

Only Socialism means Freedom

www.workerssocialistparty.co.za • workersandsocialistparty@gmail.com • 011 333 0804 • 081 393 1914

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WASP

Workers & Socialist Party

2014 Election Manifesto



WASP presidential candidate Moses Mayekiso

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Preamble

On the anniversary of twenty years of democracy, the political settlement established in 1994 is breaking down. The end of the dominance of the ANC can now be imagined without entertaining a fantasy. The link between the working class and poor masses of South Africa and their former liberation movement is in an advanced stage of disintegration. The Tripartite Alliance is collapsing. This was shown starkly on 16 August 2012 at Marikana when police opened fire and massacred 34 striking mineworkers. This premeditated act of class aggression was a watershed in post-apartheid South Africa.

The heroic struggle of the mineworkers for a minimum wage of R12 500 per month before and especially after Marikana represented a political earthquake. The mineworkers broke free from the prison of class collaboration that the National Union of Mineworkers – an ally of the ruling ANC – had imprisoned them in and established their own democratic worker-controlled strike committees to organise and lead their struggle. The mineworkers decisively asserted their class independence. In rejecting the NUM, mineworkers were simultaneously rejecting the ANC and the ANC's capitalist policies.

It was out of this struggle that the Workers and Socialist Party was born. The mineworkers, based on their experience of the strike and the bloody lesson of Marikana drew a simple but seismic conclusion: the working class and poor need their own political party. Millions more watching the brutality of the Marikana massacre on their television screens drew the same conclusion. The idea was popularised in mass meetings of mineworkers and at a meeting on 15 December 2012, representatives of the Democratic Socialist Movement, which played a leading role in the strike movement, and six mineworkers' committees agreed to found a new political party to give a voice to the working class and poor and struggle for a socialist society that would be run in the interests of the majority.

The ending of apartheid by the mass movement of the working class was an enormous achievement. But at Codesa the ANC compromised with capitalism. The ANC negotiated taking political power by agreeing to leave the economic foundations of the capitalist system that apartheid had rested upon intact. The working class had demanded and expected a far more fundamental change in society than the one the ANC settled for. As a result of that compromise the class contradictions of 'democratic' South Africa have been sharpening for years, ultimately leading to the epoch-defining struggle of the mineworkers in 2012.

The ANC's compromise with capitalism is directly responsible for their failure to solve the crises of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The ANC presides over a society where 16 million live below the poverty line, on just R20 per day, inequality between rich and poor has increased by 5% making South

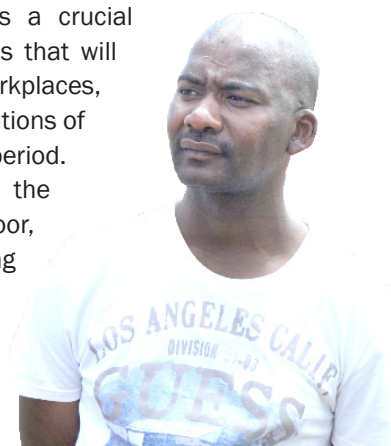
Africa the most unequal society in the world and over 7 million are unemployed; nearly 40% of the working-age population. The Nkandla scandal, where R 246 million of public money was spent 'upgrading' President Zuma's personal residence has revealed how deep the rot in the ANC has gone.

The erosion of support for the ANC has taken both a passive and an active form. On the electoral plane it has been reflected in the abstention of 12 million registered voters in the 2004 election and the abstention of 12.4 million in 2009. At the same time we have seen a huge increase in the number of strikes, including the biggest public sector strikes in South African history in 2007 and 2010. Since 2009, communities have exploded in anti-government service delivery protests, sick of the continuing poverty and broken promises of the ANC at all levels of government. Splits from Cosatu affiliates and the emergence of a new generation of independent unions have revealed the dead-end into which the class collaboration of the Tripartite Alliance has pushed workers' leaders. Workers are searching for organisations that can lead real struggles to advance their interests. The booing of President Zuma at Madiba's memorial service reflects the feeling of millions: the ANC government must go!

The eighteen months since Marikana have seen aftershocks of equal intensity to the original tremor. The crisis in Cosatu, the suspension of general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi and the decision of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) not to campaign for the ANC in the 2014 elections are all part of the reconfiguration of the political landscape triggered by Marikana. The heroic stand taken by NUMSA, following on from that of the mineworkers, will see the end of the Tripartite Alliance, the rebirth of the trade union movement and the laying of the foundations for the development of a mass workers' party in the next period.

WASP is contesting these elections to accelerate the process towards the formation of a mass workers' party on a socialist programme. We see ourselves as pioneers, assembling under the WASP banner the forces that can begin this historic task. The entry of the voice of the working class into the National Assembly will serve as a crucial support to the struggles that will be waged in the workplaces, communities and institutions of education in the next period. We appeal to workers, the unemployed and poor, communities and young people to join us!

Mametlwe Sebei
29 March 2014



What is the role of our manifesto?

Our manifesto is not simply a wish list of demands but a guide to struggle and a roadmap for the revolutionary tasks the working class will need to complete for the socialist transformation of society. We are not making empty promises of what WASP alone can deliver to the people of South Africa. We are promising to struggle alongside the working class and poor to fight to realise our manifesto in common cause. WASP has no interests apart from the interests of the working class and poor.

Unlike all the other political parties contesting this election, WASP recognises that capitalism is at the root of all the social ills that society faces – the crises of poverty, unemployment and inequality. The grip of capitalism is buttressed by the capitalist property clause in the constitution which places the commanding heights of the economy beyond the democratic control of the working class and poor.

For that reason, we do not for one moment believe that if WASP won a majority in the National Assembly, the capitalist class and the parties that represent them such as the ANC and the DA, would “allow” us to implement our socialist programme. The entire capitalist class would attempt to frustrate the democratic will of the working class and poor, using the state apparatus – the police, courts and army and the property clause of the constitution – economic sabotage and appeal for foreign intervention both economically and militarily. That is why WASP’s manifesto steps outside of the parliamentary framework and addresses a significant part of this manifesto to the struggles of the working class, the poor and unemployed, the communities and the youth. To do otherwise would sow illusions in how real change will be achieved.

WASP will use any seats in the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures to ensure that the voice of the working class and

poor reverberates throughout the country. WASP representatives will use this platform and “speak to the windows” – to the masses outside, to popularise the ideas of struggle, solidarity and socialism amongst the working class and poor shut out of these elite institutions. Our representatives will fight for every improvement possible in the lives of working class and poor people.

But ultimately we believe that the fundamental changes needed in this country will be won in the struggles in the workplaces, the communities and institutions of learning. The burning issues facing the working class and poor mean that we cannot move at the tempo of the parliamentary timetable or trust to gradual and incremental change – we must act and we must act now! WASP is first and foremost a party of struggle. Our goal is to unite the struggles of workers, communities and the youth; a unity that will be essential to wage the revolutionary struggle needed for a socialist society.

At this stage of the struggle for a socialist society WASP is not offering a detailed blueprint for every industry or explaining precisely how they would be integrated and coordinated as part of a democratic plan for a socialist society. Nor are we giving an exhaustive account of all the institutions and mechanisms of workers’ control and management that a developed socialist society will require. It is enough at this stage to demonstrate the method and the general principles of a socialist society. The majority of details will be worked out through the experience of working class struggle and the vast day-to-day experience the working class has in their own workplace and industry which a socialist society will draw upon. That said, in what follows we will outline a socialist approach to the key issues and struggles faced by working class and poor people today and begin to sketch out WASP’s vision for a socialist future.

WASP was born from struggle!

WASP is a party of struggle!

The Economy

From capitalist exploitation to socialist economic freedom

Poverty amidst plenty

South Africa is a rich society. South Africa has the 29th largest economy in the world, the largest economy on the African continent and is a member of the G20 club of major economies. In 2012 the economy was worth R4 trillion. But because of capitalism only a tiny elite enjoy this wealth.

South Africa is the most unequal country in the world and things are getting worse. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. In the first decade after the end of apartheid, inequality increased by 5%. In recent years the top 10% in society increased their income by 6.6% whilst the bottom 20% saw their incomes decline by 0.9%.

This is the reality of the capitalist system. The economy – the banks, the mines, the commercial farms, the big factories and big businesses – are owned privately and run to make a profit. The needs of the working class and poor are of little concern to the capitalist class. Working class people produce the wealth of society every day when they go to work yet they see very little of it. For twenty years the ANC government has worked to create the best conditions for the capitalist class to exploit the working class – from 1996 and the Growth Employment and Redistribution (Gear) policy to 2014 and the National Development Plan.

The result is super-exploitation and impoverishment. 16 million South Africans live below the poverty line living on little more than R20 per day. As a group, the poorest 20% in society receive just 2.7% of the national wage and receive 55% of their income through social grants. In other words a major section of society are virtually excluded from the formal economy.

The so-called 'middle' class

The ANC likes to boast that they have nearly tripled the size of the middle class to ten million since 1994. But the laughable definition of a middle class income is between R1 400 and R10 000 per month. This is only R200 above the level at which people are eligible to claim social grants. By this definition simply having a job makes someone "middle class" which makes transport workers, mineworkers and factory workers the backbone of the "middle class"!

This is just propaganda from the ANC to try and convince the black majority that the ANC has made good on their promises of wealth redistribution. Given that a tank of petrol could now cost over R800, it is hard to see how someone who could not even afford two tanks of petrol with their entire monthly wage could be considered middle class! The mass of public servants – typically considered a 'middle class' job – are similarly anything but. Nearly 20% of those working for the government (some 216 000 individuals) have been served with garnishee orders, i.e. they have taken on more debt than they can afford to comfortably pay back. In fact the ratio of household debt to earnings has now reached a record high of 70%. This so-called

'middle' class has to borrow extensively to boost their incomes and many cannot keep up.

The average household income of the overwhelming majority – the bottom 80% of South African households – is R10 000 per month or less. There is a layer of better paid workers earning more than R10 000 per month, but after them incomes start to climb into the stratosphere. The average income of the top 20% of households is over R40 000 per month.

In reality there is a massive class of unemployed and urban and rural poor getting by on social grants and participation in the informal economy and the working class (or 'middle class' according to the ANC!). Then there is the real, far smaller and still predominantly white middle class. Finally there is a tiny elite which owns and controls the vast majority of the wealth of South Africa. It is the wealth of this elite that WASP has its sights on. This sort of wealth can only become the property of so few individuals through massive exploitation.

WASP firmly believes that there is enough wealth in society to provide all with work on a living wage, decent and accessible services and a decent standard of living.

Where is all the money?

- The market capitalisation of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange – where shares in the major banks, mines and factories are traded – was R9.5trillion in January 2013. Just twenty corporations account for more than two thirds of the JSE's value, including SAB, BHP Billiton, Anglo American, Absa and Standard Bank.
- Corporations are refusing to make significant investments and are estimated to be sitting on "corporate cash hoards" of over R600 billion.
- The top 10% of income earners – just a few million people in a country of over 50 million – take 51.69% of national income which averages at over R500 000 per year each.
- The super-wealthy – a mere 145,000 individuals – have an income of over R1 million per year. Most will have incomes significantly greater than R1 million.
- For example, in 2012 just 81 JSE CEOs took home over R991 million and 296 executive directors took home a further R2.3 billion between them. In other words, just 377 individuals took home pay and bonuses of R3.328 billion.
- Huge amounts of money are taken out of the country and invested offshore. For example in 2007 it is estimated that R450 billion was taken out of the economy in this way.
- Taxes on companies have fallen from a rate of 40% in 1994 to 28% today.

Black Economic Empowerment, 'affirmative action' and the continued racial segregation of the economy

The continuing legacy of apartheid means that the life opportunities of the vast majority continue to be determined by their race. The average income of white households is five times greater than that of black households and the gap is increasing. Between 1996 and 2011 the average annual income of white households increased by 235% compared to 210% for black households. Half of all black individuals

earn less than R2 500 per month; half of all white individuals earn more than R10 000 per month. The professions and supervisory and managerial positions continue to be dominated by white people despite them only making up 12% of the population.

“Affirmative action” has been the main tool used by ANC governments to try and redress this historical injustice within the framework of the capitalist system through the setting of employment quotas by race and other mechanisms. However, the ANC’s Black Economic Empowerment policy has always been less about creating equal opportunities for the black, coloured and Indian population and more about creating a new black capitalist class. Between 1995 and 2009 BEE deals were worth a total of R535 billion and 770 black directors on six, seven and even eight figure incomes had been created. ANC general secretary Gwede Mantashe has himself described South African society as like an Irish coffee – “concentration of black at the bottom and the white cream on top with a sprinkling of chocolate”. This inequality has continued in democratic South Africa because the capitalist foundations that the apartheid system rested upon have been kept intact by the ANC.

But even on its own capitalist terms BEE has failed and done nothing but create a black façade to hide continued white dominance of the economy. Even the more generous estimates for black ownership of shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange only put the level at 25%.

For workers, the colour of their bosses’ skin does not alter the fact that they are exploited. The only way to genuinely place the economy in the hands of the black majority is through nationalisation under workers’ and community control. Such a genuine democratisation of the economy by definition places the ownership and control of the economy with the black majority since the working class is both overwhelmingly black and makes up the overwhelming majority of the population. WASP does not support gimmicks or window dressing for capitalism but socialism and genuine democracy.

WASP fights for:

- Scrap BEE – no elite, neither white nor black, should own and profit from the economy at the expense of the majority. Demand the nationalisation of the assets of the BEE elite as part of WASP’s nationalisation programme for the banks, the mines, the commercial farms, big factories and big businesses
- Genuine black economic empowerment is socialism. Struggle for the democratisation of the economy through nationalisation under working class’ control – the only genuine way to transfer ownership and control of the economy to the black majority rather than a black elite.
- Real “affirmative action” – place hiring practices under the democratic control of workers’ committees in nationalised industry at the level of the workplace; fight discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, tribe, religion, age, gender or sexuality.

Nationalisation and economic planning – the foundations for working class liberation

The heart of the Freedom Charter is its nationalisation clause which reads: “*The People Shall Share in the Country’s Wealth! The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people; The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole; All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the wellbeing of the people; All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.*” When the ANC abandoned nationalisation as a policy in the 1990s and finally removed even the word from ANC policy documents at their 2012 congress the possibility of the ANC

being a vehicle to achieve any of the other freedoms of the charter disappeared.

