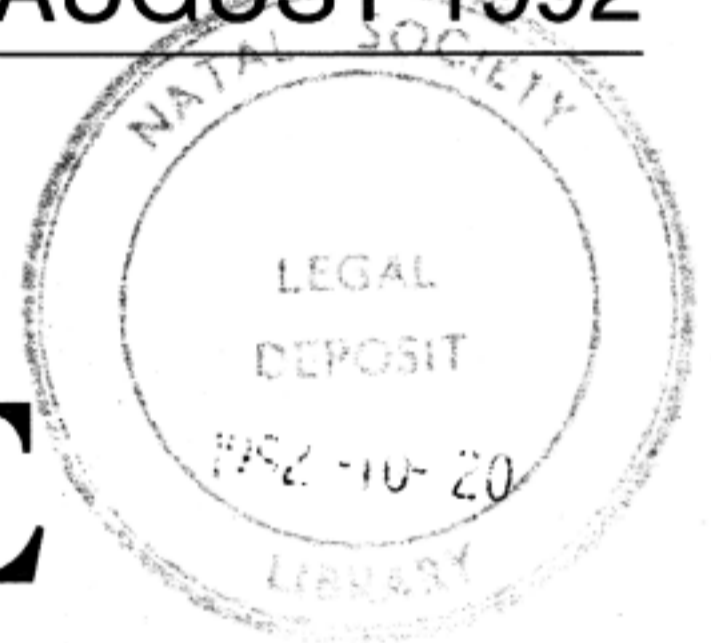


APDUSA VIEWS

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THE BOIPATONG MASSACRE

—

BEFORE AND AFTER

DEDICATION

We dedicate this issue of "APDUSA VIEWS" to Comrade Zulei Christopher, who died in Canada on 16 March 1992, whilst in exile.



WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SOUTH AFRICA?

INTRODUCTION

It will be three years in October 1992 since the process of releasing political prisoners, unbanning of organisations and the betrayal politics of negotiations began.

From the point of view of the local oppressors and their imperialist masters, negotiations were designed to trap the ANC-SACP and others into a situation where ordinary struggle would be regarded as a breach of the "peace". They reasoned that as long as the ANC-SACP were kept busy talking, there would be "peace" between the oppressors and the oppressed. And for as long as there was this unnatural peace, the international investors (mainly, the bankers and financiers) would relax and see their way clear to pumping finance capital (investment) into South Africa.

DEADLY GAME

The ANC-SACP embraced the betrayal politics of negotiations with such eagerness that many of their members had to do a somersault in a manner which can be described most kindly as inelegant. In doing this, they deliberately chose to ignore the unforgettable lessons of history, some of which are:

1. NEVER negotiate voluntarily from a position of weakness.
2. NO ruling class ever relinquishes (gives up) power without a struggle.
3. The ruling class in South Africa serves a system of oppression and exploitation which, like a gun:

"Has no heart, no brain, no conscience
No gift of reason, no forgiveness and
no capacity for making allowances."

Those of us who know or know of, the leading personalities of the ANC-SACP will confirm that the majority of them are highly skilled in the art of manoeuvring. It was possession of this skill which foolishly and mistakenly made them believe that they could outmanoeuvre the ruling class at the negotiating table. They made the fatal mistake of under-estimating the oppressors. They believed that the De Klerk regime was similar to the Strydom-Verwoerd government which banned "Black Beauty" (a book about a horse) as a work of pornography!

Hence, at CODESA II, the ANC-SACP were almost hoisted by their own petard. Mahomed Valli, leader of the negotiating team of the ANC-SACP let it slip out in Natal that they were saved by the skin of their teeth from a constitutional trap which would have, with the consent of the ANC-SACP, perpetuated white privilege and a white veto.

CODESA has been designed to institutionalise conflict. Instead of conflict in the bush, in the streets, in the factories and the townships, conflict is conveyed in luxury cars to luxury hotels and from there to luxury conference rooms. By the time conflict regains its breath, it find itself transformed without teeth and claws.

