



Some of the Socialist Party's latest parliamentary candidates chosen to contest the August election, including Lindiwe Mawere, second left. More pictures, Page 6

Socialist Party makes history

21-year-old is the youngest person to stand for Parliament

Socialist staff reporter

THE SOCIALIST Party has made history by fielding the youngest ever person to stand for the Zambian Parliament.

The Zambian constitution provides for its citizens to stand as parliamentary candidates from the age of 21, and Lindiwe Mawere has been chosen to contest Kawambwa Central constituency, Luapula Province.

Speaking at an adoption ceremony in Lusaka, Mawere said, "We young people have a duty to make the real changes required by our country. We can change things and nobody will change anything for us. It has to be us ourselves. I have to play a role or else I'll have no future and no present."

"Our president, Dr Fred M'membe, has taught us that the future is not built in the future, it is built on the threshold of what we do today. I've been selected by my people in Kawambwa to represent them in Parliament this year."

Mawera said the Socialist Party

was committed to youth leadership.

"The Socialist Party and our president has offered me this opportunity. I don't have money, I don't even have a bicycle, but I'm standing as a parliamentary candidate. Leadership is not about money, leadership is about being near and necessary to one's people."

"I urge all my fellow young people in this country to support me in this struggle, to support our president and our party to ensure that we win the August 12 election. This is our only hope for a better future and for a better life."

"I am equal to the task. Chances of victory for me are there. I hope I win the election."

Mawere works as a hairdresser in Kawambwa. A Grade 12 certificate holder from Kawambwa's Ng'ona Secondary School, she will be among the Socialist Party's 156 parliamentary candidates to contest the August general election.

The party has also adopted a 22-year-old. Mulenga Royda will contest Kaputa constituency.

● Youth Day, Page 3; Walking the talk, candidates, Page 6

The future is not built in the future, it is built on the threshold of what we do today



Lindiwe Mawere: I am equal to the task. I hope I win the election

The 2021 elections give us a chance to change everything and build a more just and caring society



FRED M'MEMBE, incoming president, offers #realchange with the Socialist Party's policies based on justice, equity and peace. Manifesto download details and info about how to join the party are on our back page

– Page 12

Electoral bribes must not blind us to reality

– Page 5

SP does not enter into alliances or make pacts

We have explained our position so many times

Socialist staff reporter

THE ISSUE of the Socialist Party joining alliances or pacts keeps on coming up. We have explained and explained our position on this issue but it comes up ceaselessly, party president Fred M'membe says.

"For us, it is not about quick and easy political fixes just to enable us win elections. For us, there is no choice between being principled and unelectable; and electable and unprincipled. We should win because of what we believe in," he said.

Dr M'membe said we lived in a complex era that required principles more than ever.

"It requires a lot more awareness," he said. "Political deals, alliances or pacts are worthless if they are not inspired by noble, selfless sentiments. Likewise, noble sentiments are worthless if they are not based on correct and fair arrangements."

"We have chosen to defend certain principles that are of tremendous value at a time of confusion and opportunism in our country, a time when many politicians are feathering their own nests. We will cooperate with other political players to address problems which affect all of us, but we will not be part of these alliance circuses going on."

Tyrannical

"Nobody should think that things are going to be easy. We must be prepared to meet difficulties. We have difficulties right now, and we will have even greater ones in the coming days, weeks and months, even if we do things the right way – and we should do them the right way – even if it calls for our greatest efforts."

"We have to cope with the objective problems of the situation prevailing in our country, the increasing number of restrictive and repressive measures this corrupt, intolerant, cruel and tyrannical regime takes against us."

"Nothing great ever came easy; nothing good ever came easy. The struggles, challenges, and obstacles that it takes to succeed in life are what make success more valuable. Nothing great comes easy, and nothing easy can ever equate to greatness."

Dr M'membe said that working hard on a goal was the only way to achieve it.

"The results won't come overnight, nor will they be easy. Aside from being patient, investing a lot of time and effort is needed. It's true that nothing great ever came that easy."

"Often times, it would take so much work, patience and dedication. And we shouldn't give up. The

path to victory is filled of obstacles and challenges. We just need to find solutions and keep on struggling.

"Lots of hard work and time need to be invested, nothing great ever came that easily. A life of ignoble ease, which springs merely from lack either of desire or of power to strive after great things, is as little worthy of a nation as of an individual."

