

Statement of the CC of the MLPD on the death of Nelson Mandela

10 December 2013

On December 5th Nelson Mandela died at the age of 95 after a long and serious illness. Millions of people in South Africa and in the entire world mourn his death. In the entire world he is honored as a symbol for the courageous struggle against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, for freedom and against racism. The MLPD recognizes that he participated in that struggle unrelentingly and charismatically and as a leading representative of the ANC (“African National Congress”) for many decades. But at the decisive moment, when in the 1980s white rule was seriously threatened by the mass movement, he preferred to go into negotiations with the butchers and torturers of apartheid. The “peaceful” transformation to democratic relations, praised by all bourgeois governments, rescued the rule of South African finance capital and has prevented just punishment for the bloody racist rule till this very day.

Since the beginning of the 1950s, Mandela was an important leader of the liberation movement ANC. After the brutal massacre in Sharpeville in 1960 he also supported the justified armed liberation struggle. For a time he led the military wing of the ANC (“Spear of the Nation”). In 1964 he was sentenced to life by the white Boer regime under Botha. He was imprisoned for 27 years. But he never submitted himself in public. Unlike many other ANC leaders whose behavior casts dark shadows, he was considered to be a person of integrity. From the time he came into contact with Marxism he opposed anticommunism for his entire life. He was put on the list of most wanted “terrorists” by the USA at a time when a worldwide movement, millions strong, demanded “Free Nelson Mandela”.

But the heroic resistance of the black South African population against apartheid and its living conditions could not be broken by the open reactionary and brutally violent Boer regime in the long

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run. It increasingly combined its forces with the struggle of the entire continent against imperialist exploitation. The rapidly growing working class, the women and the youth, they all were drawn into this struggle. In the middle of the 1980s a revolutionary ferment developed in South Africa, especially within the international industrial proletariat in the mines and auto factories of the multinational enterprises. For this reason and under the pressure of international finance capital, secret negotiations were taken up with Mandela from the mid-1980s. Starting in 1989, the new white state president de Klerk openly prepared the end of the former apartheid regime and the transition to neocolonialism with the introduction of bourgeois democracy. Mandela agreed to a deal in the spirit of class conciliation: in exchange for abandoning the call for a revolutionary overthrow of the apartheid regime – freedom for political prisoners, formal abolition of apartheid and integration of the ANC in bourgeois South Africa. For this he received the imperialist “Nobel Peace Prize” in 1993 together with de Klerk. In 1994 he was elected South Africa's first black president. Since then the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking has been spreading modern South Africa's life lie of the “successful overcoming of apartheid” through the “politics of reconciliation” between the exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed. That is why imperialists like Obama or Merkel are now crying crocodile tears.

But the people's masses in South Africa are still being robbed of the fruits of their decades-long struggle: 70% of the black youth are unemployed, 50% of the black adults. In many townships and shacks, where the masses of the black proletariat live, people still have no access to electricity, water or hygienic facilities. Many people suffer from hunger. Most people have to be glad if they get state support roughly equivalent to 100 euros per month. Even “peak wages” at international monopolies are usually no higher than roughly 330 euros. While about 75% of the population is black, top positions in the economy continue to be held by whites. Police perpetrated a bloody massacre against the independent miners' strikes in Marikana in 2012 with 34 deaths. The social reality is that apartheid continues and has even deepened in the world economic and financial crisis!

With the ANC in government, South Africa itself is developing more

and more into a neo-imperialist country. Its monopolies dominate the African economy, exploit other countries, and as a member of the “G 20” South Africa plays an increasing role in imperialist world politics. This is being orchestrated by rampant corruption with hundreds of millions of euros in the ANC leadership and in its related COSATU trade unions and the revisionist SACP, formerly submissively dependent on Moscow, whose top personnel have found shelter in the ruling exploiting class. Discontent and criticism are growing among the masses. Calls for a “second – genuine – revolution” to really do away with apartheid and for the liberation from exploitation and oppression are becoming louder. Struggles of the international industrial proletariat are unmistakably on the upswing. As a figure for social integration and with his high personal esteem, Mandela cemented many of the deep social and political contradictions for a time.

In many respects Mandela's death is a deep break. An important guarantee that the working class and the masses of South Africa draw the correct and differentiated lessons, also from his life and work, is the strengthening of the building of the ICOR member CPSA/ML, the Communist Party of South Africa/Marxist-Leninists, who have drawn the lessons from the betrayal of the liberation struggle and who are leading the struggle as a part of the preparation of the international revolution. The MLPD commits itself to support its building in interrelation with the strengthening of the self-run organizations of the masses within the framework of the ICOR even more intensively.

Long live the struggle of the South African working class and people's masses for national and social liberation!

For the completion of the struggle against apartheid on the way to genuine socialism!

Forward to the international socialist revolution!

Workers of all countries, unite!

Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite!

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Central Committee of the MLPD