Since its failure and farcical collapse, CODESA has been sworn and spat at from many quarters, including those who went into it with wide open eyes which could see nothing. A large constituency in the ANC-SACP have been vigorously opposed to negotiations and to CODESA. Mrs Mandela expressing the view of this constituency called CODESA "a fiasco and circus". Unfortunately, she does not tell us who the clowns were! Mr Chris Hani, leader of the SACP, stated that the withdrawal of the ANC-SACP was "the happiest day of his life since 1990" (sic) since CODESA was "destroying the liberation struggle". Those who observed the television relay of the Convention saw no sign of grief or unhappiness on the face of Mr Hani. Also, there was no indication that any person was driven at gunpoint to those luxury cars . . . and ultimately into CODESA.

Yet for two whole years prior to the CODESA farce, the oppressed were told that De Klerk was a man of integrity; that to enter into negotiations was politically correct and that it was another terrain of struggle; that it was proper for the ANC-SACP to campaign for a "YES" vote in a "Whites Only" referendum in support of the De Klerk regime.

The ANC-SACP are now paying the heavy price of political opportunism and for playing in the deadly political game of poker with the ruling class.

Each time the system goes on the offensive and acts according to its nature by engaging in brutal massacres, the leadership of the ANC-SACP is horrified to the point of incredulity. Why should they? They behave as if they honestly and sincerely expected the ruling class to have conducted itself fairly and in an honourable manner.

THE SUPER PLUNDERERS

Once again events are racing at a breathtaking pace. CODESA II collapsed like a pricked balloon. The massacre at Boipatong released pent-up hatred in the people. While Mandela tried to sell De Klerk as a "man of integrity", the people of Boipatong described him as "murderer". There were other harder-hitting epithets hurled against De Klerk. In their hostility and hatred against the ruling class, the people were streets ahead of the leadership of the ANC-SACP. It was to save face amongst the people that Mandela announced a break in negotiations and the mounting of "Mass Action". This, in turn, has set in motion a train of events which people must understand. It is essential to understand in order to make correct decisions.

Of all the actors occupying the political stage, the main ones are the imperialists, the De Klerk regime, the SACP-controlled ANC, the SACP itself and its brood of kitskommunists like Mayekiso and Gomomo who make COSATU dance the jig according to the tune composed by the SACP. They, too, have taken the shameful road of negotiations which must result in the betrayal of the poor people.

The oppressed have, by and large, steered clear of the ruling class and its stooges. Despite the "winning" face of De Klerk and the hand-on-heart proclamations of the Nationalists that they have been converted from fascism to democracy, the people have not been taken in. Experience is a great teacher. It has taught the people who has been inflicting all the suffering on them. They see only the De Klerk regime and the Bantustan gangsters. Daily, people learn that they are ruled by liars and thieves. The latter have never done their foul deeds on a modest scale. When they steal, it is not the petty cash box they go for. No, they go for "millions, if not billions".

Large sections of the white population have been corrupted by the Sahib-like lives they have been living. We are also aware of their frantic actions to secure for themselves as much as possible before majority rule comes into effect. The ruling class has turned a blind eye to wholesale thieving by its supporters. Like an insidious disease, corruption has rapidly spread in the civil service. They take their cue from their superiors. Cabinet Ministers have become the example. If they are not directly stealing, they are busy looking the other way when others steal. How else does one explain the multi-million rand theft in the Department of Development Aid and the minister in charge, Dr Gerritt Viljoen, still remains a minister!

The massive theft and fraud in the Department of Development Aid, the shameful racket in the Third Party Accident Fund involving civil servants, lawyers, doctors, etc., constitute no more than the tip of the iceberg. The ruling Afrikaners were described by journalists, Wilkens and Strydom, as the "Super Afrikaners". In an issue of "APDUSA VIEWS", we described the rulers as "The Super Bunglers" for their gross inefficiency and criminal mismanagement of the economy. In view of the latest developments we think that an appropriate name for them is "The Super Plunderers".

BEWARE OF ANY ALTERNATIVE

When a people have had to contend with an oppressive regime for generations, when they see nothing good in that system and when all that they have received from that regime was suffering, sorrow, degradation and pain, such a people will look to ANY alternative. As far as such a people are concerned, ANY other government can only be better. They will, therefore, be inclined to support any organisation which aspires to occupy the seat of government.

It is at this stage that the oppressed are most vulnerable. It is at this stage that the people are quite prepared to ignore all the warning signs that an important section of the leadership of the ANC-SACP has already adopted the lifestyle of the rulers and the capitalists. This can only bode ill for the workers and peasants since that lifestyle can only be adopted if that section of the leadership have chosen the capitalist road for selfish and reactionary reasons.

