

Editorial

Cosatu leaders and the SACP betray the General strike against the electricity price increases

There have been several resolutions within Cosatu for mass resistance to the huge electricity price increases; the latest was a CEC resolution in May that there should be mobilisation for a general strike; Cosatu leaders keep quiet about the planned meeting at Nedlac for the 14th June; it is already August and the increases have come into effect on the 1st July, having a devastating effect on the working class, the lower middle class and some sections of the small capitalists; yet no plans are in place or any mobilisation started for a general strike; we can only conclude that the Cosatu leaders and the SACP have sold out on this struggle and have struck a deal with imperialism for their trillion Rand plunder of the working class to go ahead. The Cosatu leaders are in effect calling for social 'peace' while imperialism continues their attacks. We call for workers to mobilise for the immediate removal of this traitorous leadership. Down with the millionaire trade union leaders! We call for workers to march and occupy the Cosatu offices, demanding that a general strike against the imperialist onslaught be called. We call for workers' crisis committees to be set up in every workplace, every mine, every farm, every factory, every working class area, to fight against the electricity price increases and the other attacks by imperialism; what we need is an emergency workers summit uniting delegates from every workplace, irrespective of union, or whether unionised or un-unionised, including delegates from the unemployed and rank and file soldiers, to plan and direct a general strike.

Around the globe, the trade union leaders have made pacts with imperialism for them to continue to plunder the working class, with increased rate of exploitation, with increased unemployment, with increased hunger and suffering; but around the globe the working class has not sat with folded arms in the face of this united onslaught by imperialism and their own worker leaders; in Bolivia the industrial workers are demanding that workers break from supporting the regime of Morales; in Argentina in some areas workers have resorted to street fights against the police; in Brasil there is a renewed wave of strikes (breaking of the 'social peace' deal that the union leaders had with imperialism); in Kyrgyzstan the working class overthrew the US puppet Bakiev and burned parliament to the ground; in Thailand workers occupied the centre of the capital for several weeks; there have been 8 general strikes in Greece this year despite the leaders of the workers, including the stalinist party KKE, continuing to defend the imperialist government; of course there have been the heroic strikes of the transport and municipal workers which shattered the plans of the SACP and Cosatu leaders for 'social peace'; the SACP and Cosatu leaders have done and are doing their best to avert any general strike against the ANC government (any general strike would be a strike against the SACP as their leaders are the key component of the ANC cabinet).

With the above in mind, the working class would do well to draw the lesson that despite the huge public sector strike pending, despite what they say, the Cosatu leaders would not call out the industrial workers in solidarity strikes; the Cosatu leaders are doing their best to lower the demands of the workers to avert a strike; they have already reduced workers demands to 8,6% (very low indeed); they are preparing the psychology of the workers to accept an increase of 7% or less. As the Cosatu leaders did in the municipal strike and last year's clothing workers strikes, if the workers press ahead with strike action, they will only organise for 1-3 days, or a short period, and then hope the workers get tired; they will call stayaways so that workers do not occupy the workplaces, thus opening workers up to demoralisation by being isolated and alone; the stayaways will enable the union leaders to manipulate mandates in the absence of mass meetings of delegates to control the strike; further stayaways will be used to prevent workers from taking over their workplaces and really posing the question as to who does the work and who are the parasites (the capitalists). A public sector strike, in the absence of support by the broader working class, will be greatly weakened.

Forward to a general strike against the electricity increases!

Forward to a general strike in support of the public sector workers!

Forward to mass regional and national strike committees that control the strikes, every step of the way!

Down with the treacherous Cosatu leaders!

Forward to an emergency workers summit!

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