

# As a party for socialism, the SACP is flimsy on Marxism

IN THEIR recent article, Chris Malikané and the Gupta-isation of Marxism, Jeremy Cronin, Alex Mashilo and Malesela Maleka present one of the most distorted, ideologically flawed and simplistic analysis ever made in the socialist discourse.

The article, which was intended to be a Marxist critique of Professor Malikané's intellectual offering, Concerning the Current Situation, ended up being an unscientific harangue which is not useful to scholars of Marxist-Leninist thought like myself.

On the transition towards the second phase of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), the trio contradict themselves on the concept of the end of the first stage of the NDR and the birth of a more radical stage. At one point they argue that, instead of the two stages being distinct from each other, they are "interpenetrating" and not mechanically separate from each other.

They argue that there is no need for the first phase of the NDR to "end", giving way for the advancement towards the second stage and realising the distortion of their argument, they write, "In principle, the second phase

should have commenced immediately in the mid-1990s". It is unclear what the basis of their opposition to Malikané's assertion that the first phase of the NDR "is fast approaching its end".

The lesson from Marx is that society is characterised by different phases and transitions and that each phase of society would last until change and conscious class struggles lead it to being replaced by another phase. Their inability to use simple laws of dialectics makes their critique on this aspect shallow.

On the dominance of white monopoly capital, they argue that white monopoly capital's dominance in the first phase was not "unfettered", as argued by Malikané. In its 2015 May Day statement, the SACP said that "the defeat of the apartheid state didn't represent the defeat of monopoly capital in our country. It didn't mean the defeat of an especially oppressive capitalist system".

## Analysis

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As the SACP correctly posited, the democratic breakthrough continues to be dominated by "monopoly capital and white bourgeoisies". The fact that the ANC and the revolutionary alliance may have failed to curtail the hegemony of monopoly in the first phase of the revolution is irrelevant in this assessment. The reality is that, through its colonial and apartheid infrastructure, white monopoly capital continues to dominate all levels of society.

How else would the writers justify the unfortunate reality that, from 1994 until recently in March, the executive was unable to appoint a finance minister without consulting white monopoly capital? In order for the trio to accept the hegemony of monopoly capital, did they expect the former to control our private affairs? Their argument is flimsy as well as utterly un-Marxist.

They obfuscate Marxist thought. Only neo-liberal thinking would propel them to blame any family of capitalists, be it the Guptas, Ruperts or Ramaphosas, for the capitalist crisis. The trio, all senior SACP leaders, have failed to make a meaningful contribution in an opinion piece that proposes the establishment

of a broad anti-white monopoly capitalist class made up of, among others, the working class, the middle strata and the progressive youth and students, can only point to the de-Marxification of these writers.

In the Road to South African Freedom (1962), the SACP said: "The 3 million whites hold a monopoly of political rights and economic opportunities. They alone can vote for and be elected to Parliament. They are fortified behind a wall of privilege in the civil service, in jobs and professions, in educational opportunities. 87% of the land is reserved for white ownership and white capitalists own the mines, factories and banks."

Save for a few changes brought by the first phase of the NDR, the South African socio-economic situation remains similar to the one made in the SACP's 1962 analysis.

Unless the SACP, a party for socialism, mobilises society for an alternative system, the situation might be the same, or worse into the future.

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