Presently, the alternative government in the minds of many people is the ANC-SACP. There are many reasons why people hold this belief. That such a belief is present cannot be denied. But those people are in for a shock. Far from striving to satisfy the aspirations of the toiling millions, that section of the leadership is busy toiling for their own millions of rands. There is increasing evidence of high living on its part. We intend to collate that evidence and to present it to the public in due course.

Apart from the craving for high living, there are frequent instances of ANC-SACP leadership engaging in double talk, talking with forked tongues or from both sides of the mouth.

Consistency is one of the greatest assets or attributes of a leadership. When a leadership is consistent, people know what to expect from it. They also get to know how the leadership will conduct itself on specific issues. Consistency breeds trust and thus a person's word is accepted.

They learn to take speeches of the leadership at their face value. With inconsistency, you never know where you stand. It is one thing today and another tomorrow. There is no way a rational person will be able to interpret the words of an inconsistent person.

THE POLITICS OF INCONSISTENCY

Prior to October 1989, the entire liberatory movement, consisting of the Unity Movement, Azapo, PAC, ANC-SACP and others was as ONE on certain fundamentals:

- No negotiations with the Oppressors.
- Non-collaboration and total rejection of the tricameral circus!
- No playing of sport with racists and the policy of “No normal sport in an abnormal society”.

These were the basic positions which bound the liberatory movement in its attitude towards the ruling class and the sellouts. That which followed October 1989 was a series of betrayals of those positions:

1. The ANC-SACP, with indecent haste, got involved in negotiations with no pre-conditions. As Mandela put it: “Everything is negotiable”. That is to say that there was nothing that was not for sale.
2. De Klerk, the leader of the ruling class, was given a certificate of respectability by Mandela. The whole country knows that notorious title of “Man of Integrity”.
3. Negotiations paid handsome dividends to the local oppressors:
 - (a) Front doors of the whole world were flung wide open for the South African Government. De Klerk became an international celebrity.
 - (b) Trade and investment-starved South Africa was once again openly welcome in the marketplaces of the world.
 - (c) Sports-starved White South Africans were once again playing Whites Only sport all over the world – thanks to the ANC-SACP and its hitmen, Ramsamy and Tshwete.

The sellouts and collaborators in the houses of ill-repute called Delegates and Representatives were publicly given acceptance by the ANC-SACP at CODESA and other forums. The reader will recall Mandela taking Rajbansi’s hand and exchanging pleasantries. Likewise, the reader will recall Advocate Skweyiya urging the people to accept J.N. Reddy and the rest of that disreputable lot.

While the leadership of the ANC-SACP was enjoying its honeymoon with the De Klerk regime, the latter had unleashed a reign of unbridled terror against the population. Massacre followed massacre. Killers went on the rampage, slaughtering men, women and children mindlessly. They went about their grisly work in the confidence that they enjoyed immunity from prosecution. Not less than 95 percent of the killers have gone undetected and it is most unlikely that they will ever be prosecuted.

Each time there was a particularly gruesome massacre, the government responded with a Commission of Inquiry which took months before it made public its findings. The delay always helps the rulers by defusing the situation. Or so the rulers thought.

The ANC-SACP attributed these massacres to a so-called "Third Force". But they are unable to describe or identify this force. Hence, the "Third Force" remains mysterious. For the government the "Third Force" is an undisguised blessing. The "Third Force" has become the scapegoat for a large part of the violence and thereby deflects blame from the ruling class.

THE PEOPLE'S ANGER OVERFLOWS

While the leadership of the ANC-SACP was busy "negotiating", the people were writhing in agony from the bloody repression and violence unleashed against them. The ANC-SACP came under heavy fire from the militant youth. They were accused of being cowardly. Derisive songs were composed: "While you talk to the enemy, they are killing us." The youth demanded guns. Certain townships became war zones. Barricades have become commonplace. Deep trenches are being dug to deny cassettes and military vehicles free access to the townships. As if by magic AK47's have made their appearance. Now, it is no longer rocks against automatic rifles. The AK47's have become a popular equalizer. For the first time in the modern history of South Africa the Defence Force and the Police find that they cannot move in and out of the townships as they wish.

Add to all this the swelling anger of the population.

