

# REPULSING STALINIST SLANDER

Introduction:

What appears below, a statement by the New Unity Movement Youth Wing titled SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT is presented as an example of the campaign of slander engaged in by the Stalinist South African Communist Party against another segment of the South African Liberatory Movement. The slander as is its nature was designed to generate blind and intense hatred against another organisation. It is not accidental that Harry Gwala a lifelong member of the South African Communist party uses, inter alia, the epithet **ENEMY**. That epithet was much beloved by Stalin and his killer henchmen. It was the word that caused countless ordinary Soviet citizens to spend their last living moments facing the firing squad.

The statement also reveals the arrogance-filled accusations without an ounce of substantiation. It is an expression of supreme assuredness by the speaker that making bald accusations will suffice to convince the audience of their veracity notwithstanding the very serious consequences for anybody labeled the ENEMY. Many people lost their lives and those of their relatives for no other reason than being accused of being the ENEMY!

The response of the Youth Wing exposes the shallowness and falsity of the accusations with ease.

The Stalinists never did have a sense of history. They believed that they could get away with anything. Well they were wrong. Today the Stalinists are to be found in their eternal resting place which is the dung heap of history.

The slanderer in the instant was One Harry Gwala, member of the South African Communist Party (previously called the South African Communist Party) and the African National Congress. During the 1980s and 90s Harry Gwala was a regional leader of the ANC/SACP. The Natal Midlands was the area under his control. He was feared as a warlord. It required tremendous courage on the part of the Youth Wing to challenge Gwala publicly and to expose his slander.

## NEW UNITY MOVEMENT YOUTH WING (Durban Branch)

### SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT,

On the 19 March 1990 Harry Gwala addressed a meeting at the Medical School of the University of Natal. He was introduced as a symbol of the ANC (African National Congress) and of the alliance between the ANC and the SACP (South African Communist Party). He did not disagree with nor qualify the introduction.

Much of his speech was general. He described the exploitation of labour by capital, provided a critical appraisal of 'beach protests' and similar such action and correctly castigated 'money mad' doctors in private practice. All this is well and good.

However, during the discussion that followed Mr. Gwala made a number of outrageous statements to the effect that:

1. the All African Convention was a two man organisation and represented no organisations:
2. the Unity Movement is Trotskyite and, like Trotsky, did nothing:
3. he (Harry Gwala) hates the Unity Movement and labelled the Unity Movement 'the enemy':
4. that people who did not toyi-toyi were not part of the struggle.

This statement is released because the meeting was closed despite attempts by medical students who are Unity Movement activists to reply. Students have heard Mr. Gwala's statements. This is the reply we would have made had we not been denied the opportunity to do so.

#### THE ALL AFRICAN CONVENTION

The rise, the fall and the re-generation of the All African Convention (AAC) represents a crucial period in the history of the oppressed people from 1935 to 1943. Although space does not permit us to deal with it in detail, we are duty bound to recommend that all people serious about liberation make the effort to find out about events during this period.

Space does allow us to point out that :

1. there were ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE organisations represented at the 1936 Conference of the All African Convention and at that time the AAC had a six member national executive consisting of D.D.T. Jabavu, A.B. Xuma, J.S. Moroka, H. Selby Msimang, R.H. Godlo and Z.K. Matthews.

These simple facts alone negate Mr Gwala' s assertions. We feel strongly that to deny the oppressed their history is to weaken the struggle for liberation. Mr. Gwala would do well to heed Dora Taylor's words when she wrote

·It is part of the very process of liberation to expose the distortions of history which are presented by the herrenyolk as truth and taught to the young In the schools and universities·.

#### MISREPRESENTING LEON TROTSKY

The assertion that the Unity Movement is "Trotskyite" is not true. There is no evidence that the Unity Movement is a "Trotskyite" organisation. In developing its political perspectives the Unity Movement draws from the ideas of a large number of people. This includes people such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, Mao Tse Tung, Chou en Lai, Fanon, Cabral and many others. No serious organisation limits itself to the ideas of a single person.

What the Unity Movement has done, and will continue to do, is to set the historical record straight.