Nationalisation is the only possible foundation for a society that is run in the interests of the working class and poor. But WASP would go further than the Freedom Charter. Whilst the Freedom Charter was a radical and historic document, it was not an explicit proposal for a socialist society. Indeed, when it was drawn up in the 1950s, the dominant trend even in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe was for the nationalisation of strategic sectors of the economy and for remaining industry to be heavily regulated. Nationalisation alone does not create socialism – all shades of capitalist government have used nationalisation. Socialist nationalisation requires all nationalised industry – the mines, the banks, the commercial farms, the big factories and big businesses – to be placed under democratic workers’ control and management and integrated as part of a democratically planned economy administered by a workers’ state under a socialist government. Otherwise nationalisation is mere window-dressing for capitalism.

When WASP speaks of nationalisation we are talking explicitly about the commanding heights of the economy – the mines, the banks, the commercial farms, the big factories and big businesses – not small business. Small business owners are squeezed and exploited by capitalism too, albeit in different ways to the working class. Small business is dependent on the big banks and big corporations who dominate credit supply, supply chains and the wholesale sector. The big banks use interest rates to benefit financial speculators. Small business owners are some of the worst hit by high interest rates because of the loans they have taken out to support their business and assist cash flow. The domination of the big corporations in the manufacture and supply of the vast majority of goods and services means small business has little choice but to pay whatever price is asked of them for stock and other vital services. The result is that small business owners are often forced to work long hours with no possibility of holiday or sick days to ensure their business survives. It can be a tough life. 60% of small business started in Soweto in 2007 had failed by 2011. As long as small business owners treat their workers in line with pro-worker legislation of the socialist government their situation will improve massively as a result of the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy.

Socialism will end the dominant role of the so-called “free” market in the distribution and exchange of goods and services. The market moves resources to where they can extract the greatest profit not where there is the greatest social need. Democratic economic planning is the only rational system that can replace the chaos of the market.

Workers’ control and management – key to socialism and genuine democracy

Workers’ control and management of the economy is crucial to socialism and genuine democracy. Today, much of what passes for “management” is in reality the policing of the workforce. This arises as a necessity under capitalism due to the tension between the working classes’ desire to “get the job done” and take home a decent wage and the conflicting priority of the capitalist class to make profit. Workers have an incentive not to be productive or innovate under capitalism! If a way is found to get the same amount of work done with half the number of workers there will be retrenchments; if a way is found to speed up the work process workers will simply not be paid for the hours saved. Nationalisation under workers’ control will reverse this bizarre situation.

Workers' control will be exercised through the establishment of workplace committees made up of elected representatives of the workforce, the trade unions, the local community, consumer groups and the socialist government. These committees will be linked-up at the sector and industry level and ultimately brought together at the level of national industry. For workers to be able to participate fully in workers' committees, a reduction in the working week will be required and the sharing out of work without loss of pay. This will give workers the time to genuinely participate in the democratic running of society and debate, study and consider the crucial questions of administering the economic life of the country.

Giving workers democratic control of day-to-day workplace decision-making, including control over hiring and firing, working hours and work practices will detonate an explosion of innovation and creativity as workers are given a genuine incentive (other than the threat of starvation!) to improve the running and efficiency of their workplace and the economy and society in general. Workers will not be working to create profits for a faceless capitalist but in order to benefit themselves, their families, their comrades at work and society as a whole.

Workers' committees will play the crucial role in building a socialist society. They will be the mass organs of popular democracy that will break down the doors of the capitalist class' control of the economy. Business secrets, back-door deals, sweetheart deals, market rigging and price fixing are essential features of a capitalist economy. A crucial part of extending workers' control over the economy will be the abolition of business secrets and the opening of the books of capitalist enterprises through nationalisation. Workers' committees will audit and scrutinise all aspects of nationalised industry. Workers' committees will determine how resources are used, assess investment plans, technological improvements and oversee their implementation. They will also discover what portion of wealth is expropriated by the capitalists as profits and investigate whether work practices are in place because they are the most efficient means of working or because they make the biggest profits for the capitalists.

Such experts – accountants, statisticians, engineers – as are necessary to employ will be under the strict control of the workers' committees. As workers, these experts will have their own democratic voice in the workers' committees. Similarly those workers elected by the workers' committees to perform aspects of what are currently supervisory and managerial roles will be under the strict control of the workers' committees and recallable by them. Their function will not be to police the workforce, but to coordinate and oversee the implementation of democratically agreed work practices.

Ultimately, the entire economy must be placed under the direct management of the working class, cooperating to draw up a democratically agreed plan of production on the basis of the experience of workers' control.

The parastatals – workers and communities need to take control

South Africa, like many developing countries, has a large state sector – the parastatals. This includes companies like Eskom, Telkom and the Post Office amongst others. Under the ANC, many have been privatised or part-privatised to allow capitalists to profit. WASP defends the public ownership of the parastatals. We would kick big business out of them entirely and bring them back into full public ownership.

Today the parastatals are by no means examples of socialist workers' control; more a model for how capitalists can loot public resources

through tenders. The parastatals are run by top-down bureaucracies and structured to take part in the capitalist economy where distribution and exchange is on the basis of the market. They are not controlled democratically by the working class but run by the capitalist state in order to put a floor under the South African economy in its competition with more developed economies. For example, via Eskom, BHP Billiton alone consumes 10% of the country's electricity but is charged prices less than half the production cost. Eskom subsidises BHP Billiton's profits by R11.5 billion per year! The subsidising of capitalist profits is at the core of nationalisation in a predominantly capitalist economy. That is why WASP demands socialist nationalisation under workers' control.

The environment and economic planning – planet or profit?

Capitalism is not only locking the working class into endless inequality, unemployment and poverty but is also a lethal threat to our future through the destruction of the environment. Every year, an average of 300 000 people die from climate change-related causes – extreme weather such as storms and flooding, starvation due to drought and diseases that spread as the temperature heats up. Climate change is also felt directly in our pockets. The massive increase in the prices of bread and other foods has been driven in part by crop failure due to extreme weather. Global warming – the dramatic increase in the Earth's temperature – could see an average global temperature increase of 4-9°C. If the global warming process is not broken and reversed Southern Africa will be one of the most extremely affected areas on the planet. Global warming means not only draught and crop failures, but in the worst case scenario also the wiping-out of half of the planet's species within the lifetime of our children.

About 75% of global warming can be attributed to the emission of greenhouse gases. These gases trap heat in the atmosphere causing the planet to heat up. Most of these gases come from the use of fossil fuels such as coal, petrol, oil and gas. In South Africa these emissions come mainly from the metal industries (mining, smelting, and manufacturing), energy generation (e.g. coal fired power plants), large-scale commercial agriculture and the use of petrol and diesel-driven cars. The destruction of forests and seas which counter 'the greenhouse effect' accounts for the remaining 25% of global warming. The process is accelerating and risks reaching tipping points beyond which the rising temperature would be self-reinforcing.

South African big business is one of the major climate thugs. South Africa is the world's 12th largest emitter of greenhouse gases because of the economy's reliance on coal-powered electricity. BHP Billiton alone consumes 10% of the country's electricity. This makes South Africa one of the single highest carbon emitters even as millions of working class and poor households are without electricity! The government's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2010-2030, entails an expansion of coal, gas and nuclear power which would set the country on course to increase carbon emissions by 29% in that period.

A total overhaul of how production is organised and society is run is needed to stop the looming climate disaster. To have a chance of limiting global warming, greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut in half by 2020 and by at least 90% by 2050. The technology to achieve this exists. Fossil fuel based energy production can be replaced by renewable energy such as solar, wind and wave energy and geothermal energy. Such renewable energy could provide the energy needs of the world many times over. Petrol and diesel could be replaced by renewable fuels. Public transport could be massively expanded and improved. Much of the production that causes emissions is also

completely unnecessary from the point of human need – e.g. the arms manufacturing industry and the packaging and branding industry – and could be replaced with socially useful “green” industries.

But under capitalism carbon emissions are increasing, despite over 20 years of “climate talks”. The capitalist classes’ chase for profits and the competition between capitalist nation states does not allow for any meaningful cooperation to stop emissions and global warming. So-called “market solutions”, such as “cap-and-trade” do not even begin to address the problem.

Working class needs are not separate from those of our environment, without which we cannot live. A socialist society is the only way to lay the basis for overcoming the destruction of the environment. The planning of production and the use of resources for human need would allow us to simultaneously protect and restore our environment. This is another of the responsibilities the world’s working class has to shoulder. The battle against global warming is therefore very important to WASP.

WASP fights for:

- Scrap the ANC’s neo-liberal National Development Plan – for a democratic socialist plan of production and development
- Nationalisation of the mines, the banks, the commercial farms, the big factories and big businesses and place them under democratic workers’ control – compensation only in cases of proven need (e.g. small shareholders and pension investments)
- Full renationalisation of the parastatals – Eskom, Sasol, ArcelorMittal SA etc. – under democratic workers’ control
- Integrate all nationalised industry into a democratic socialist plan of production whose priority is the social needs of the majority not the private wealth of the elite
- Rapid redirection of energy generation towards renewable sources such as solar, wind, wave and geothermal power, and biomass power based on waste not food crops – stop SA’s expansion of coal power and nuclear power due to the devastating risks posed
- Struggle for mass job creation through renewable energy projects, redirection of polluting industries and agriculture – retraining and guaranteed jobs for all workers in redirected polluting industry
- Development of a comprehensive recycling service in all communities.
- Massive investment in infrastructure and service delivery under democratic working class control
- Upgrade the rail network for fast efficient train lines accessible to everyone as well as for goods freight combined with safe, efficient buses and taxis; or the massive development of non-fossil fuels
- Cancel the debts of struggling home-owners and small businesses Abolish ‘business secrets’ and open the books –let’s see where the money is!
- Confiscate the “corporate cash hoards” and spend them on socially useful projects such as building houses, schools, clinics and infrastructure
- Repatriate and confiscate offshore investments.
- Confiscate 90% of the personal wealth and private assets of the CEOs and all highly paid corporate board members
- Introduce a 90% income tax on all income over R 1 million per year.

Industrialisation and the world economy

Over the past two decades the ANC has overseen the financialisation of the South African economy at the expense of mining, manufacturing and agriculture. But the financial sector – the banks, insurance companies etc – no longer just simply lubricate the real economy by making loans to industry, farms and individuals. Today the financial sector has become a massive gambling casino where the capitalists churn their profits in order to boost them. They are assisted by the now privatised Reserve Bank which acts as the state facilitator of financial

speculation. The financial sector has become purely parasitic and plays no useful role in society.

This trend is an international one and the trigger for the world economic crisis that started in the United States and has now entered its sixth year. It is this trend toward financialisation that explains the increasing reluctance of the capitalist class to invest in sectors of the economy that provide jobs and make goods that workers and their families need. The capitalist class can make much greater profits far more quickly through financial speculation. Consequently, business investment levels are still 3% below their 2008 level when the world economic crisis struck.

A democratically planned economy would see a dramatic rebalancing of the economy away from finance and financial speculation and back towards manufacturing. WASP would re-industrialise the economy but in a way that made the industry environmentally sustainable. As part of the task of raising living standards and mass job creation there would be massive investment in manufacturing and industrial capacity. Investment in industries to beneficiate raw material would be an integral part of this too, creating jobs, developing skills and boosting the value of exports. This would also make a major contribution to protecting the environment as the shipping of bulky raw materials is reduced.

As private ownership in the economy is reduced and the profit motive and role of the market curtailed, speculative financial activities will cease. But these vast sums of money must be kept in the country and used to benefit society. It will be necessary to impose strict capital controls to prevent the capitalists from attempting to take this capital abroad. A socialist government would have to protect a planned economy from the international market forces that lead to social dumping and the destruction of viable industries, unemployment and a race to the bottom for wages. The only means to do this is via a state monopoly of foreign trade. Everything except for the import and export of goods for personal use will require the approval of the socialist government.

However WASP does not believe that building a wall around the country and working toward “self-sufficiency” is a long-term solution. Production methods, science and technology long ago outgrew the limits of narrow “national” markets. This is the underlying economic cause that has been driving imperialism for the last century and a half. To chase after economic “self-sufficiency” would be an attempt to turn the clock back and consciously stunt and limit the full deployment of the latest technology and production methods. The genie is out of the bottle. Such attempts – including the idea of “socialism in one country” – are doomed to fail.

The only long-term solution to the negative effects of the world market on South African jobs and industry is the world socialist revolution. Through the IMF and World Bank the capitalist class attempts to export their economic model of the “free” market around the world. A socialist government must have an economic and foreign policy that attempts to do the same. Democratic economic planning must be extended across borders. A stunted and underdeveloped form of this takes place for example in the deal between Venezuela and Cuba that sees Venezuelan oil exchanged for the services of thousands of Cuban doctors. Ultimately a world economic plan will be needed that allows for the sharing of resources, skills and industrial capacity to the benefit of the world’s entire population.

Trade tariffs and capitalist ‘protected development’ vs. class independence, international solidarity and socialism

Job creation and protection are absolutely central to WASP policy. Over one million jobs were lost in the wake of the 2008 world economic crisis. Sections of the trade union movement and the left have looked toward tariffs and ‘protected development’ as a way to try and prevent jobs being lost due to international competition and financial instability. But WASP does not believe it is necessary to save jobs in South Africa at the cost of destroying jobs in Zimbabwe or even China or Germany. Our approach will first and foremost be based on the principle of international working class solidarity. WASP will see it as our duty to link up South African trade unions and workers’ organisations with trade unions and workers organisations in other countries. It would then be possible for workers to coordinate across borders and to discuss and plan common responses to competition and trade wars between the different national capitalist classes – our common enemy. Nationalism is the ideology of the capitalist class; internationalism is the ideology of the working class.

