
INTRODUCTION TO THE ***SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY***

BASIC INFORMATION

1. WHEN WAS THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY FORMED?

- ★ The South African Communist Party (SACP) was formed in 1921 in Cape Town, and was called the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA).
- ★ In 1922, the Young Communist League was formed as a Marxist-Leninist youth wing of the Communist Party of South Africa.
- ★ When the apartheid National Party government was elected in 1948, it banned the Communist Party in 1950 through the Suppression of Communism Act.
- ★ From 1950, the Communist Party was operating underground, and re-emerged officially in 1953, now called the SACP, not CPSA and in close working relations with the ANC.
- ★ When the ANC was banned in 1960, the banned SACP and ANC leadership formed Umkhonto WeSizwe and most of its leaders went to exile to prepare military forces against the apartheid regime.

2. WHY WAS THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY FORMED?

- ★ The CPSA was formed to mobilise the working class in South Africa to fight against capitalism and discrimination of blacks by the white minority government.
- ★ The SACP is a Vanguard of the working class that realised that in order to overthrow the capitalist system, there should be conscious efforts to end racialism and sexism in South Africa in order to build a society free from exploitation, racism and sexism.
- ★ It was the Communist Party in South Africa that first advanced the slogan "**one-person, one-vote**", calling for and campaigning for all South Africans (black and white) to have a right to equality and vote for their own political leadership.
- ★ It was the Communist Party that pioneered progressive **trade unionism and journalism** in our country—the formation of progressive trade union, which campaigned beyond workplace issues was a result of the Communist Party programmes to build a conscious Trade Union Movement.
- ★ The Communist Party was the first political formation in South Africa to advance **non-racialism**, not just in theory but in our own internal organisational work—the Communist Party started a campaign of Africanisation of the Party in 1924, recruited hundreds of black workers and took them through classes to understand what the Communist Party stands for.
- ★ It was Communist Party activists, like Dora Tamana, who ran **cooperatives** in informal settlements in the 1940s and 50s—the formation, support and sustenance of Co-operatives is correctly associated with the Communist

Party, as it took practical steps in improving the living conditions of all South Africans.

- ★ And it is Communists who have always been numbered among the outstanding **martyrs** of the struggle - Johannes Nkosi, Vuyisile Mini, Alpheus Maliba, Basil February, Cde Phokanoka, Ahmed Timol, Matthew Goniwe, Chris Hani, and many more.

3. WHY DID THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY JOIN THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL?

- ★ When formed in 1921, the Communist Party joined the Communist International in order to mobilise for a Socialist Future, which will be connected to other Communist Movements in the world and informed by their common perspectives and analyses of different conjectures of the struggle for socialism, ultimately communism.

4. WHAT IS THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL?

- ★ The Communist International was the organisation of all progressive, Left and Communist movements and forces in the world, which were united in the struggle against global capitalism and imperialism, which was rapidly expanding.
- ★ The Communist International was engaged in the struggles of the oppressed and colonised people in the whole world, arming the anti-colonial movements with theoretical and physical arms in the struggle to defeat colonialism.
- ★ The resolutions of the Communist International were almost always correct, consistent and comprehensive (based on Marxist theoretical framework) and therefore binding to all member organisation.

5. WHY DID THE SACP FORM THE ALLIANCE WITH THE ANC AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT?

- ★ In 1928, the Communist International resolved that the Communist Party should “*pay particular attention to the embryonic national organizations among the [African majority], such as the African National Congress. The Party, while retaining its full independence [we repeat: “**while retaining its full independence**”], should participate in these organizations, should seek to broaden and extend their activity. Our aim should be to transform the African National Congress into a fighting nationalist revolutionary organization against the white bourgeoisie and the British imperialists, based upon the trade unions, peasant organizations, etc., developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organization [we repeat: “**developing systematically the leadership of the workers and the Communist Party in this organization**”] ...The development of a national-revolutionary movement of the toilers of South Africa...constitutes one of the major tasks of the Communist Party of South Africa.*”
- ★ The Communist International Resolution was based on the fact that in South Africa, the exploitation of workers in mines, farms, factories and other

workplaces, could not be disconnected from the fact that black people were discriminated, excluded and denied the most basic rights, whilst women were excluded based on their gender.

- ★ The Communist Party realised and conceptualised this reality as Colonialism of a Special Type (CST)

6. WHAT IS COLONIALISM OF A SPECIAL TYPE?

- ★ Colonialism of a Special Type

7. WHAT WERE THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ROAD TO FREEDOM?

- ★ In 1962, the SACP adopted the South African Road to Freedom

8. WHAT IS THE SACP'S APPROACH TO THE FREEDOM CHARTER?

THEORETICAL QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS SOCIALISM?
2. WHAT IS COMMUNISM?
3. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM?
4. WHAT IS CAPITALISM?
5. WHAT IS IMPERIALISM?
6. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION?
7. WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION AND SOCIALISM?
8. WHAT IS MARXISM-LENINISM?
9. WHO WAS KARL MARX?
10. WHO WAS LENIN?

CONJECTURAL QUESTIONS

1. WHAT HAPPENED IN THE OCTOBER BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA IN 1917?

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2. WHAT IS A COLD WAR?



3. WHY DID THE SOVIET UNION COLLAPSE?



4. HAS HISTORY ENDED?



5. WHAT DEFINES THE RESURGENCE OF THE LEFT FORCES IN LATIN AMERICA?



6. WHAT IS A RED OCTOBER CAMPAIGN?



7. WHAT IS KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD CAMPAIGN?



CONTEMPORARY QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE SACP'S APPROACH TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION?

2. WHAT IS THE SACP'S CONCEPTUALISATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL STATE?

3. WHAT IS THE SACP'S APPROACH TO LAND AND AGRARIAN REFORM?

4. WHAT IS THE MEDIUM TERM VISION AND WHAT ARE ITS KEY COMPONENTS.

5. WHAT IS SOUTH AFRICAN ROAD TO SOCIALISM AND WHAT ARE ITS KEY COMPONENTS?

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