Leon Trotsky was one of the greatest revolutionaries of the twentieth century. He formed part of the leadership of the Bolshevik Party that led the first great workers revolution in 1917 in Russia. Their actions directly changed the course of history in favour of the oppressed people struggling for freedom . Trotsky contributed as an outstanding theoretician, brilliant organiser, as an orator and as a prolific writer. His life and work is a legacy and inspiration to oppressed people all over the world.

In the course of the Russian revolution backward sections of Soviet society representing a politically sterile and bankrupt bureaucracy, personified by Stalin, rose to prominence. In the struggle against Stalinism Trotsky represented the revolution fighting against the forces of backwardness and reaction. Stalinism represented a betrayal of the struggle of the international working class for socialism. The same political description applies to all those "parties", "fronts", "leagues" who faithfully and blindly toed the line of Stalin and his heirs. We would be willing to debate this publicly with anyone from the ranks of the oppressed who wants to defend the record of Stalinism.

The statement that Trotsky 'did nothing' is a complete falsification of history.

For example, Trotsky played a pivotal role in building virtually from scratch, the Red Army to defend the fledgling, Russian Revolution against the threat of counter-revolution and foreign invasion. This is how Lenin described Trotskys contribution to Maxim Gorky at that crucial time :

Show me another man able to organise almost a model army within a single year and win the respect of military experts. We have such a man. We have everything And we shall work wonders.

Nor was this an isolated observation. At the Central Committee meeting of the Bolshevik Party on the 1 November 1917 Lenin is reported to have said - ***There is no better Bolshevik than Trotsky.***

In other words Trotsky's active role was clearly acknowledged by the top leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

It was Stalin and Stalinism that, in the process of committing enormous crimes against not only the Russian Revolution but against the entire international struggle for socialism started a campaign of falsification of history to denigrate Trotsky. And yet today long after Stalinism has been totally discredited by the whole world, and when there are major efforts within the socialist bloc to correct the falsification of Trotskys role, Harry Gwala persists in his Stalinist anti- Trotsky position.

#### THE UNITY MOVEMENT

From the platform Mr Gwala

1. professed "hate" for the Unity Movement and
2. labelled the Unity Movement the enemy".

Mr Gwala's public declaration of hate for the Unity Movement is ironical. Harry Gwala was one of the victims of the states repression in the 1970s. At his trial, during this period of savage state repression, Mr. Gwala was represented in court by Unity Movement lawyers. It is strange that today with repression allegedly on the wane, he chooses to forget the hand that came to his aid.

Labelling the Unity Movement the enemy" is politically inept. The enemy in this country is the ruling class, The organisations fighting against them make up the broad liberatory Movement and includes the Unity Movement, the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and the Black Consciousness Movement. There are differences among these organisations that cannot be wished away. Irrational statements by leadership figures are capable of turning non-antagonistic contradictions among these organisations into antagonistic ones; and opens the door for political thuggery and strife within the ranks of the liberatory movement.

#### CONDUCT OF ACTIVISTS

Mr. Gwala said that the group of students toyi-toying were part of the struggle and that those (the majority) who had assembled to listen to what he had to say, were not part of the struggle. This is simply an incomplete observation.

People have a right to sing freedom songs, chant slogans, wear T-shirts of their organisations. But doing any or all of the aforesaid does not make up the struggle for freedom struggle involves building up the organisations of the people, raising the level of the political consciousness of the people, building the unity of the oppressed. It means working every single day for the community; it means house visits, street meetings; area meetings fighting civic issues, being part of strike support committees and so on. The struggle for freedom sets out to ideologically and physically outmatch the ruling class.

Gwala's division of the students into 'africans' who were toyi-toying and 'coloureds' and 'indians' who were hot, is divisive. Firstly, it was inaccurate. Secondly, we reject such statements because they are totally antagonistic to the principle of non-racialism to which we uncompromisingly adhere.

#### CONCLUSION

This statement is released to set the record straight, it is presented to the students so that they may evaluate both the attack on the Unity Movement and our reply to it.

WE FIGHT IDEAS WITH IDEAS!

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