It was in this setting that CODESA failed. The Nationalists had overplayed their hand. All the ANC-SACP were concerned about was about getting into the government, even though it might be an interim one. The ANC-SACP was trapped deep in the machinations of the Nationalists. Even at that stage, they were unaware of the role of the government. This lack of understanding is expressed by Mandela soon after the deadlock in CODESA:

“In spite of all the differences which have emerged here, I can say confidently that we are members of one family and one day we will be able to deliver the goods.”

This is honeymoon talk on the very eve of the Boipatong Massacre!

THE BOIPATONG MASSACRE

The Boipatong Massacre, as South African massacres go, was not very different. There was the same cruel and barbaric slaughter of men, women and children who were unable to defend themselves. Because of the frequency of this type of massacre, the one at Boipatong evoked the usual ritualistic condemnation. In all probability, it would have gone into a maze of bureaucratic inquiries and at best, a commission of inquiry would have been set up. In fact, so low key was the reaction that after their visit to the scene of the carnage at Boipatong, Joe Slovo and Cyril Ramaphosa went to a party celebrating the birthday of Thabo Mbeki. From the photograph of Joe Slovo and company, one would be hard pressed to detect mourning or sorrow on their faces.

There were two factors which made Boipatong escape the fate of “regular” massacres:

1. The level of the people’s anger, their fury and their impatience with the genteel politics between the ANC-SACP and the rulers.
2. The ability of the people to give expression to their pent-up anger and rage. This was made possible because De Klerk also came on to the scene of the slaughter. He was obviously insensitive and arrogant or he was badly advised.

The people of Boipatong let De Klerk know, in no uncertain terms, what they thought of him. The come-down from being hailed, “Viva Comrade De Klerk” to “De Klerk – you son of a raped bitch” must have been a shattering experience not only for the man, but also for the ANC-SACP who had done some hard sales pitch to convince the people that De Klerk was really a changed man.

It was a furious, but shaken De Klerk, who left the scene and faced the press.

The ANC-SACP realised that their thinking was in conflict with that of the people. There was a face to save and catching up to be done. This took place when Mandela addressed the Boipatong residents. He announced that a meeting scheduled for later that week between the ANC-SACP and the government was cancelled; that no further talks

with the government would take place, until certain demands were met. Using their contacts in the useless OAU, the ANC-SACP sought to get “mileage” out of the Massacre by taking the whole matter to the UNO, that den of robbers and bullies.

THE FIASCO AT UNO

The oppressed people of the Third World have long hated and feared the political wing of the UNO, especially the Security Council. The Iraqi orphans and widows daily curse the USA and the UNO, both of which have wreaked so much death and destruction in their country. Two years after the commencement of the attack, the UNO is still persecuting and humiliating Iraq. It was to this body that the ANC-SACP turned for help. Nothing could have been more cynical, more dishonest or more misleading.

When the Sharpeville massacre took place, the whole world paused and took note of the massacre. In time the world reacted and declared the South African government and the white electorate an outcast. After Boipatong, the ANC-SACP sought a repeat performance. Unfortunately for them, they miscalculated. Boipatong 1992 was not Sharpeville 1960. Thanks to the prodigious effort of the ANC-SACP, South Africa was no longer regarded as an outcast.

It is commonly agreed that in the verbal joust between Mandela and Pik Botha, the latter emerged victor. But the fiasco does not end there. The sellouts and collaborators who, to date, have not been able to borrow the ears and patience of the oppressed for more than a few seconds before they were howled down, were given a platform to address the nations of the world. And what is more, those creatures used the platform to assail the ANC-SACP. The latter have only themselves to thank for the drubbing they received.

The UNO, being protective of its latest protégé, De Klerk, treated the ANC-SACP as errant schoolboys. They were told to get back to the negotiating table -- the very thing De Klerk was urging the ANC-SACP to do. The cherry on the top for imperialism was the appointment of Cyrus Vance, a trusted agent, to monitor violence in South Africa. Again, the strong element of cynicism. Bellicose and aggressive imperialism which thrives and prospers on war and violence sending its trusted agent to monitor violence!

MASS ACTION

After failing in its mission to get the UNO to pass resolutions condemning the South African government, the ANC-SACP had no choice but to return to the negotiating table. Having suspended the so-called armed struggle and having been abandoned by the former Soviet Union, the ANC-SACP had been left with no bargaining chips. It meant that they would have to go to the table with nothing but moral arguments – arguments which bounce off the oppressors like water off a duck's back. Hence the need to back moral argument. Hence mass action.

