

# A NATIONAL CONVENTION OR A

'CALLS FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION'; 'GOVERNMENT TALKS TO ANC'; 'PFP MP CALLS FOR TALKS WITH ANC'; 'KENNEDY VISITS S.A.';

These recent headlines in the newspaper are the signs of the times.

Gatsha Buthelezi, P.F.P., Black Sash and the U.D.F. (Transvaal and Natal regions) have all called for a NATIONAL CONVENTION.

## WHAT IS A NATIONAL CONVENTION?

According to the National Forum the basic characteristics of a National Convention are:

- a) It is a solution by the ruling class to save the situation, that is the system of capitalism.
- b) It brings about reforms or other changes always in the interests of the ruling class. It never brings about fundamental change ie change in the interest of the majority - workers.
- c) It is used to tell the world that consensus has been arrived at in South Africa and that there is no longer any need to fight.

The system is presently making second-level arrangements and white South Africans are being geared to accept the idea of a National Convention. A survey by the Human Sciences Research Council revealed that 43% of whites were in favour of negotiations with the ANC while 44% were against.

In the City Press (January 1984) we read:

"Bishop Desmond Tutu, at a press conference upon his return from overseas, intimated that the ANC would be prepared to talk to the government.

This news comes at a time when there has been much publicity about the possibility of releasing Mandela and in the wake of a report on white attitudes towards the ANC.

## WHY A NATIONAL CONVENTION?

The ruling class will opt for a convention when it feels the internal situation cannot be controlled any longer. This is becoming a greater reality with the increased consciousness and militancy of the black working class.

In a National Convention the ruling class always calls the tune. This can be witnessed in Namibia where South Africa and its Imperialist allies want a negotiated settlement on their terms. How, thus, can we expect the South African regime to agree to a settlement on our terms when they have failed to do it in Namibia?

Oppressive regimes always start a process whereby they study the liberation movements against them and decide which are cooptable when the crunch comes. For example, as the conflict in Zimbabwe sharpened, Smith met Nkomo's ZAPU several times. Smith had Nkomo in mind as the best alternative to Muzorewa.

In the liberation movement people are developing strategies in order to change S.A. into a society free of oppression and exploitation.

The strength of the liberation movement to carry these strategies through depends a lot on the

leadership that is built - they must not be easily corrupted or seduced by liberals and other agents of the system who try to wean the struggle away from its revolutionary direction. More importantly, democratic organisations based among the black working class and dominated by revolutionary working class theory and practice can make the National Convention a misnomer.

There can never be a transference of actual power to the working class via a National Convention because power is wrested and NEVER transferred.

The road to building a society free of exploitation and oppression does not lie through the negotiating table. This type of society can only be achieved if the oppressed and, in particular, the exploited (black working class) are organised in organisations dominated by revolutionary working class theory and practice. What is needed is hard work to organise and mobilise the entire country in new forms of organisation and methods of struggle if necessary.

Large alliances and federations of all the organisations of the oppressed and exploited must be formed. No single grouping or organisation can claim to represent all the oppressed people. The call of the day is unity - organised united action of all workers. Alliances must be formed on principles such as anti-imperialism, anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-

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liberalism, non-colaboration with the oppressor and most important of all : INDEPENDENCE of WORKING CLASS ORGANISATIONS from the bosses and reactionary middle-class, and that the struggle for a new society

must be LED BY THE BLACK WORKING CLASS.

The alternative to a National Convention is a CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY i.e.when the oppressed and exploited are about to take power they call an assembly

to hammer out how to take power. A Constituent Assembly is called when the ruling class is unable to contain the situation and the oppressed and exploited can literally invade the corridors of power.

## Notes on Theory No 1



The workers by transforming raw material into a finished article bring new wealth into existence. They create a new value. The difference between what the workers are paid in wages and the amount of value they have added to the raw material is what the employer keeps.

**THATS WHERE THE CAPITALISTS PROFITS COME FROM!**

When workers hire themselves out to an employer they don't sell what they produce; the workers sell their ability or capacity to produce. The employer does not pay the workers for the

product of eight hours work; the employer pays them to work eight hours.

The workers sell their labour power for the length of the whole day - say eight hours. Now suppose the time necessary to produce the value of the workers' wages is four hours. They do not stop working and then go home. Oh no! They have been hired to work eight hours so they continue to work the other four hours. In these four hours, they are working NOT FOR THEMSELVES, but FOR THEIR EMPLOYER. Part of their labour is PAID labour; part is UNPAID labour. The empl-

oyers profit comes from the unpaid labour.

There must be a difference between what the workers are paid and the value of what they produce, else the employer would not hire them. The difference between what the workers get in wages and the value of the commodity that they produce is called SURPLUS VALUE.

Surplus value is the profit that goes to the employer. The employer buys labour power at one price and sells the product of labour at a higher price. The difference - surplus value - the employers keep for themselves.

SURPLUS

VALUE

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