WASP will not take sides in struggles between different national capitalists trying to maintain their competitive advantage over foreign rivals and boost their profits all the while exploiting their own workforces. Adopting a “patriotic” support for their “own” capitalist class, e.g. as with the “Proudly South African” campaign, would be a deadly trap for workers. WASP exists to assert the independent voice of the working class. This requires maintaining our class independence on all issues. We will demand the opening of the books of South African companies that claim they cannot compete with foreign importers. Workers’ committees will scrutinise their profits, senior pay levels, input costs, the wages they pay their workers and the prices they charge for their goods or services. WASP will not support capitalist profits by asking the working class to pay high prices for goods and services or by holding down wages on the capitalist classes’ behalf.

If companies genuinely cannot compete, in the first instance we will demand their nationalisation under workers’ control. This must be the principle demand of the trade union movement struggling to defend jobs from foreign competition. Only as a last resort would WASP consider supporting import tariffs in order to save jobs, but such support will be carefully weighed against our responsibility to our class brothers and sisters around the world whom we include in our plans in order to try and find a solution together.

WASP fights for:

- International solidarity with all workers – workers of the world unite!
- Open the books. - nationalise globally “uncompetitive” South African industries to save jobs
- Introduce a state monopoly of foreign trade and capital controls under the democratic control of a socialist government – no to the looting of the economy or the sabotage of democratic decisions of a socialist government; re-nationalise the Reserve Bank
- Campaign for the abolition of the IMF and the World Bank and for a worldwide democratic plan of production

The mines – for 100% nationalisation under workers and community control

The mining industry and related sectors are the backbone of the South African economy. South Africa has 80% of proven world platinum reserves and the largest reported reserves of gold, chrome and manganese. Besides this there is plentiful iron-ore, coal, zirconium, vanadium and titanium. In 2010, US bank Citigroup ranked South Africa as the richest country on the planet in terms of its mineral reserves and estimated the mineral wealth of the country at an almost

unimaginable R25 trillion. The average annual profit of just nine of the major mining companies is R39 billion.

More than half a million workers are directly employed in the mines and are amongst the most exploited workers in capitalist South Africa. Mineworkers earn a basic minimum wage of R4 743 per month. The average income for the CEO of a JSE listed mine is R12 689 000 per year with some receiving vastly more than this. For example, Nick Holland of Gold Fields had an income of R45 million in 2012 making him the highest paid mining CEO. It would take the average mineworker 17 lifetimes to earn what the average CEO receives in one year. The minimum wage demand of R12 500 demanded by mineworkers represents less than 0.01% of an average CEO’s annual income. The Labour Research service has pointed out that on the basis of the mining companies average annual profits they could pay 2.3 million workers R12 500 per month. That number of workers is nearly four times bigger than the current workforce yet the mine bosses claim they cannot “afford” it!

Modernisation and mechanisation on the basis of capitalism mean mass retrenchments and poverty for mineworkers and their families. WASP does not oppose modernisation and mechanisation as such – only when at the expense of workers to line the pockets of the mine bosses.

WASP also fights for the bosses to carry the full social and environmental costs of mining. Nobody should come to the mine to die, destroy their lungs and then be thrown away as rubbish. We also cannot accept the pillage of natural resources, leaving behind for example acid mine water, slimes dams, radioactive dust, heavy metal contamination of soil and water.

WASP fights for:

- United struggle for a living minimum wage of R12 500
- End labour broking, make all contract workers permanent
- End all retrenchments; re-employ all retrenched mineworkers with experience recognised
- Demand that all current court actions brought by dismissed mineworkers to be settled immediately in favour of the mineworkers and lost wages paid immediately – e.g. the Kroondal Murray & Roberts workers, the Royal Bafokeng Rasimone workers and the Steelpoort Xstrata workers
- Massive investment in mining communities to provide decent housing, electrification, sanitation, roads, recreational facilities and other basic services for all
- Democratic and informed community control over mining licencing and exploration – nothing about us without us!
- Open the books of all the mining companies – for worker and community control; stop hiding profits away, astronomical pay for management and politically motivated shaft closures
- Decisions on modernisation and mechanisation of the mining industry to be placed under the democratic control of workers’ committees at shaft-level and at sector- and industry level in consultation with a socialist government – implementation to be under the control of shaft-based workers’ committees
- The bosses must pay the environmental and social costs of mining – properly decommission exhausted shafts, restore water and land resources and clean-up and make safe shafts already closed, no job losses, fund the retraining of mineworkers wherever requested
- End mine deaths – democratic worker control over safety; people before profit
- Struggle for the nationalisation of 100% of the mining industry immediately and place it under democratic workers’ control integrated into a society-wide democratic socialist plan of production

The land and food production

The expropriation of the land from the black population, first by colonialism and later by the apartheid state was and is a historical injustice. By the end of apartheid. 87% of land in South Africa was white owned. Despite having a considerable agricultural sector more than one in ten households in South Africa regularly experience hunger.

Only 13% of South African land is suitable for agricultural use. Today, 36 000 predominantly white commercial farmers control 95% of agricultural land – over 100 million hectares. These farms are worked by approximately 800 000 waged farmworkers nearly half of whom are seasonal workers. A further 171 000 workers are employed in the food processing industry.

The remaining 5% of agricultural land is occupied by 1.3 million small-scale and subsistence farmers predominantly in the former homelands. Some 2.5 million black South Africans eke out a living in this way.

WASP fights for:

- Nationalise the 36 000 commercial farms and the food processing industry under democratic workers control and integrate them into a society-wide democratic socialist plan of production – compensation in cases of proven need (e.g. small shareholders and pension investments)

- Shift farming and forestry to sustainable ecological methods., e.g. permaculture – end hunger!
- A living minimum wage of R12 500 for all agricultural workers – all seasonal workers to be made permanent.
- Workers' committees on individual farms and at industry level to determine the deployment of labour – reduce the working week without loss of pay out of season.
- State assistance in the form of cheap loans and access to affordable and sustainable agricultural implements, feed and equipment for the 1.3 million small farmers –cancel the debts of small farmers
- State assistance to subsistence farmers in the form of cheap, sustainable fertiliser, pesticides, seed and implements with incentives to socialise subsistence plots at the village level under the democratic control of the community
- State control of prices on all basic foodstuffs
- Democratic community committees to determine the use of the 87% of non-agricultural land for social need including currently state-owned land and communally held land (e.g. under Ngonyama Trust or other “tribal” Permission To Occupy-systems), in consultation with a socialist government; home owner-occupiers and small business premises exempted.

Work & Income

For dignity and fair reward – not exploitation and hand-outs

The unemployment crisis

Officially one in four South Africans, 25%, cannot find work. If so-called ‘discouraged jobseekers’ – those that have given up looking for work – are included the real rate is approaching 40%. Over seven million individuals are idle – a massive “reserve army of labour” acting as a downward pressure on wages for the entire working class. And the problem is getting worse. Between 2001 and 2012 the number of “discouraged jobseekers” increased by 733 000. These people are not reported in the government’s official unemployment statistics showing the nonsense of the ANC’s claims that employment levels are improving.

Unemployment affects the youth most severely. More than half of all 15-24-year-olds are without work; amongst 25-34-year-olds the rate is 29.3%. South Africa risks a “lost generation”.

It is not just the wasted potential of millions that is a problem. The crisis of unemployment has a wider social impact. Unemployment is a major factor contributing to crime, drug and alcohol abuse and gender-based violence, to name just a few of the social ills it produces.

ANC’s failure to respond

The Expanded Public Works Programme (which includes schemes such as the Community Works Programme and Home Community Based Care and many other small-scale municipality-, provincial- and NGO-organised schemes) has dismally failed to reach its target to cut

unemployment in half by this year. Workers on EPWP schemes can receive less than R50 per day. They are not entitled to sick pay, holiday pay or other benefits. The work is usually hard and labour intensive – road repairs, litter picking and street sweeping. The jobs are not full time or permanent. In fact, EPWP workers can only be employed for two out of every five years.

The government cynically manipulates the EPWP to try and claim it has had an impact on unemployment. For example a “work opportunity” is created if someone is employed for any length of time – even just a week! If the same worker leaves their scheme for a week and returns for another week’s work a month later then two “work opportunities” are counted! The EPWP’s own guidelines say the “optimal” length of a “work opportunity” is 100 days. What sort of job only employs a worker for less than one third of the year and only two years out of every five? The main achievement of the EPWP from the point of view of the ANC has been to channel huge sums of public money to tenderpreneurs, contractors and others looking to loot state resources. In 2012, only 10% of the EPWP’s R77.5 billion budget reached workers as wages.

Going into the 2014 election, the ANC talks of creating six million “job opportunities”. They are offering nothing different – this is the same tired language of the EPWP.

Unemployment is fundamental to capitalism

Nothing shows the dead-end of capitalism better than mass unemployment. The life chances and human potential of millions of South Africans is wasted. But unemployment is not a natural disaster – it is a capitalist disaster and a permanent feature of capitalist society.

The bosses claim that the reason there are not more jobs is because

of heavy labour market regulation, trade unions and strikes – in other words “workers have too many rights”! This is rubbish. It is capitalism that is incapable of creating enough jobs for everyone because of the prioritisation of profits over social need. The fewer workers a capitalist employs and the more each individual worker is exploited the more profits there are for the bosses. That is why capitalist societies have the contradictory features of over-work on the one hand, with long hours and seven-day-weeks, and on the other hand mass unemployment. Even with massive investment in training and education, on the basis of capitalism we would simply end up with a highly educated mass of unemployed people. This is already the situation in capitalist countries from Britain to Egypt

Only socialist policies of economic planning are capable of creating the millions of jobs that South Africa needs. Economic planning will allow education and training to be fully integrated with the broader economy allowing society to educate and train the necessary number of workers for the jobs that society deems necessary and desirable.

Underemployment: There are 14 million South Africans in work today. But the skills and potential of many are barely used. For example two million are employed as security guards. Whilst WASP fights for the rights of security workers, for decent pay and safe working conditions, in a socialist society these two million workers could be given far more productive – and interesting! – work.

Wages and salaries: For most of the 14 million South Africans in work, their wages and salaries are an insult. The median minimum wage across all industries is just R3 500 per month. Over 40% of black households have no direct income at all from wages or salaries.

Wages and incomes must be at a level where they offer workers and their families a decent standard of life free from the worry over where the next meal will come from, how the rent will be paid this month and how education or healthcare will be paid for. It is a scarecrow of the capitalist class that higher wages will mean less jobs. WASP rejects this logic. What the capitalists really mean is that their profits will be reduced as a consequence of wage rises to the point that they chose to mothball factories, close shops, shut shafts and run off with the money. For example, the Labour Research Service’s figures show that the profits of just nine mining companies could pay 2.3 million workers a wage of R 12500 each month.

That is why nationalisation is fundamental to solving the unemployment crisis. Nationalisation means all the money that is currently paid to shareholders as profits can be used for decent pay, amongst other things. Nationalisation also neutralises the threats of the capitalist class to mothball factories, close shops and shut shafts. The individual capitalist is free to go; but the resources, infrastructure and capital of their business will become the property of society through nationalisation and be placed under workers’ and community control.

WASP fights for:

- Scrap the exploitative Expanded Public Works Programme. Replace with a massive worker- and community-controlled public works programme building houses, clinics, hospitals, schools, road and other social infrastructure; fight for permanent full-time jobs on a living wage, full workers’ rights from day one of employment
- No to the Employment Tax Incentive Bill – victory to NUMSA’s campaign against it
- Stop all retrenchments; fight all retrenchment plans – nationalise failing businesses to protect jobs; restructure failed businesses under workers’ control to integrate them into democratically planned socialist economy

- Massive training and education programmes as part of an integrated democratic socialist plan of production to match social needs, jobs and workers with training and education
- A living minimum wage of R12 500 per month for all workers; nationalise non-complying big business – if the capitalists cannot afford their workers, then the workers cannot afford the capitalists companies and businesses must open their books to demonstrate unaffordability; in proven cases of small businesses, government subsidies could be available to make up the shortfall
- Reduce the working week and share out the work without loss of pay to improve the quality of life for workers and allow all those living in South Africa willing and able to work to do so – democratic workers’ committees to determine the size of the workforce and length of the working week at the sector and industry level
- End labour-brokering – make all contract, temporary, casual and informal workers permanent

Social grants – from humiliating hand-outs to dignified basic income grant

WASP supports a comprehensive welfare system that guarantees all those that live in South Africa a basic income. WASP’s job creation and wage policies, the development of free, high-quality and accessible healthcare, home-based care, childcare and education would greatly reduce the need for social grants.

Currently, under the ANC, social grants are used to disguise low pay and unemployment and to subsidise employers who avoid their responsibility to workers and their families to make suitable severance payments, sick pay, holiday pay and offer decent pensions. In the last four years the annual cost of social grants has increased 18% and now over 16 million South Africans receive some form of grant at a cost of R104.8 billion per year. A much greater portion of this social cost must be transferred to employers in higher minimum wages, comprehensive sick pay and holiday pay, and the provision of living pensions for retired and disabled workers.

Now the ANC wants to go further and make their subsidy to low-paying employers explicit in the Employment Tax Incentive Bill (a repackaging of the Youth Wage Subsidy). Not only will it result in driving down wages in general, it will subsidise those low wages by offering tax breaks to companies taking part in the scheme! WASP fully supports the NUMSA campaign against the youth wage subsidy.

WASP fights for a basic income grant of R8 000 for all those unable to work, including pensioners, war veterans and the disabled. As part of the development of a socialist planned economy, workplaces will be made accessible to the disabled so that if any of the 1.2 million disabled people chose to come back to work they are helped to do so with any training that may be necessary. The 800 000 currently in receipt of the foster care grant or care dependency grant will have the option to become full time social services workers even if they chose to remain full-time carers for family members. They will have the option to receive the industry minimum wage and full training if they chose this path. Investment in day centres and other social services for dependents and their carers will socialise the provision of care and help lift the burden on carers.

WASP fights for:

- Massively increase the responsibility of employers to pay a living pension to retired and disabled workers and to pay adequate sick pay and holiday pay; UIF for all
- A basic income grant of R8 000 for all those who live in South Africa who are unemployed.

