex way in which this group of right-wing intellectuals were able to gradually position themselves through their writings and professional work to enable neo-liberalism to be adopted first by Margaret Thatcher in 1979 and then by Ronald Reagan in 1980. As Milton Friedman wrote in 1966, discussing the role of intellectuals:

The role of intellectuals is to keep options open until circumstances make change necessary. Only a crisis produces real change. When actions are taken it depends on

the ideas that are lying around. That is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies... keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable (Milton Friedman, 1966, cited in Peck, 2011).

Following in Gramsci's footsteps, this free-market intellectual project can be seen as one of practical construction and successive reorganisation of the ideological programme of the new right, in the vanguard of which sits the newly empowered class of "permanent persuaders". Intellectual contestation, Gramsci argued, is at no time more consequential than in moments of crisis, when ideational cadres rise to prominence as fabricators and rationalisers of putatively transformative programmes. This, writes Peck, is a vital clue to the "organic" function of the neo-liberal think tanks, a new organisational form that rose to prominence under just such conditions.

The history of how these think tanks were able to shift a whole paradigm of thought is a fascinating one. Neo-liberalism, at base, contends that "free markets in which individuals maximize their material interests provide the best means for satisfying human aspirations" (Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neo-Liberalism*, 2011: vii). In turn, "neo-liberal globalisation" corresponds to the worldwide process of reorganising economic activity on the principle of intensified integration of, and interdependence among, increasingly liberalised national markets.

To return to Chris Hani. Something deeply disturbing has happened since his death twenty-one years ago. The struggle for freedom, for which Hani and countless others died, has been appropriated by capital to mean the opposite – free trade, free financial markets, free labour markets. Indeed, here in South Africa, we have the heirs of the think tanks of the right – the Free Market Foundation (FMF). The FMF believes that workers should be free to sell their labour without any constraints, and that the rights that labour has won in the post-apartheid period are an obstacle to growth.

We have entered a new phase and are encountering a new enemy. The challenge for the left is this: is it possible to build a similar project to that of the right by developing an alternative to neo-liberalism rooted in the struggles and organisations emerging among working people in the Global South?

There has been a flourishing of think tanks in recent times, both in South Africa and globally. This is a crucial part of the battle for ideas and is an indication that in times of crisis, opportunities arise. The leading right-of-centre think tank, the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), realises this and has tripled its staff. Many leading figures in the Alliance have established independent think tanks: Thabo Mbeki (School of African Leadership), Joel Netshitenzhe (the Mapangubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection), Sydney Mufamadi (School of Leadership at the University of Johannesburg), and so on. Besides the recently launched Economic Policy Institute by NUMSA and the Alternative Information and Development Centre (AIDC) in Cape Town, the CHI is the only think tank that is based within Alliance structures which has as its explicit mandate a working-class agenda.

Building an entity such as the CHI is a long-term project, but it is under-resourced and will need a serious injection of funding to achieve the vision of developing it into an independent think tank of the left. I believe the time has come for those who founded the CHI, and those who continue to fund it and support it, to come together and jointly decide its future.

Our greatest challenge will be to develop the CHI as a genuinely independent left think tank. By this I do not mean that we should be neutral; we must take sides in the battle for ideas and develop a theoretical perspective that provides an alternative to neo-liberal capitalism. Our challenge will be to successfully create the CHI as a forum for overcoming the deep divisions that have emerged on the left over the past five years, and particularly since the Marikana Massacre. It is a challenge not only to rebuild trust between leaders on the left and rank-and-file members, but also to draw the middle strata, the professionals and progressive business into a more supportive role in transformation. The question raised by the divisions in Cosatu House is whether the vision I have developed for the CHI can be achieved within Alliance structures, or whether a radical re-think of its current location and board membership is now necessary.

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Submitted by

Edward Webster,

Director, Chris Hani Institute

and

Professor Emeritus, Society, Work and Development Institute,

University of the Witwatersrand

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