For a whole week, people were made to put up a performance – to stay at home; to march; to sit down; to dance and stamp feet; to shout slogans. The presence of the UNO monitoring team ensured that the police and army were on their best behaviour. So were the many thugs and hoodlums who attach themselves to the doings of political organisations.

Notwithstanding the best behaviour act, 60 people lost their lives.

On whom must the responsibility for these deaths lie?

If you ask people who supported Mass Action what the purpose of it was, you will get conflicting answers. There are those who saw the Mass Action as a means to overthrow the oppressive system. This was to be achieved by overwhelming the government with hundreds of thousands – if not millions, of protesters. This was described as the “Leipzig Option”. This name comes from what took place in East Germany in 1989. The “Leipzig Option” was shot down by Mandela who made it clear that Mass Action had no insurrectionary objectives. That is, it was not designed to overthrow the system. Rather, it was sought to make it easier for the ANC-SACP at the negotiations table.

However, the ANC-SACP radicals, like Mr Harry Gwala of the Natal Midlands Region of the ANC-SACP persist that mass action would be continued until power is transferred to the majority (Natal Witness – 8 August 1992).

For the majority in the leadership of the ANC-SACP mass action, and the suffering and sacrifices which accompany it, was designed for the continuation of the negotiation process which in the end must result against the interests of the ordinary people.

FOLLOWING NERO

It is said that Nero, the Roman tyrant, played the fiddle (more likely the lyre) while Rome burnt. The meaning of this phrase is that people are inclined to attend to or engage in irrelevant or useless activity while important tasks are left unattended. That, in our view, is precisely what the ANC-SACP is doing. They are so obsessed with negotiations politics that they are doing nothing about the fire which is raging throughout the country and which is threatening to consume society as a whole.

How does the fire manifest itself?

1. A whole nation is engulfed in daily mindless violence. Daily, people are being killed for no other reason than that they belong to an organisation which does not meet with the approval of the killer. Such killings have been going on for over eight years. There are no signs of abatement of this abominable practice. And for as long as this practice continues there is no hope for a peaceful and democratic South Africa. **REMOVAL OF THE NATS FROM POWER BY ITSELF WILL NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM!** The fratricidal outlook will survive the Nats. Killing as a means of expressing political differences has become steeped in the thinking of people. They regard this practice as correct and acceptable. In this environment democracy has no chance to survive, let alone flourish.

The task facing the entire liberatory movement is the eradication of this kind of thinking.

2. There are millions of young people who are lost to the country, perhaps forever. These youth are ill-educated, ill-equipped, ill-prepared to make a positive contribution to the development of South Africa. Though lacking the skills, the youth have expectations of a good life which their station in life cannot afford. Therefore, they increasingly turn to a life of crime. Guns, motor cars, robbery, rape and murder. And in the end, their own untimely death. This is the story we read and hear of over and over again.

Another section of the youth has acquired a rudimentary political training. They have become a political force in the African townships which no organisation can direct or control or subdue, if necessary. Disaffected groups or individuals from the ANC-SACP have, apparently, given AK47 rifles to these youth. They have thus become a law unto themselves and in certain areas they hold the entire population in terror.

Being unemployed, these youth have all the time and opportunity to observe what is going on in their area. Nothing escapes them. They know who is employed and who is not. And they will, most certainly, know who defies a call for a stay away.

The population is, by and large, sick and tired of stay aways. Given half a chance they will go to work. This is well known to those calling for stay aways. Yet they persist in calling for them. Why? They know that the unemployed youth are there to enforce it. They are also aware that the youth use the weapon of terror to enforce the stay aways. As for the youth themselves, their support of a stay away is not born out of an understanding of the issues. Rather, it flows from their world outlook of a total rejection of all systems of values, except their own. It is one more opportunity to assert their dominance over a frightened adult population.

3. Long decades of enforced separation of the racial groups in this country, together with the active implementation of the policy of divide-and-rule, has greatly undermined the spirit of unity and the striving together of the oppressed people. The hard and backbreaking work of the 1940s and 1950s in laying the foundations of a truly South African nation is in real danger of being completely lost.