- Increase social grants for pensioners, the disabled and war veterans to R8 000 per month. – a dignified existence for all!
- Investment to make the economy accessible to the disabled; training for all disabled people wishing to work
- Employ carers as social workers with adequate training on a R12 500 per month living minimum wage – for a choice of dignified employment rather than hand-outs

Street traders and small business – time to organise to fight repression

As a result of the unemployment crisis, the “informal” sector of the South African economy is huge. One estimate in October 2012 suggested that over 6.3 million were routinely active in the ‘informal’ economy. There are thought to be 90 000 spaza shops in townships and informal settlements across the country. Much of the “informal” economic activity also takes the form of street trading, or ‘hawking’. In Johannesburg CDB alone there are over 8,000 street traders. For millions, informal trading is the only way to try and earn a living, yet the state and police regularly harass and persecute these workers (see section 4). For example 2010/3 saw a sustained campaign against the Johannesburg street traders by Johannesburg’s ANC mayor in “Operation Clean Sweep”. WASP helped lead the campaign that defeated Operation Clean Sweep.

WASP fights for:

- Recognise all who depend on street trading – for full licensing of all street traders without discrimination
- The right of street traders to earn an honest living – the “informal” economy must become formal!
- No re-registration of traders – licences and permits to be of minimum five year duration; for a transparent demarcation and allocation process that allows all stakeholders to take part
- Develop adequate market space, stands and other infrastructure necessary for street traders to engage in business
- Subsidised wholesale warehouses to enable street traders to obtain adequate stock for their business at rates that allow them to make a decent living
- All plans for the development of the informal economy to be developed in democratic consultation with all informal traders – nothing about street traders without street
- Cheap credit to be available to street traders to grow their business, e.g. to allow those who wish to open permanent premises – support the forming of cooperatives

Domestic workers – unite and fight for recognition as social service

There are over one million domestic workers in South Africa; nearly all are black women. Most domestic work takes place in the “informal” economy with little regulation or enforcement of domestic workers’ rights; e.g. trade union rights. The official minimum wage for domestic workers is between R1 618 and R1 877 per month depending on the area and assuming a 45 hour working week, but many work far longer hours for less pay.

WASP believes it is necessary to raise the wages of domestic workers and properly regulate the industry to protect the rights of domestic workers.

As part of constructing a democratically planned socialist economy steps would be taken to socialise many of the back-breaking domestic chores currently confined to the home and carried out by either domestics or unemployed women. A public corporation could be established, employing all domestic workers, democratically controlled and managed by domestic workers themselves. All households wishing to employ the services of domestic workers would have to register with the corporation and pay a monthly subscription fee. The corporation would pay wages directly to domestic workers subsidised by the socialist government and ensure a R12 500 minimum living wage.

A network of high quality public facilities such as laundry services, communal kitchens and restaurants and child care centres, accessible to all, would also be set up. This would begin to break the isolation and ineffectiveness of confining such services to the home, recognising that these are services everyone in our society needs. Domestic workers would be first in line to take up work in an management of such facilities, with the chance of upgrading education and training where necessary.

WASP fights for:

- A living minimum wage of R12 500 per month for all domestic workers and a maximum 35 hour working week
- Protect domestic workers’ right to organise in a union; for investment in adequate enforcement officers to protect the rights of domestic workers spread across scattered workplaces
- Create a public corporation as the sole employer of domestic workers under the democratic control of domestic workers –
- Create a network of public laundrettes, communal kitchens and restaurants and high-quality, accessible free childcare in every community – begin to socialise domestic work; for domestic workers to receive priority employment in these facilities with full training on how to run and manage them

Service Delivery

Time to unite the battles for decent living standards into one mighty struggle

The service delivery crisis

Millions of South Africans do not have access to basic services. More

than one in five households do not live in a “formal dwelling” – in other words they live in shacks, “traditional dwellings” or backyards. 1.8 million households are on the housing waiting list, and have been for years, but even the waiting list is not a true reflection of all those in need of housing. Of those that have been given RDP housing, one in six complained of poor quality.

More than 15% of households are not connected to mains electricity

and nearly 40% do not have refuse collected regularly. One in ten still do not have access to running water. But this figure hides the poor quality of water provision as 20% of those considered to have access only do so through a communal tap or via a neighbour. Those that do have access to electricity are forced to ration its use due to high prices and poor provision.

In other ways a major section of society is excluded from the benefits of the twenty-first century. One in five does not have a television, electric stove or mobile phone. Only 10% have internet access in their home. Many informal settlements have few or no tar roads.

The social infrastructure of South Africa needs to be brought into the twenty-first century rapidly. After twenty years of ANC rule there is zero excuse for every household not having a brick home that is connected to mains electricity, the water system and the sewerage system. Every South African should be able to step out of their front-door onto a tar road. It is only the ANC's pro-market policies that prevent a massive programme of public works being rolled out to accomplish all of this. The government worries about "stoking inflation" and prefers to let millions live in poverty rather than offend international capitalism. Millions are unemployed and in enforced idleness when they could be given training and put to work immediately developing South Africa's social infrastructure. We have the workers, we have the social need, we have the resources – only capitalism prevents these things being combined into a solution!

Public transport is underdeveloped, uncoordinated and expensive. Almost 20% of working heads of household walk to work to save money. Because of the legacy of apartheid spatial planning this can mean walking for hours before and after the working day. Many of the poor find themselves trapped in their communities unable to afford to ever leave. Even those with modest means who can afford to own and run a car are now being penalised by e-tolls in Gauteng.

There is the urgent need for the rapid development of a publicly owned, affordable and integrated public transport network. The working class and poor deserve a genuine freedom of movement, not the present rationed transport system on account of their poverty.

WASP fights for:

- End water and electricity cut-offs – cancel all rent, rates and electricity arrears for working class communities
- No to tenders, outsourcing and privatisation in public works
- A massive programme of public works to build the 2.5 million homes needed to provide every household with a decent home of adequate size and quality, with adequate and cheap electricity, water and sanitation; build tar roads to replace every dirt track.
- Stop evictions and forced removals – communities to have the final say on the implementation of all development plans; communities and households to be fully involved in the design of houses and the planning of communities
- Bring work to the people – a democratically planned socialist economy would end the segregation of residential areas and workplaces
- Massive investment in publicly owned, affordable and integrated public transport – expand the rail network; ensure safety of taxis and decent conditions for drivers; scrap e-tolls
- Employ all casual refuse and recycling workers as permanent employees with proper training in the waste management sector; invest in comprehensive and sustainable waste management systems

A socialist education policy: youth and students must fight for a future

Nowhere is the contradiction between the capitalist system of profit-making and the modest demands of the working class as clearly evident as in its incapacity to meet the working class youth's thirst for education. The ANC government has not only failed to address the education crisis inherited from apartheid but has made it worse. Through underfunding, poor planning, gross incompetence and neo-liberal attempts to commodify education for the benefit of private profiteers, 'class apartheid' has been maintained in education. The education system is failing working class and poor youth at every level.

Just looking at how many learners out of each year-cohort sit and pass the Senior National Certificate ('Matric') exams shows the failure of schooling in poor communities. In last year's matric class, out of the 1 261 827 learners who started grade one in 2002, only 562 112 remained to sit their final exams in 2013. While government triumphantly announced a pass rate of 78.2% last year, the real pass rate was only 34%. And this rate is based on standards that have been severely compromised to boost the statistics! Only 16 out of every hundred who started school in 2002 achieved university entry-level passes.

60% of young people do not go beyond grade nine as the result of a systematic process of exclusion. A huge chunk of learners are 'culled' from the system from grade ten in particular. This is a key factor in greatly improving the official pass rate while devastating the future of hundreds of thousands of youth. Other tricks are used such as shifting learners towards easier subjects. For example drastically lower numbers of learners now take mathematics and instead opt for 'maths literacy' which has ridiculously low pass requirements.

These are just the most immediate expressions of a system where segregation and inequality is intrinsic, a system built to fail the majority. Up to 80% of schools have been classified as dysfunctional by the government itself and South Africa's university admission rate is one of the lowest in the world. According to Development Bank of South Africa education specialist Graeme Bloch, only 0.1% of black African grade three learners can read and write. Overall only 15% of grade three learners tested in 2007 achieved the required literacy and numeracy levels; 17% of schools have no library; and 31% depend on borehole or rainwater. The infrastructure backlog for toilets, libraries and laboratories is estimated at R153 billion. Even this is merely the tip of the iceberg, considering that even when government claims delivery, for example school feeding schemes, text books and no-fee schools, many of the resources officially allocated are diverted through the tender system to 'tenderpreneurs' who enrich themselves by looting these resources through non- or poor delivery of food, books and other goods meant for learning.

The first six years of a child's life are known to be the most important for developing the mind, language etc. Yet less than 40% of children have the benefit of attending pre-schools or nurseries. Early childhood development is an almost entirely private-run sector, with quality pre-school education far beyond what the majority of working class and poor parents can afford.

It is overwhelmingly the black working class youth which endures poor education – reduced, in the words of apartheid architect Verwoerd, to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water". Official statistics point out that whereas 85% of white grade six learners in the Western Cape could read at grade six level, only 5% of Africans could. This is

key to explaining why only 12% of black children proceed to university compared to 50% of whites.

The introduction of no-fee schools has not been a genuine step towards the kind of free education WASP is fighting for. Instead, with funding capped, no-fee schools just cement the class apartheid in the education system. Instead of quality, free education, poor working class children are relegated to nine to twelve years of 'storage' in under-staffed, under-resourced and over-crowded schools, in preparation for permanent unemployment, poverty and humiliation. Meanwhile those who can, buy their children a future in private and semi-privatised ('Model C') government schools. The higher the school fees, the better the school will be resourced with smaller class sizes, extra teachers and other staff, modern equipment and teaching materials, sports facilities and cultural activities. While the average learner/teacher ratio is 30.4:1 in secondary school, and 40:1 at primary level, this is extremely unevenly distributed with class sizes in township and rural schools often over 50 learners. Not surprisingly, teachers are overworked, underpaid and often demoralised.

WASP supports the struggle for permanent jobs, continuous training and decent pay for teachers. We also firmly support teachers' right to strike and oppose the right-wing push for government to declare education an 'essential service'. It is workers who in the course of taking action need to define what are essential services in cooperation with learners and parents, in a responsible manner. Teachers' strikes will be strengthened by winning the hearts and minds of the public, including parents and learners. The threats against teachers' right to strike are part of the ruling class offensive to divert responsibility for its failing system onto the shoulders of public sector workers in education and health care. The responsibility of teachers that we do recognise is, on the contrary, to maintain their solidarity with learners and parents and struggle together with them for a quality education system and never to let the learners suffer through absenteeism, neglect or abuse.

Higher education

Twenty years since they promised to "open the doors of learning", the ANC has only managed to increase the higher education participation rate from 14% in 1996 to 16% today. For working class and poor youth, accessing higher education is still more difficult than passing through the eye of a needle.

This year only 77 000 university spaces were made available compared to the 439 779 full-time learners who passed Matric. Even the Minister of Higher Education and Further Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, had to concede that even after adding some 93 000 'learnership opportunities' and 197 946 FET college spaces, the government had no plan whatsoever for the remaining 70 000.

These 70 000 students, together with the 21.8% who failed Matric and the 92 611 'part-time students' (those who were culled to glamorise the final results) will join the already 3.7 million-strong army of NEETs – youth aged 18 to 25 years who are 'Not in Employment, Education or Training'.

The few working class youth who make it to university are subjected to yet another cruel system failure – massive academic and financial exclusions combined with "voluntary" dropping-out under the pressures of grinding poverty, inaccessible, unaffordable and inadequate student housing and transport and the lack of academic and financial support.

The graduation rate remains only 15% in public institutions of higher learning and amongst black African and Coloured students the success

rate is only 5%! Out of each first-year cohort, half drop out during their first three years. Over 70% of drop-outs are from low-income groups. Over one in three students lives in poverty and regularly suffers hunger, getting by on only one meal per day. Only 5.3% of first-years, and 20% overall, are housed in university residences, which afford advantages such as subsidised meals, financial aid for rent, transport and access to information, learning, study, cultural and recreational facilities. R104 billion would be needed to increase the spaces in student housing to cover 80% of the student population.

These mass exclusions are a wasteful squandering of public resources and the youth's future and represent a crude attempt at shifting the burden of the failing educational system onto poor working class youth and their families. The cost of these mass drop-outs to the public purse is estimated at R5.3 billion per year just in lost state subsidies., not to mention the cost to the wider economy in a lack of critical skills and the costs related to the alienation of young people such as drug abuse and crime. WASP believes it is not young people who are failing, but the education system that is failing them. After university, working class graduates are left with massive debt. – the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and universities are currently owed R13.4 billion.

Further education and training

Though the Further Education and Training college sector has expanded massively in the past few years, with over 400 000 students enrolled in 2013, this is still inadequate to accommodate the millions of NEETs. The massive increase in enrolment has not been matched by a corresponding increase in public spending on expanding infrastructure, upgrading facilities or improving the teaching staff compliment. In consequence, the pressure on these resources, that were already poor, has only worsened.

The whole post-schooling sector is undermined by the narrow, self-serving logic of neo-liberal capitalism that underpins the ANC's policy for the development of this sector. Sub-standard education and training is rife, private profiteers and 'fly-by-night' operators dominate. The FET sector is promoted as a site for the cheap production of 'human capital' (skilled workers) and for the profits of the capitalist class. Meanwhile, community colleges and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) are largely reduced to dumping grounds for those failed by the mainstream education system.

But these integral parts of the education system have a crucial role to play in the development of communities and the life-long learning that is necessary for that. WASP believes that FET and the whole post-schooling education sector should be overhauled and massively expanded. This sector should not be a cash cow for private operators but part of a comprehensive public education system. FET colleges should equip students with the general education necessary for an active civic participation and skills useful to the development of communities.

There is a near endless list of areas where training would assist with meaningful community development, including training in home-based health care, public works and training to allow the meaningful participation of workers and communities in the democratic control and management of society. As part of these efforts, and linked to workers' and community struggles, a mass literacy programme is still needed in South Africa.

To eradicate poverty and massive underperformance, we need a universal, fully state-funded and comprehensive education system tying together pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education

as well as adult basic education and vocational and community development training. The full costs of study, learning and research must be covered throughout, including students' costs for procurement of books, a sufficient and balanced diet, decent accommodation and transport and a massive upgrade of student housing, libraries and learning facilities.