Rabid racialism has not only raised its "reptilian head", but has gone around striking and spreading the poison. It has now become common to hear members of the Indian community openly expressing their fear of the African people. Robbers and killers have practised their own form of racialism which is both bloody and macabre when it comes to dealing with Indian and white victims. The latter are regarded as fair game, not only for the purpose of robbery, but subsequent infliction of physical injuries.. It is true that these sick and psychopathic killers are in the tiny minority compared with the entire African population. Yet, it is they who get the publicity and not the millions who harbour no illwill towards other racial groups.

The perception is there and it has to be removed. The question is how? The recent stay away has done more to harm the cause of unity of the oppressed than a whole mountain of crude ruling class propaganda. Durban Indians, in panic, closed their shops and offices and cleared the city centre because they feared that the African people would be attacking them. In Pietermaritzburg, the ANC-SACP unleashed the kombis. The drivers, amongst whom are to be found the louts and bully-boys, terrorised other motorists, pedes-

trians and other members of the public. That binge probably drove a substantial number of otherwise anti-Nats to reconsider their options. Mr Gwala's apology in public has done little to calm those who were traumatised.

4. The forces of the system which go around killing and assassinating opponents of the ruling class ply their bloody trade as if they have the sanction of the law. Like the official hangman, these killers also believe that they enjoy an immunity from prosecution. It is they and not any mystical "third force" who are responsible for most of the mindless massacres. CODESA, Commissions, Peace Accords are traps and diversions. They have not reduced the killings. On the contrary, the number of deaths have increased. Only the entire liberatory movement is capable of putting an end to the slaughter by fully focusing on the problem and by pooling resources, both material and intellectual. The less time spent in institutions created by the ruling class, the more time there will be to devote to the solving of these burning problems.
5. There are other very important and urgent matters which require the undivided attention of the liberatory movement. There is the scourge of AIDS which is sweeping through the whole of Africa. There is wanton destruction of the environment and endangering of all life on earth. There is drought which is threatening millions of persons in Southern Africa with famine and starvation. All these problems are the problems of the liberatory movement. Regretably, space does not permit us to deal with these problems in any detail.
6. There is the overwhelming problem and challenge of RE-HUMANISING the millions who have been brutalised by the system of oppression and exploitation. For this we will require the selfless contribution of psychologists, sociologists, social psychologists, economists, the medical profession and the government to provide co-ordination and finance.

That of necessity, can only be fully accomplished in a truly liberated South Africa. But the process of RE-HUMANISING can and must begin NOW. It must be understood that this process is part and parcel of the process of liberation. Re-humanising is always a major objective of true liberation.

CONCLUSION

As we travel on the road of struggle, we will come across many signs directing travellers. Some of these signs read: LIBERATION; BETRAYAL; COMPROMISE; NEGOTIATIONS; COLLABORATION, etc. In the present stage, two signs stand out: LIBERATION and NEGOTIATIONS. They point in opposite directions. That is how it ought to be, since the road to negotiations leads NOT to liberation but to betrayal. If, then, some prankster turns the sign of LIBERATION in the same direction as that of NEGOTIATIONS, it does not mean that the forces representing LIBERATION and NEGOTIATIONS are travelling in the same direction. Signs do not determine reality. They merely reflect them.

Political tomfoolery, the memoranda drafting industry, the bully boy tactics, performing for the approval of the imperialist gallery, rigged stay aways and the rest of the publicity stunts are most decidedly not going to solve the burning problems of the day.

There is NO substitute for the policies and weapons which have been tried and tested in numerous struggles:

- * Non-collaboration with the oppressors – local and overseas.
- * Unity of the oppressed people and the breaking down of racial and ethnic barriers.
- * Nationwide organisation of the oppressed and exploited into democratic structures which will:
 - Ensure a constant flow of communication between the leadership and the people.
 - Draw the entire population in a democratic process of decision-making.
 - Establish organs of defence against aggression and violence and which organs will be under the strict control of the liberatory movement.
- * To work for the establishment of an ethos where “a hundred flowers will bloom” and where debate and discussion on all matters can take place without fear of reprisal and violence.
- * The raising of political consciousness by an un-interrupted campaign of political education.

* To galvanise the population to action by persuasion and force of reason and by direct involvement.

The leadership must fulfil its tasks, which is to provide guidance and direction.

THE PEOPLE DO NOT NEED LIBERATORS. THEY, THEMSELVES MUST BECOME LIBERATORS!