WASP fights for:

- Free, equal, quality public education for all from pre-school to the university and colleges; nationalisation of private schools, colleges and universities – for an end to class apartheid in education
- Free, healthy, quality meals for all learners and students from pre-school to tertiary level
- Nationalise all printing facilities and school textbooks publishing houses as well as stationary producers for cheap production and distribution of quality study materials to all learners – under democratic control of workers, educators, learners and communities
- A massive and urgent programme of building schools and improving facilities, as part of a new public works programme – under democratic worker and community control; no to tenders
- A programme of allowing all learners to learn in their mother tongue throughout their education
- Re-open the teaching colleges as publicly funded, free and quality training centres to meet the needs, in number and quality, of the teachers necessary to reduce the current overcrowding in classes – cut the learner/teacher ratio for a maximum class size of 20 learners
- Permanent jobs for all teachers – further training available to all, recognise experience; defend the right to strike
- An adult literacy programme centred around organised workers and communities to empower the working class and poor
- Set up community colleges for a mass expansion of meaningful civic education and training to meet the needs of community development
- Stop financial exclusions in tertiary education – register all qualifying students, release all results unconditionally
- Stop academic exclusions – massive increase in academic support systems, e.g. tutoring and mentorship programmes; make casual university staff permanent
- Massive expansion of higher education and FET spaces – increase the rate of participation to a minimum of 85% of the population aged 18-25 years
- Urgent programme to address the higher education and FET infrastructure backlog and support increasing levels of enrolment – from learning and research facilities and social support facilities to student accommodation and transport; 80% of the student population should be housed in residences – as part of a new public works programme under democratic worker, student and community control; no to tenders
- Make information technology, study facilities and libraries available to all
- Study allowance to eliminate student poverty and curb rates of students opting-out of studies in search of jobs

South Africa's sick healthcare system

As with the economy generally, healthcare in South Africa is marked by extreme inequality. Total spending on healthcare is roughly split 50/50 between the public healthcare system and the private healthcare system. The problem is that 85%, or 42 million South Africans, are reliant on public healthcare and only 16%, or just over 8 million use private healthcare. A minority of the population receives the bulk of health resources. For example 73% of doctors work in the private sector looking after a small minority of the population.

With the lack of resources, investment and staffing the quality of the public healthcare sector is deteriorating from its already low level. Corruption is looting the public health sector. According to the auditor-general R12 billion disappeared from the Gauteng health budget – nearly half the entire provincial budget!

Consequently life expectancy for the population as a whole is less than 59 years and there is only one doctor for every 4 219 people. Even these figures skew the massive inequality in health as they count the minority receiving private healthcare. If these were discounted life expectancy is even lower and the number of doctors per person even less. Over five million have HIV and less than half of those infected are receiving ARV treatment. There are two million AIDS orphans. TB remains at epidemic proportions. In 2010 the maternal mortality ratio was 310 deaths per 100 000 live births, the infant (under-1) mortality rate was 41 deaths per 1 000 live births, while the under-5 mortality rate was 57 per 1 000 live births.

The private health sector is dominated by a few big businesses. Over 80% of private healthcare is controlled by just three vastly profitable businesses – Mediclinic, Netcare and Life Healthcare. Mediclinic saw its profits increase 45% in 2012.

The ANC government's new National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme talks about massive investment in health in order to improve the access and quality of healthcare for all South Africans. But rather than approaching the health crisis in a genuinely comprehensive manner the NHI is a fudge that leaves the private healthcare service intact. The NHI will mean private health companies using public money from taxes on ordinary people to treat patients who cannot afford private healthcare. The NHI will almost certainly mean a profits bonanza for the private healthcare sector. This is not the way to address the healthcare crisis of South Africa. The wealth exists for all to have easy access to free, high quality public healthcare.

WASP fights for:

- No to the ANC's National Health Insurance subsidy to the private health sector – for a universal, free, high-quality, accessible publicly owned national health service, integrating all levels of care – clinics, hospitals, home-based care and other services – from cradle to grave; the health service to be run under the democratic control of patients, communities and health workers
- Nationalise the private healthcare providers, health insurers and pharmaceutical companies as part of a public national health service
- Massive training programme of doctors, nurses and medical staff – fill all vacancies, boost staff numbers and improve care
- Defend health care workers' right to strike – workers must determine 'essential services' in consultation with patients and communities
- Demand an increase the wages and training of home-based care workers. For home-based care to be under the democratic control of communities
- Regulate traditional healers – weed out fraudsters; roll out health literacy programme in all communities

Fighting for Rights

For working class unity – end sexism, racism, xenophobia and repression

Capitalism is the economic dictatorship by 1% over 99% of the population. The maintenance of such a situation requires the ruling class to rely on an intricate web of means to divide and weaken the working class and the poor. The state – at its core the police, the courts and the army, but also including the parliamentary institutions and agencies, the education system and social welfare institutions – is the most important tool for this. A range of methods are employed: deception, propaganda, raw repression. Capitalist governments are rarely required to work out some conspiracy to hold the oppressed down. They can rely on social norms, customs and traditions which go back as far as class society itself (about 10 000 years) and which have been taken to extremes with the emergence of global capitalism: sexism, racism, authoritarianism and superstition. The capitalist class relies on institutions such as the media, churches, traditional kings and chiefs to transmit and reinforce these attitudes amongst the people.

While the ANC fought against racist and sexist attributes of capitalism in the form of the apartheid regime, it took over the management of the same capitalist system. As a servant of big business, the ANC government has found itself obliged to recycle the apartheid regime's methods of oppression. This is not a 'legacy of the past', but a reactionary, repressive trend that is increasing in strength along with the increased class tensions of a system in crisis as expressed in the service delivery rebellions, strike action and student protests. Capitalism has taken society into a dead end. With no actual way forward (without breaking with the capitalist system) the ruling elite increasingly look backwards for ways of ensuring the submission of the masses. It is within this context that WASP understands the problems of sexism, gender-based violence, homophobia, racism, xenophobia, police brutality and attacks on freedom of expression and other democratic gains – and why it is a necessity for us to fight against them.

Fighting for women's liberation.

In South Africa...

- ...1 in 60 seconds – a person is raped
- ...1 every 6 hours – a woman is murdered by her intimate partner
- ...1 in 25 men on trial for rape are convicted
- ...1 in 9 rape survivors report the crime to the police
- ...1 in 4 men admit to having raped a woman
- ...1 in 2 women are sexually assaulted in their lifetime

South Africa came out of the struggle against apartheid with laws that recognise the equality of all humans, regardless of gender and sexual orientation, amongst other things. But South African society is still one of the world's most dangerous for women and for those, such as lesbians and gays, who break with gender norms. A recent study estimates that 3600 rapes are committed every day in South Africa.

Half of all women in South Africa are sexually assaulted at some point in their lives. Lesbian women are at high risk of becoming victims of so-called 'corrective rape' and other homophobic hate crimes. In a 2010 study by the Medical Research Council, one in four men admitted to having raped at least once. The perpetrators of violence against women are in most cases men who are close to their victims, rather than strangers. The courts receive close to 250 000 applications for protection orders every year. On average four women are murdered by their husbands, boyfriends or exes every day.

Violence against women, or gender-based violence, is the most extreme expression of the sexism that runs through society, not only in South Africa but worldwide. The spectrum of women's oppression includes the lower wages for women workers, the higher unemployment rate among women, the burden of unpaid work women do in the home, the definition of gender roles through clothes and body language, the objectification of women to sell anything from perfume to cars, the constraints on freedom of expression and movement imposed on women and the commodification of women through prostitution and transactional relationships. The inequalities between men and women and the violence against women flow from the deeply ingrained idea that women are the possessions of men, exist to gratify men's 'needs', and should depend on and submit to men.

Inequality between men and women is not something 'natural' that always has and always will exist. For most of human history, men and women have lived as equals. It was with the emergence of class society, about 10 000 years ago, that women came to be subjugated to men (but not without a fight!). The creation of a new classless socialist society will constitute the foundation from which to eradicate women's oppression and all other oppressions.

To wage an effective struggle for a classless socialist society it is necessary to build the maximum unity of the working class. We have to overcome the divisions between men and women that capitalist society encourages as far as possible to unite the working class and all the oppressed and fight effectively. The oppression of women puts obstacles in the way of the struggle.

Work: According to Statistics SA, in a 2010 study, women who have jobs spend twice as much time as men doing unpaid work at home and looking after others (on average four hours per day). Unemployed women do even more housework compared to unemployed men. When men and women get married, women's time spent on housework rises while that of men drops drastically. This not only gives men far more freedom than women but is also a gigantic free service provided to the capitalist system by having a major part of the work necessary for the running of society – the functioning of workers, the raising of children (to become new workers) etc. – performed without pay. In South Africa many young girls' lives and development get stunted by the burden of domestic work.

Pay: While women overall do more work than men, they get far less of the pay. Worldwide, working women earn between 10% and 30% less than men according to a 2011 World Bank study. Even in the most advanced capitalist countries, women get paid 16% less for the same

job. In South Africa, the wage gap for the same tasks is a massive 33%. Young, black African women are the lowest paid workers in the country. This injustice boosts capitalist profits enormously. Women are also the biggest losers in terms of unemployment. A 2003 study showed that 75% of young black African women were unemployed. Out of all households headed by single women, 45% are classified as 'poorest-of-the-poor'. Women's exclusion from paid work has wide impacts. Having an income and a recognised role in society is the key to building the self-esteem and confidence to stand up against abuse. Gender-based violence affects women across all classes, but it has been shown that the lowest paid and poorest women suffer the highest levels.

Health: Women's health also suffers as a result of gender inequality. SA has one of the world's highest mortality rates when it comes to pregnancy and child birth (2 500 women every year). A large portion of these deaths could be easily prevented with better care, but women's reproductive health is not seen as a priority. The government also abuses women's traditional role as care-giver to lock women into 'voluntary' work, e.g. in home-based care, without any job security or real pay or the kind of support needed for these very difficult tasks. 68% of caregivers for HIV/AIDS patients, for example, are women.

Commodification: One of the most extreme expressions of women's oppression is prostitution – the very capitalisation of the idea that women are the property of men that is evident throughout society, for example in the 'transactional' nature of gender relations from dating to marriage. Not just sex, but holding power over a woman is what is being sold as a commodity. In a situation of mass unemployment and poverty which affects women the hardest, and where gender-based violence and abuse are the order of the day for many women and young girls, prostitution offers an income – but at a high price. Prostitutes face extremely harsh conditions. Rape, assault and murder are rife. Across the world, though circumstances may appear to differ widely, in common is the mortality rate of prostitutes which is higher than of any other group (about 80 times higher than the average population). The HIV infection rate is close to 60%. While many are driven into prostitution out of desperation, and very commonly also after having their self-esteem scarred by abuse, the business is also intrinsically linked with trafficking, in other words the slave trade. Trafficking and prostitution are very profitable businesses for the operators. According a 2009 report by the United Nations' International Labour Organisation, trafficking yields annual profits of R312bn. Most of the victims (78%) are sold into prostitution; the overwhelming majority are women and girls.

Prostitution is illegal in SA, and many prostitutes suffer harassment and abuse at the hands of the police. Some, such as the Commission for Gender Equality, suggest that decriminalisation or legalisation would ease the situation faced by prostitutes, by recognising sex work as a job like any other, regulated, with income taxation etc. It is hoped this would improve security and access to health care, reduce drug abuse, police harassment and role of organised crime. Actual experiences have however shown the opposite results. For example, a 2005 study by the European Union Parliament shows that, contrary to the hopes of many supporters of decriminalisation, the level of violence against sex workers was higher in the countries which had decriminalised prostitution totally or partially. Another study of legalised prostitution shows that this drove up trafficking, illegal prostitution (e.g. child prostitution) and crime.

Legal or not, prostitution remains bound up with abuse, gender-based violence and trafficking – WASP therefore supports the

decriminalisation of prostitution together with a struggle to end it, which must involve organised workers and communities and prostitutes themselves in a fight for jobs, education and against women's oppression. In this context, decriminalisation can be a tool to reduce the threat of police harassment and brutality, bearing in mind that legal measures on their own are far from enough. WASP also supports efforts by prostitutes to organise and fight for their rights, as well as 'exit' programmes to assist people to leave prostitution as part of struggles for permanent jobs, on decent wages, for all.

Abusing tradition: In South Africa, capitalism has also incorporated oppressive practices of earlier societies, such as virginity testing and the payment of *ilobolo*. Virginity testing of girls is of no use in combating the spread of HIV. Instead it strengthens the dangerous idea that women have no right to a sexuality on their own terms which is actually adding fuel to the fire of HIV infection. While *ilobolo* was once central to the functioning of the pre-capitalist African societies and is still cherished by many as a way of bringing two families together; a closer look reveals that under capitalism it has been reduced to a dehumanising transaction which forms part of the system of ideas that underpin the oppression of women – the deadly implications of which have been outlined above.

While other practices, such as *ukuthwala* – the abduction and forced marriage of young girls – are condemned by government, the backward-looking trend on part of the ruling elite is an attempt at shoring up the legitimacy of government by reinforcing blind authority and custom. The Traditional Courts Bill, for example, would cement the inferior status imposed on women – for example women not being allowed to own land, not being allowed to speak in traditional courts – and exclude rural people from many of the rights won with democracy.

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Freedom of sexual orientation: The oppression of women is linked to the oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons. When a key pillar of the power relations of society is for 'women' to submit to 'men', persons refusing to fit inside the tightly confined gender-boxes become a threat to the status quo and to those who rely on it. Homophobic abuse and hate crimes such as 'corrective rape' are therefore threats not just against the direct victims but against the very struggle for gender equality and for working class unity. WASP supports the struggle for LGBTI rights, not just on paper but in real life, and urges the labour movement, struggling communities and organised youth to take up the struggle against homophobia.

WASP fights for:

- Women and men fight together for gender equality in every sphere of society
- Equal pay for equal work – only the bosses gain from women's low wages.
- Paid parental leave for all workers (men and women)
- Free, state-funded and high-quality pre-school education for all.
- Decent work for everyone – share the wealth to create jobs; cut working hours without loss of pay
- Permanent jobs, living wages for home-based care workers
- Shelters and housing to give everyone the freedom to leave abusive relationships.
- Zero-tolerance against secondary victimisation of victims of rape and other gender-based violence by police and courts – cleanse the SAPS of perpetrators
- Training on gender-based violence for all law enforcement and court officers
- Unite communities, workers to fight hate crimes against LGBTI people
- Decriminalise adult prostitution – for exit programmes involving quality education and job opportunities, support self-organising efforts by prostitutes, target trafficking, child prostitution and other profiteering
- No to the Traditional Courts Bill – fight for equality of men and women before the law and in every other way in the whole of South Africa

Fighting racism and xenophobia

Despite the defeat of the racist apartheid regime, racism permeates the lives of all who live here. The median wage of white wage earners is four times as high as that of black wage earners. The abuse black workers endure at the hands of employers, both white and black, feeds on racism. Workers face racist verbal and physical abuse, such as in the case of the Xstrata alloys worker in Tubatse, Limpopo, who was assaulted by a white supervisor in May 2013, or the murder of farmworker Nelson Chisale, who was beaten and then thrown into a lion's den by his white boss who spent hardly three years in prison for this. Racism is a necessary, if unofficial, part of the justification for the deadly conditions faced by mineworkers and the poverty wages paid to domestic workers, to mention a few examples. Racism, in fact, has not only survived but regained strength as the hopes for a common liberation of all through the ANC-led democratic transition have been dashed. This is one of the most damning indictments on the ANC.

The failure to break with racism is reflected in government policy – from foreign policy to the sub-human conditions of government-funded RDP settlements, without electricity, water or sanitation. Racism, with its siblings xenophobia and tribalism, is rife in the police force and within other state authorities (see section on the police below).

Black immigrants and refugees who have been forced to leave their homes because of poverty, war and political and religious persecution are subjected on a daily basis to threats of arrest, deportation, extortion of bribes and xenophobic and racist harassment and abuse. In many cases, for example in Zimbabwe and the DRC, these problems are directly fuelled by South African foreign policy and predatory economic dominance of the continent.

By treating black refugees and immigrants as criminals, government and the capitalist system fuel xenophobia. If you are part of the rich elite, you have no problem living in SA as an immigrant. You'll even get your permanent residence permit with few questions asked as long as you can show you are 'financially independent'. Working class and

poor immigrants and refugees on the other hand live a nightmare of a dysfunctional, corrupt, racist and class-hostile immigration system. The right to asylum has effectively been abolished in SA as applications are systematically dragged and bungled.

As part of the government's war on the poor, working class and poor refugees and immigrants are denied equal rights to housing, work, health care and other basic needs. The government and the bosses then exploit the desperation and vulnerability they create for super-exploitation, abuse and extortion. This feeds the beast of xenophobia within the working class, especially in a situation of want and discontent. Tribalism and other divisions follow close behind. These divisions are serious threats not only to the lives and dignity of our class brothers and sisters, but also to the unity we need to face our real, common, enemies – the capitalist bosses and their political representatives, regardless of skin colour or nationality. They gain from racial, national and tribal divisions – we have everything to lose. WASP's response is to demand equal rights for all – equal pay and conditions at work, the right to housing for all, etc. We also urge trade unions to work hard to organise all immigrant workers to demand equal pay, benefits and legal status. There is enough wealth to provide for all the residents of South Africa, citizens or not – if only we as the working class take control of it! In that struggle, we need all workers and poor people to unite.

WASP fights for:

- Joint struggle against xenophobia and racism – both on part of the police, government and the bosses, as well as within working class communities
- Cleanse the South African Police Service, starting with the Minister and the Commissioner, of all perpetrators of, and those responsible for the perpetration of, torture, assault, shootings, rape, intimidation, bribery and harassment
- End the police checkpoints where IDs and passports are checked, apartheid-style, bribes extorted and our people humiliated
- Stop the deportations – shut down Lindela
- Amnesty for all 'illegal immigrants' and hidden persons
- Implement the right to asylum – overhaul the application process under the control of worker and community committees, with representation of genuine refugee groups
- A workers and community commission to overhaul Home Affairs' Immigration systems, root out corrupt officials – protect working class unity and international solidarity
- All workers fight for equal pay for equal work – act against the bosses who abuse vulnerable migrant workers, create jobs for all
- Trade unions must organise immigrant workers, fight to equal pay, jobs for all, a living wage, and for legal status
- Joint struggle for a massive expansion of housing, health care, recreational facilities and education to provide for all who live here – under democratic control of workers and communities; weed out corrupt officials, no to tenders
- Nationalisation of the banks, the mines, the commercial farms, big factories and big businesses under democratic control and management by workers and communities – use the resources to end unemployment, homelessness, poverty, xenophobia and racism

Fighting police brutality

When the police opened fire and killed 34 striking workers and wounded 78 in Marikana on August 16, 2012, they exposed the true role of the government and the state forces at its disposal. The police carried out the massacre as the 'concomitant action' (in the words of Cyril Ramaphosa) demanded by the Lonmin bosses, backed by all of big business and the tops of the state and the ruling party. A state apparatus always serves the particular social class that rules society. In South Africa's case, the ruling class has essentially remained the same from Sharpeville to Marikana – the same capitalists rule, with the decorative co-optation of black faces.

The Marikana massacre of 2012 is still being 'queried' while the police officers who fired the shots are free to do so again, as happened in Brits in January 2014. Those who authorised them to kill, such as the Minister of Police, are still comfortably in office. Protesters are routinely shot and killed as protest action has effectively been criminalised, part of the close to 1 000 people who die at the hands of the police every year in South Africa. Hundreds more are raped and thousands report beatings, torture and other abuse. According to the Independent Police Investigative Directorate's 2013 report that year saw 275 deaths in police custody, 415 deaths as a result of police action, 141 rapes by police officers, 22 rapes in police custody, 50 cases of torture and 4 047 cases of assault. These official figures are inevitably just the tip of a much larger iceberg.

The South African Police Service, and the various Metro Police services are presented as 'services' that are there to protect the public against crime. As the main victims of crime, many working class people would of course like to believe this, as would many genuinely committed police officers. The state uses the fear of crime to build support for the police, demand more resources and greater powers. The re-militarisation of police and the 'shoot-to-kill' policy are examples of this. But combatting crime is not the core function of the police. As seen in Marikana and countless other strikes and protests, the key task of the police is to protect the private property and power of the ruling class. The more powerful the police force, the greater the danger to working class organisation.

In any case, the real reason that South Africa is one of the most crime-ridden and violent countries on the planet is the extreme inequality, despair and brutality of capitalism. The roots to most of the violent crime people face on daily basis – broken people, broken homes and broken communities, massive alcohol and drug problems, poverty alongside obscene wealth – cannot be fixed by more or better trained or equipped police. In the final analysis they can only be overcome on the basis of the socialist transformation of society which WASP fights for.

WASP fights against police brutality, -corruption, -racism and sexism and for holding the police to account. As part of our struggles, genuine 'community policing forums', not the toothless shams in operation today, should be formed, where in particular the groups in society that face the most victimisation and political policing need to be represented, where we need to fight for democratic working class control over the police, also appealing to the sense of class solidarity among rank-and-file police officers. Police officers are also workers, and as we struggle we need to undermine the capitalist state's ability to use them against us and win them over to our side in the class war. Defending trade union rights and the right to strike for workers "in arms" are key tools for this. WASP supports decent wages and conditions – including not having to risk your life on the job – for rank-and-file police officers. We also push for improved training of the police, in line with working class needs such as anti-sexism and international solidarity.

In a socialist society, the old police, army and courts will be shut down, and democratic working class structures that are directly elected and accountable will take their place. With property collectively owned and controlled, and the root causes of crime dying away the need for a repressive state apparatus as such would also wither away.

WASP fights for:

- Cleanse the SAPS and the Metro police services of all perpetrators of harassment, beatings, torture, murder, rape and racist, xenophobic, sexist and homophobic abuse and corruption – starting with the Minister of Police and the National Police Commissioner
- Charge all officers, officials and politicians involved in the Marikana massacre, and other atrocities, with murder in a tribunal of representatives of workers, poor communities, youth and concerned residents
- Close down the Tactical Response Team, the Intelligence services and other units that have shown themselves as specialising in human rights abuse
- Set up real 'community policing forums' – involving residents, workers, and particularly vulnerable groups such as immigrants and refugees, women, the LGBTI community – with power to control and direct policing
- De-militarise the police – fight for a service accountable to residents and workers
- Defend the right to strike and trade union rights – for living wages and safe working conditions
- Anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-homophobic training for all police officers and staff
- For the election with the right to immediate recall of station commanders and police commissioners
- Defend the right to strike and trade union rights – for living wages and safe working conditions; for police trade unions to reach out to communities and workers

Corruption & Democracy

End the corruption of capitalism – for genuine democracy: a socialist workers' state

Corruption – inseparable from big business and the capitalist state

The government's own auditor-general has reported that of 536 government entities examined only 22% received a "clean audit". Even the government's self-assessment process suggests massive corruption with 50% of government departments showing "non-compliance" for financial management and 75% "non-compliance" with human resource management. We can safely assume these official reports grossly underestimate the corruption in the public sector.

Public sector resources are being looted by the capitalist class. In fact corrupt officials are turning themselves into capitalists through their public "service". In 2009 the Public Service Commission reported that 20% of national and provincial department managers had conflicts of interest by being linked to companies doing business with their department. The year before the auditor-general reported that a staggering R540.2 million was spent in the provinces on contracts linked to employees or employees' spouses. This is just the tip of the iceberg however. In February 2013 the PSC reported that 26% of public servants and 37% of directors-general had disclosed no information on their "outside interests". What are they hiding? Through these new 'tenderpreneurs' corruption and looting are institutionalised in the South African capitalist state.

The ANC's drive towards tenders, outsourcing and privatisation in the public sector is motivated by the interests of the capitalist class. Privatisation extends the size of the market that the capitalist class can make a profit from. In many cases it is not even genuinely profit but the direct looting of public money! The ANC's argument that privatisation is 'necessary' is a false argument and in reality based upon the intentional de-capacitation of the public sector through underinvestment over many years.

The vast majority of the over one million public servants working for the government are hard-working and dedicated. Their pay should be protected and increased. But these workers will almost certainly come under attack in the next period as the capitalist classes' concern about current account deficit increase. Public sector workers need to begin preparation and organisation now to fight off the coming attack.

The capitalist class rules both the economy and the democratic institutions. It is not just in the state bureaucracy that capitalism exerts its corrupting influence. The capitalist class directly make up a significant section of elected representatives. In 2011 over 30% of MPLs, 59% of MPs and 76% of the executive – i.e. ministers, deputy ministers and President Zuma's inner circle – held directorships and/or shares. Is it any wonder that the interests of big business are

prioritised when the capitalist class themselves are the ones making all the decisions?!

Even those representatives that do not enter office as capitalists or become capitalists in the course of holding office are immediately elevated into an elite world removed from the day-to-day concerns of the working class and poor. Even the lowest paid MPs earn a salary of R 74 115 per month (R 889 383 per year) putting them in the elite top 10% of society.

WASP fights for:

- Defend the rights and pay of public sector workers – no pay cuts, no retrenchments!
- End all tenders, outsourcing and privatisation in the public sector – return all privatised services to local, municipal and provincial ownership and control.
- Invest in public sector capacity
- Confiscate the assets of rich and corrupt 'tenderpreneurs' – worker and community investigations of suspected corrupt public officials with the power to prosecute
- Demand full disclosure of business interests of elected representatives – non-compliance and conflicts of interest will mean immediate expulsion from office and the calling of by-elections
- All elected representatives to take no more than the average wage of a skilled worker. All expenses and salary information to be published annually

The ANC does not just represent the capitalist class; its leadership IS the capitalist class

A fish rots from the head down. Fifteen members of the Zuma family are involved in a staggering 134 companies, 83 of which were set up after Jacob Zuma became president. President Zuma's friendship with the Gupta family of capitalists is a national embarrassment as is the R 246 million spent on the president's private residence at Nkandla. Deputy-president of the ANC Cyril Ramaphosa has wealth of over R6 billion and is part of the new BEE elite. On the ANC National Executive Committee, over 50% of its members are company directors and a third are directors of more than one company with over 1 in 10 holding five directorships or more. 72% of ANC NEC members own shares, 50% own shares in more than one company and 18% own shares in more than five companies.

This is not a government representing the working class and poor. Nor is it the leadership of a liberation movement. The ANC NEC is an executive committee of the capitalist class. The ANC and the government do not just represent the capitalist class, ANC leaders are the capitalist class!

But the character of the ANC as a vehicle for the capitalist class goes even deeper than just the individuals that lead it. In severing the link between the ANC and the working class and poor the ANC has become reliant on capitalist sources of funding. Their now infamous Chancellor House investment company, which channels profits back to the ANC, owns shares in a wide number of companies, in particular large-scale engineering, mining and energy projects. Via BEE, Chancellor House took ownership of a 23% stake in Wits Gold which in turn took control of resources previously owned by AngloGold Ashanti, Gold Fields and ARM/Harmony Gold. Chancellor House owns a 25% stake in United

Manganese of Kalahari an operation worth up to R10 billion. Given that government is responsible for licensing, granting concessions and regulating the mining industry “conflict of interest” does not even begin to describe this situation. The ANC and the mining capitalists have fused in the investments Chancellor House has made.

Then there is the ANC’s Progressive Business Forum (PBF) established in 2006. This is the legalised payment of bribes for meetings with senior ANC officials. The ‘business community’ are invited to pay R3 000 to R7 000 for access to senior ANC officials. Regular conferences of the PBF can net the ANC upward of R500 000. The slogan of the PBF reads more like a threat: “can you afford not to belong to the PBF?”

The ANC’s ally in the Tripartite Alliance, the South African Communist Party (SACP) was recently described by Business Day – the newspaper of the capitalist class – as the best place to launch a political career from, by which they mean of course a capitalist political career! By freeing themselves from the funding of ordinary members the capitalist class has taken full control of the ANC, with the ANC reduced to the distribution of food parcels to attempt to buy the votes of the desperate and downtrodden.

Capitalist opposition parties offer no alternative

The ANC is not alone in being part and parcel of the capitalist class. The DA remains a party of privilege and business committed to a capitalist South Africa. They merely think they can do a better job running capitalism than the ANC! Mamphela Ramphele – leader of Agang SA – has a fortune of at least R50 million, is a former director or the World Bank and former chairperson of Gold Fields. Is it any wonder that these two attempted a marriage? Even the leadership of the Economic Freedom Fighters has its roots in the ‘tenderpreneur’ elite. Unfortunately the EFF’s manifesto is not a blueprint for socialism but just promotes a different kind of capitalism – they are radical but they are not revolutionary.

The ‘traditional’ leaders – unaccountable bulwark for capitalism

Scandalously, in twenty-first century democratic South Africa some 22 million (or 1 in 3 of the population) live under the authority of so-called traditional leaders. Unelected and unaccountable traditional leaders sit by right on many municipal councils and have to be consulted over local development decisions. Mining companies and foreign investors are required to pay taxes and royalties to the traditional leaders.

There are approximately 6 000 traditional leaders. Kings and queens receive a state salary of R900 000 per year; other traditional leaders receive a state salary of R180 000 and R650 000 per year. This puts the majority of traditional leaders in the elite top 10% of society just on account of their basic salary. These leaders are dependent on the capitalist state for their privileged social position and capitalist social relations for their taxes and royalties. Whatever “traditional” trappings these leaders are given the reality is that they are a conservative and divisive bulwark of the capitalist system.

The ANC’s Traditional Courts Bill seeks to extend the authority of the traditional leaders by creating a parallel justice system with no right to opt out for those who do not recognise traditional authority. What the Bill proposes is a travesty of justice and an attack on the rights of women. The Bill does not guarantee the participation of women in the system and does not guarantee the right to representation for anyone! South Africans who voluntarily recognise the authority of traditional leaders should be free to do so as long as it does not conflict with the law and the rights of others. Full religious and cultural freedoms will be

a basic democratic right in a socialist South Africa. However traditional authority should not be maintained or supported by the state

WASP fights for:

- Scrap the Traditional Courts Bill – one country, one justice system: a democratic system of trial by a jury
- End all state salaries for traditional leaders – remove traditional leaders from municipal councils; traditional leaders retain the right to form a political party and contest elections the same as every other citizen
- Put all taxes and royalties paid by mining companies and foreign investors currently paid to traditional leaders under the democratic control of elected and accountable community committees and spent on social development
- Traditional authority to be given the status of voluntary associations – if members chose freely to pay subscriptions and maintain traditional leaders as full-time employees from those subscriptions that is their concern; such traditional associations to observe democratic norms of non-oppression, non-discrimination and non-coercion

For a workers’ state and a socialist government

The state’s intertwining with the capitalist class makes it impossible to use it for the construction and administration of a socialist society. Leaving aside the parasitic co-dependence of the two, the institutions necessary to accommodate the massive expansion of democracy in a socialist South Africa do not at present exist. Democratic councils of working class people at the level of the workplace, community, industry, economic sector and national economy will form the basis of a workers’ state. (See section 1 for more detail on the role of workers’ councils.)

A workers’ state would end the division between the so-called ‘political sphere’ and ‘economic sphere’. This division only exists where private ownership of the economy dominates. Ending this division will turn today’s intensely political questions – e.g. which class gets what share of the national wealth through different wage and tax levels – into technical questions about the best way to organise labour and produce all the goods and services that society needs. Undoubtedly there will still be robust debates and disagreements on these questions, but they will be of a very different character compared to today.

A workers’ state would still be topped by a national government, but again this would be of a very different character. It would be a socialist government resting on the foundation of a workers’ state and taking its mandates from the enormous participation of the working class in these new democratic structures at every level of society. The government would not be a talking shop, tinkering about the edges of society when all the major decisions are made behind closed doors in the boardrooms and executive suites of corporate HQs. Government would become a genuine working body with real powers and control on society but of a strictly accountable basis.

WASP fights for:

- A workers’ state and a socialist government – based on democratic councils at every level, involving each community and workplace
- Election of all state officials expanding elections to posts that are currently appointed, including judges, department heads, police commissioners etc All state officials to receive no more than a skilled workers’ wage
- Term limits of five years for all elected state positions to prevent the formation of a permanent bureaucracy with interests other than those of society in general
- The right of immediate recall of all state officials and government representatives.

Unite the struggles

Uniting the struggles of workers, communities and youth – struggle and solidarity for socialism

WASP is first and foremost a party of struggle. Our goal is to unite the struggles of workers, communities and the youth, a unity that will be necessary to wage the revolutionary struggle needed for a socialist society. The burning issues facing the working class and poor mean that we cannot move at the tempo of the parliamentary timetable or trust to gradual and incremental change – we must act and we must act now! The vast majority of changes needed in this country will be won in the struggles in the workplaces, the communities and institutions of learning.

Over the past twenty years the mass organisations have become pale shadows of their former selves. The majority of workers' leaders, community leaders and youth leaders have been seduced by the capitalist class, through the ANC and SACP, into acting as a break on struggle rather than as the leaders of struggle. As a result the unity of the working class has fragmented. This has not stopped the working class and poor from engaging in heroic struggle again and again. For example the mineworkers uprising in 2012, the farmworkers strikes in 2013, the continuing service delivery protests in the communities and the insurrection of the students against financial exclusions in 2014. But these lions are led by donkeys. The general task facing the working class today is the building of our class independence through organisation. But different challenges are posed in the different theatres of struggle.

The crisis in Cosatu – a threat to workers' unity

The ANC and their allies in the Cosatu leadership are trying to destroy the independence of the working class by fully subordinating the federation to the ANC within the Tripartite Alliance. The ANC views this as a crucial strategic objective. Opposition to the ANC will inevitably grow in the coming years, particularly with the deteriorating position of the South African economy and as the full implementation of the neo-liberal National Development Plan begins. The ANC wants to dampen resistance in advance of the battles which are sure to come.

A struggle is raging for the heart and soul of Cosatu. The pro-ANC wing of the leadership is acting as a treacherous fifth column for the capitalist class. Opposition to this process has centred on Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi with the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) at the forefront. The two factions represent a struggle between the capitalist classes' attempt to destroy the working classes' independent organisation and the working classes' resistance to this.

Even before the crisis around Vavi exploded, Cosatu was already paralysed as a centre for working class struggle. This is a result of the slavish support for the ANC and their anti-working class policies. No lead has been given for a struggle against retrenchments, e-tolls,

labour broking, or rising electricity, fuel and food prices. None of the more radical resolutions adopted at Cosatu's 2012 congress have been acted upon. Consequently, workers have been voting with their feet for several years. Mineworkers and farmworkers have used independent strike committees to organise and lead their struggles and a new generation of non-Cosatu unions has emerged from splits in Cosatu affiliates. The implosion of the National Union of Mineworkers – losing over 150 000 members and being relegated from largest Cosatu affiliate to fourth place – is an indication of the ground that Cosatu is losing as a result of this paralysis.

Cosatu must be reclaimed as an independent organisation of the working class and once again become the centre of struggle. In the meantime, those forces – in particular NUMSA – must campaign for the maximum unity of the working class in struggle irrespective of the stage of the campaign to reclaim Cosatu. Ultimately, if the battle to reclaim Cosatu is lost the swift foundation of a new socialist trade union federation – a re-founding of Cosatu – is a task that must urgently begin.

National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU)

A consequence of the crisis in Cosatu is the movement of significant sections of workers to NACTU affiliated unions. This includes the mineworkers who left Cosatu for the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) and the transport workers who split from Cosatu to form the National Transport Movement (NTM – an affiliate of WASP). Though Cosatu remains a colossus in comparison, the possibility exists to turn NACTU into a pioneer in building a socialist trade union movement and a mass workers party based on its recent influx of militant and radical workers.

WASP believes that NACTU must link with NUMSA, the Cosatu affiliates aligned to it and independent trade unions like the General Industrial Workers Union of South Africa (whose acting general secretary is a candidate on WASP's election lists) and campaign to build a socialist trade union network and a mass workers party as the only solution to the crisis facing the organised labour movement. There is an urgent need to build a new centre to co-ordinate struggle. It is also vital that trade unions throw themselves into the building of a mass workers' party that can unite the struggles of the working class and struggle for the socialist transformation of society.

Members of NACTU-affiliated unions must build their unions on the basis of workers' control and a clear fighting programme to advance the struggles for decent wages and better conditions of work. NACTU must stand in solidarity with all the struggles of all workers.

A struggle programme for the trade union movement:

- Support NUMSA's call for the dropping of all charges against Vavi – no trust in the pro-ANC Cosatu leaders.
- For an independent shop stewards' investigation into all corruption and misconduct allegations against Cosatu leaders.
- Support the call of the nine unions calling for a Cosatu Special National Congress – workers must kick out the pro-ANC Cosatu leadership around Dlamini and co; If the pro-ANC leaders refuse to call an SNC, the nine unions supporting the call must convene

their own conference to play the role that a Cosatu SNC should have played and give a lead to working class struggle

- Support NUMSA's Section 77 actions
- Following NUMSA's example, the other unions supporting the call for a Cosatu SNC must convene their own special congresses to debate and take decisions on the future of Cosatu, Cosatu's participation in the Tripartite Alliance, the 2014 elections and the question of founding a mass workers' party
- Support members of those Cosatu affiliates led by pro-ANC cliques in a campaign to reclaim their unions, for example as in CEPWAWU
- Campaign for Cosatu's immediate withdrawal from the Tripartite Alliance – not a cent more of Cosatu members' money must be given to the ANC to implement anti-working class policies
- Campaign for the launching of a Socialist Trade Union Network to complement the battle to reclaim Cosatu, the purpose of which would be to unite workers' in struggle, the role that the pro-ANC leaders have abdicated – for the unity of all workers willing to struggle.
- Prepare the ground for the foundation of a socialist trade union federation

For worker-controlled trade unions

The corrupting influence of capitalism and money has affected not only the ANC and the government but has begun to corrode the trade unions as well. Reports of corruption of trade union leaders and unfortunately even shop stewards are regularly heard. WASP supports worker-controlled and worker-led democratic trade unions. Trade unions belong to their members.

A struggle programme for democratic worker control:

- Campaign for democratic worker-controlled unions – nothing that affects workers must be done without workers; no meetings between union officials and the bosses without the knowledge and presence of workers' representatives; wage settlements and when to begin and end strikes must be the democratic decision of workers
- For unity in struggle – solidarity with all workers in struggle
- Oppose self-enrichment and privileges for leadership – shop stewards and union officials must earn the same wage as workers
- Demand open, regular and democratic elections of all union officials from ordinary shop stewards to the national leadership

Turn to unorganised and unemployed workers

Whilst the organised working class, particularly members of Cosatu have a decisive social weight, it is crucial that currently unorganised workers and the unemployed are drawn into the struggle and the trade union movement. The danger of not doing this is that the bosses will try to use these groups to undermine workplace struggles by using them as scab labour. This will pitch worker against worker when the real enemy is the capitalist class.

A struggle programme to unite the working class:

- Campaign for mass unionisation drives in unorganised workplaces and industries – strength through unity!
- Campaign for trade unions to open up their membership to unemployed workers' and campaign for job creation and trade union rights

The struggles of the mineworkers

The Marikana massacre was a watershed in post-apartheid South Africa. Without the collusion of the mine bosses, the ANC government and the leaders of NUM, Marikana would not have happened. The mineworkers' rejection of NUM and the organisation of independent rank-and-file strike committees to lead their struggle for a minimum wage of R12 500 per month were simultaneously the greatest of threats to the mine bosses and the greatest achievement of the mineworkers.

One of the most important new features in the struggles of the mineworkers is the emergence of the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) as the majority union in the platinum sector and the Gauteng gold fields. It was the struggle of the mineworkers' in 2012 that elevated AMCU to that position. The founders of WASP welcomed the mineworkers breaking free from NUM as a potential improvement on the previous situation where NUM betrayed the workers at every turn. But the AMCU leadership is heading rapidly in the wrong direction if it wants to become the union that the mineworkers expected and deserved and the vehicle for the achievement of a R12 500 per month minimum wage.

In the eighteen months since Marikana a complicated situation has developed in the mining industry. The high point of workers' unity achieved in 2012 under the independent strike committees – which WASP's founders were a central part of – has given way to a sectarian rivalry between the NUM leadership and the AMCU leadership with the mineworkers of both unions caught in the middle.

Tragically, the AMCU leadership has not made any serious preparation for a campaign of action to win the R12 500 per month minimum wage notwithstanding the present platinum strike. To complicate the situation further, another union has been launched in the midst of the present platinum strike with a clear scab agenda. But the situation is far from lost. Mineworkers urgently need to adopt a struggle programme and appeal to all mineworkers and the wider working class to join and support the campaign for R12 500. AMCU members must make demands on the AMCU leadership about the waging of such a struggle and make demands for the reform of the structures and practices of their union to turn it into an organisation capable of leading the mineworkers to victory.

Mineworkers from both Rustenburg and Carletonville are candidates on WASP's election lists.

A struggle programme for the mineworkers:

- Prepare a serious struggle and programme of action to win a R12 500 monthly living minimum wage - unite the entire mining industry through a programme of rolling mass action
- Mobilise the mining communities and youth in all mining areas in active support of the mineworkers' wage demands – link to the struggle for service delivery
- For the formation of worker and community forums in all workplaces and working class communities around the country in support of the mineworkers' struggle – call for the solidarity of the entire working class in national demonstrations, solidarity strikes and ultimately a general strike to force the mine bosses to concede
- Campaign for a united front of all mineworkers, including NUM members, through joint strikes and campaigns around common demands and a common programme of action – isolate the NUM leaders and expose their lies, corruption and their unwillingness to seriously fight for the workers; do not allow demoralisation to sustain scab unions

- Build the Socialist Trade Union Network to create a rank-and-file network across the mining industry of AMCU members, shop stewards, officials and genuine NUM members wanting to fight for the interests of all mineworkers – involve workers’ committees and NUMSA; networks to link with workers and trade unionists in other unions and industries in solidarity and common action
- Campaign for a worker-controlled and worker-led AMCU – leaders, officials and shop stewards must earn the same wages as workers
- Open, regular and democratic elections of all union officials – all officials to be subject to recall through a vote of no confidence
- Every elected official must account through regular general workers meetings at shaft level and regional and national conferences
- Election of democratic branch and regional structures in every major mining area
- Campaign for AMCU to adopt the demand for the nationalisation of the mines on the basis of democratic workers control and management as a step towards a democratically planned socialist society
- Campaign for mineworkers to support the Workers and Socialist Party as the party of the mineworkers uniting with working class communities and youth – organise mass meetings of AMCU members to debate the question of political affiliation and take a democratic decision

Working class communities rise in struggle for service delivery

South Africa is burning with rage. According to the World Bank, South Africa is the world capital of protest with the highest number of protests relative to the population. A large proportion of this is accounted for by community protests. Since 2009 in particular, so-called ‘service delivery protests’ have exploded. The latest reports show that on average 32 protests are taking place every day! The anger felt by communities at poor – or non-existent – provision of basic services is entirely legitimate. After twenty years of ANC rule why are we still waiting?

WASP fully supports the demands of the protesting communities. They have been abandoned by the ANC and the leadership of ANC aligned civic movements such as the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO). There is no other choice but to take to the streets to make their voices heard. But there is an urgent need to unite all these communities and begin coordinating the struggle at a national level. The new socialist Congress of South African Non-racial Community Movements (COSANCOM) is an affiliate of WASP. Many other local genuine community organisations have sprung up. In the coming months and years WASP will play a role in organising and coordinating community struggle.

Community activists and community leaders are candidates on WASP’s election lists, for example the chairperson of Abahali Basemjondolo-Western Cape.

A struggle programme for communities:

- Organise disciplined community struggles demanding high quality service delivery
- Unite the service delivery protests under one banner and a common programme of demands that all communities facing service delivery issues can unite around – coordinate protests for maximum impact
- For a community general strike and national service delivery day of action including a national march, reaching out to other sections of the working class for support – the trade unions, the youth etc
- Organise a mass challenge to corrupt and ineffective ANC councillors in the 2016 local elections under the WASP banner

A fighting programme for the youth and students

Across the country working class students have risen in struggles on the campuses and joined the working class youth who have been fighting in communities, for delivery of essential public services, jobs and in the mines, agriculture, etc. for job security and decent wages.

If the recent wave of student strikes demonstrated the resilience of the working class youth who have fought again and again in spite of defeats in the past, unfortunately it also graphically exposed the class treachery of the leadership of the ANC-aligned Sasco, ANC Youth League and Young Communist League on the campuses. These leaders conceal rather than clarify the reactionary neo-liberal policies of the ANC government and their pro-capitalist character that are hostile to the vital interests of the working class youth and poor students.

Following in the footsteps of the mineworkers, NUMSA, and other key sections of the working class and poor, working class youth increasingly recognise the urgent need to build an independent, mass revolutionary student movement with a principled leadership and clear fighting strategy to defeat unaffordable fees, academic and financial exclusions, and a socialist programme linking the struggles of the students with those of workers and communities to struggle for a socialist society.

The phenomenal growth of the Socialist Youth Movement represents a conscious articulation of this objective historical process. Even more rapid and far greater is the mass exodus of members and the splintering of Progressive Youth Alliance structures (the coalition of ANC-aligned youth structures). On many campuses this has led to the emergence of independent youth organisation. In certain instances, some have even joined organisations like the Pan-Africanist Student Movement of Azania (Pasma) and others which are equally suffering from the political paralysis that has spilled over from the endemic factional squabbling in their mother-bodies and the dead end for struggle that their programmes entail. This is nevertheless, an instinctive expression of the same desire for class and political independence of the youth and students that presently cuts across entire sections of the working class.

It is in the movement of the youth that the need for a long term perspective for the struggle for a socialist society is most crucial. Young people have their entire lives ahead of them but for most this will mean a failure to access education or succeed in it as well as unemployment and poverty whatever level of education they are able to achieve. The Socialist Youth Movement campaigns together with WASP for a mass workers party on a socialist programme, has joined the Numsa initiated United Front and its activists now stand as candidates on WASP’s election lists, all as part of an attempt to assist the historical process of the formation of the mass workers party.

Socialist Youth Movement activists are candidates on WASP’s election lists.

A struggle programme for the youth:

- Build the Socialist Youth Movement as part of the struggle to create a mass, revolutionary movement of the working class youth and students, with a socialist leadership, programme and ideas
- Build a campaign for decent jobs and free education for all to unite the entire mass movement of students around the immediate demands of the students in campuses to defeat exorbitant fees, financial and academic exclusions and for decent, adequate facilities and support and to link them with the struggles of the unemployed youth in townships and rural areas fighting the lack of jobs and services

- Campaign to organise young workers into trade unions and those in trade unions to mobilise the power of the organised working class to build organic links between struggles of the students and unemployed youth with the trade union movement in their fight to defeat youth wage subsidy, casualization, labour-broking and for a decent conditions of work.

The struggle for a mass workers party and the role of NUMSA

Ultimately all struggle needs to be united on the political plane in a mass workers party that struggles to win political power. Such a party must be based upon a socialist programme. Socialism is the generalised expression of working class interests and as such is the very basis for unity as the fully conscious expression of the instinct amongst the working class that “an injury to one is an injury to all”. Only in a socialist society can the living conditions and democratic rights of the working class and poor can be guaranteed.

NUMSA, the largest trade union in the country, clearly recognises the need for the working class to build its political independence. They are reflecting the increasingly clear sentiment of the majority of Cosatu members. The 2012 Cosatu shop stewards survey showed that 62% of shop stewards would vote for a labour party if Cosatu were to found one. At their recent special national congress, NUMSA delegates voted in favour of severing ties with the SACP and voted not to campaign for the ANC in 2014. WASP has repeatedly applauded this decision as heroic and historic.

Delegates also adopted a set of criteria that could be used to assess any political party for its compatibility with NUMSA policies and positions. These included (1) a working class composition of the party, (2) a socialist programme, (3) the party’s struggle record and roots, and (4) the existence of democratic structures. These criteria were used to explicitly reject Agang-SA and the EFF. However, further guidance was not given by the NUMSA leadership. The danger is that the mood that exists to punish the ANC at the ballot box will lead to workers voting for other capitalist parties just to hurt the ANC. That would not advance the process towards a mass workers’ party one bit.

The NUMSA leadership has indicated that they will launch a workers’ party early in 2015. However, that allows the opportunity of the 2014 elections to slip by without advancing NUMSA’s agenda. It is clear that WASP meets NUMSA’s criteria. At the very least NUMSA should call for its members to vote for WASP. But more than that, WASP has invited NUMSA to take its place in the WASP leadership. This would be in keeping with the decisions NUMSA adopted at their SNC when delegates adopted a resolution saying that NUMSA must “be alert to gains that may present possibilities of either the new united front [see below], or any other progressive coalition or party committed to socialism, standing for elections in future. The NUMSA constitutional structures must continuously assess these developments and possibilities.”

At their SNC NUMSA took the decision to launch a United Front and a Movement for Socialism. The United Front is to be an umbrella under which struggles and organisations can unite. These bold decisions will place NUMSA at the heart of working class struggle in the next period and responsibility they are to be commended for taking on.

But it is not entirely clear what the difference between the United Front and the Movement for Socialism will be. At the very least there appears to be a significant overlap between them. What forces would the United Front would bring together that would be different from those that would coalesce under the banner of the Movement for Socialism? The central task of socialists in workplace and community struggles must be the linking of the immediate day-to-day demands of the working class and poor to the wider struggle for a socialist society. We suggest that the United Front be merged into the Movement for Socialism.

Excellent as the name “Movement for Socialism” is because it makes the ideological content clear, it is not clearly a call for a mass workers party on a socialist programme. This is a significant limitation. There is undoubtedly a role for a general and all-embracing “Movement” for socialism. But unless it is built for the purposes of crystallising the forces for a mass workers party with a clear socialist programme that directly poses the question of political power, it will ultimately dissipate and lapse into confusion.

NUMSA members are standing as candidates (in a personal capacity) on WASP’s election lists. Our presidential candidate, Moses Mayekiso, was the first general secretary of NUMSA.

A struggle programme for the creation of a mass workers’ party:

- Campaign for a mass workers’ party on a socialist programme – unite the struggles of workers, communities and the youth on the political plane to challenge for political power
- Support the Workers and Socialist Party in the 2014 elections as a critical step toward laying the basis for such a party – establish a bridgehead for the voice of working class people now!
- Campaign for NUMSA to call on its members to vote for WASP in the 2014 elections in keeping with the democratic decisions already taken by NUMSA members at their SNC
- Argue for NUMSA’s United Front to be merged into NUMSA’s Movement for Socialism and become an explicit campaign for a mass workers’ party on a socialist programme
- Campaign for the widest possible consultation of organisations and individuals on the formation of such a party before and after the election, through, but not limited to NUMSA’s Movement for Socialism

Foreign Policy for a socialist world

No to poverty and war, imperialism and capitalism – for a socialist world

We live in a capitalist world

The result for billions of people is economic chaos, massive inequality, environmental destruction, war, terrorism and violence. There are no socialist countries in the world today. Even the handful of countries that still have large elements of economic planning – such as Cuba – are run by undemocratic bureaucracies topped by dictators. Major countries like China are using state control to accelerate capitalist development. Other developing countries – such as India and Brazil – are ruled by capitalist governments who intervene in their economies not to challenge capitalism but to strengthen it in the face of competition from the advanced capitalist countries of Europe and America. Even in Venezuela, the left government – first under Hugo Chavez and now under Nicholas Maduro – has not ended capitalism.

There is no government in the world today that WASP considers a genuine ‘friend’ of the working class and poor of the world. It is true that some regimes are more explicitly and brutally anti-working class than others. Other regimes are intransigent against European and US imperialism – such as Iran and Zimbabwe. But WASP does not base its foreign policy on the defeatist principles of ‘lesser evilism’ or the opportunism of the idea that “my enemy’s enemy is my friend”. WASP will pursue a principled independent foreign policy. We do not want the friendship of a handful of “slightly less bad” capitalist governments when our real friends and allies around the world number in the billions – the working class and poor of the world. Workers of the world unite!

WASP stands in the best internationalist tradition of the working class. We are proud of our links to socialist and workers’ organisations on every continent.

Capitalist South Africa’s foreign policy is an extension of its pro-capitalist domestic policy

The ANC promotes the interests of big business as a central part of their dealings with foreign countries. Business delegations accompany President Zuma on overseas trips regularly. On Zuma’s very first state visit he took 124 big business representatives with him from mining, agriculture, oil, finance and elsewhere to Angola. The size of these delegations has increased massively with 212 accompanying Zuma on a visit to the UK, 226 on a trip to India and 371 on a trip to China! This further reveals the character of the ANC as a vehicle for the capitalist class. Why are they not taking trade union representatives along to lobby for the rights of working people?

The deployment of South African National Defence Force soldiers is also bound up with business interests. President Zuma used SANDF troops in the Central African Republic (CAR) to defend the interests of ANC linked business men. This led to the deaths of 15 South African soldiers.

South Africa has joined every capitalist and imperialist club possible. South Africa served as a temporary member of the United Nations Security Council in 2007-8. South Africa is a member of the G20 club of rich nations. South Africa joined the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) group of emerging markets at the start of 2011 and has devoted considerable time to developing these relations – particularly with China. But just because these countries all have the same ‘emerging market’ label, it does not make the capitalist governments of the BRICS countries friends of working class and poor in any of them, including South Africa.

Both Russia and China suppress the democratic rights of their people, especially trade unionists and socialists. Like South Africa, there have been mass protests of millions in Brazil in recent months against inequality and poverty, all the result of the pro-capitalist policies of the ruling so-called Workers Party (PT). The ANC’s lauded ‘Lula moment’ was in reality the capitulation of the PT to capitalism and the betrayal of the working class, not the harnessing of capitalism for the benefit of the majority. In India outrage at the corruption and crony capitalism of the elite has led millions to break from the ruling Congress Party – in its day a liberation movement like the ANC – and protest.

WASP has no time for the capitalist governments of the BRICS countries. Our allies are the millions of anti-poverty protestors in Brazil, those fighting for democratic and trade union rights in Russia and China and those fighting the corruption of the capitalist elite in India. WASP will stand in solidarity with these struggles and support them in whatever way we can.

The African Union is a tool for the capitalist classes of the African continent and ultimately, with the thousands of strings that link the capitalist classes of Africa to the capitalist classes of the West, a proxy for Western imperialism. The stronger countries of Africa will ultimately dominate – as capitalist South Africa is currently doing – and the working class and poor of the continent will simply swap overseas imperialists for local ones. The interests of the working class and poor will take second place to the rivalries between the different ruling elites of the continent. WASP rejects the present foreign policy of capitalist South Africa which is simultaneously submissive to Western imperialism and aggressively developing its own regional imperialism on the African continent.

In Southern Africa, the ANC government has increasingly turned a blind-eye to the abuses of democratic rights and the persecution of activists and trade unionists taking place in its own backyard – notably Zimbabwe and Swaziland.

A socialist foreign policy for world revolution:

- No to imperialist intervention anywhere on the African continent
– French troops out of Mali and CAR now; down with the United Nations, G20, the BRICS group and the African Union;
- No to the development of South African imperialism; abolish secret diplomacy
- For full religious and cultural freedoms of all the peoples of Africa – no persecution of minorities for religious, ethnic or tribal differences
- No to terrorism as a means of seeking political change – for democratic mass action and working class struggle
- For the right of self-determination of all the peoples of Africa, up to and including the right of secession from existing nation-states
- Hands off Zimbabwe! No to imperialist intervention in Zimbabwe – the working class and poor must overthrow the dictator Mugabe; no support for corrupt and pro-capitalist opposition politicians. Support full democratic rights. Solidarity with the struggles of the Zimbabwean working class and poor. For a socialist Zimbabwe as part of a socialist confederation of Southern Africa.
- Support the working class and poor of Swaziland in their democratic struggle to abolish the monarchy – for a socialist Swaziland as part of a socialist confederation of Southern Africa.
- Support the struggles of the working class and poor across the entire world – for international solidarity of the working class and poor
- For a socialist South Africa as part of a confederation of socialist states in Southern Africa; for a socialist Africa and a socialist world

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