"The state of our country calls not for the life of ease, but for the life of strenuous endeavour. If we shrink from the hard contests where we must win at hazard of our lives and at the risk of all we hold dear, then the bolder and stronger will pass us by and will win for themselves the domination of our country."

"Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well, resolute to uphold righteousness by word and by deed, resolute to be both honest and brave, to serve high ideals yet to use practical methods."

"Above all, let us shrink from no strife, moral or physical, provided we are certain that the strife is justified, for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavour, that we shall ultimately win."

M'membe: It is very dangerous to use the police as an extension of the party

RECENTLY President Edgar Lungu made a very strange admission, or rather confession, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

He quotes President Lungu as saying, "The public confidence in the police service is low, and it is up to the police, themselves, to regain that confidence by their actions. To this end, there is urgent need for the police service to address these public concerns if the people of Zambia are to regain confidence in them."

Dr M'membe said that while it was very difficult to disagree with what President Lungu was saying, there was one very serious omission: the cause of the loss of public confidence in the police in the first place.

"It's the abuse of the police by President Lungu and his followers that has, more than anything else, contributed to this state of affairs," Dr M'membe said. "They have turned the police into a wing of the ruling party for use against the opposition and other dissenting voices."

"Nothing would be more dangerous than to confuse men and women who are responsible for the maintenance of law and order in our country."

"Those in government, therefore, must

remember that even for their own good, their fellow citizens in the police must be left to deal with the maintenance of law and order in the way they have been trained. It is very dangerous for politicians in the governing party to control the police and make them do their bidding."

"In any country where law is deliberately twisted to entrap political opponents and in which police officers act as an extension of the ruling party cadres rather than impartial professional law enforcement officers, there can be nothing but tyranny and a mockery of justice."

Impartial

"Let them continue abusing the police now, but let them also remember that when they have left the pinnacle of power what may appear acceptable on others now may taste oppressive. In other words, they should remember that while today it is them at the giving end, tomorrow it may well be them on the receiving end."

"On the other hand, police officers would greatly help to evolve a fair and impartial police, defend the rule of law and constitutionalism and guarantee the success of our multiparty political dispensation and pluralism,

'Things are not OK. We are in need of real change'

SOCIALIST Party Feira constituency coordinator Adamson Simbeya says the people of Zambia cannot continue to live like slaves in their own country.

Simbeya told an SP media team in Feira that this year was the time for real change under the Socialist Party with the stewardship of president Fred M'membe and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali.

Simbeya said Zambians had suffered for too long under the current government and its capitalist system of leadership.

"For us here in Luangwa we really need change, things are not OK, the prices of goods are increasing every day," he said.

Simbeya called on the people of Luangwa and Feira to vote for Dr M'membe and his visionary and pragmatic leadership.

"Dr M'membe has a vision for this country, and the Socialist Party has already shown Zambians what it is capable of doing even before it has been voted into office," he said.

Simbeya cited the training of small-scale farmers on how to make organic fertiliser as an investment as an example of the Socialist Party's action.



SOCIALIST Party women were out and about in the run-up to, and during, International Women's Day discussing women's rights and their role in political leadership. Rehoboth Kafwabulula, party national spokesperson; Christine

Nawa Musole, Mongu Central parliamentary candidate; and Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze, Matero constituency parliamentary candidate, are pictured as guests on Hot FM's special women's day programme on the topic #ChooseToChallenge.

It's time to stand up for genuine change

AS ZAMBIA joined the rest of the world in marking International Women's Day, the Socialist Party issued a call to women to stand up for genuine change.

Nancy Busiku Mpongo, Socialist Party Mandevu constituency secretary (pictured right), said that the overwhelming majority of Zambians had suffered from poverty, hunger, unemployment, a lack of government support for farming, expensive social services, and repression of basic civil and political rights, for far too long.

"Today, our situation has worsened even further with the high price of foodstuffs, very long load



shedding hours, a lack of water services and proper sanitation, expensive health facilities amidst a pandemic, and the steepest de-

cline of the Kwacha against major currencies," she said. "There has also been corruption scandal after corruption scandal involving top officials of the land."

"This year, we mark Women's Day amidst news of the country's richest becoming even richer faster while the majority who are poor are becoming even poorer."

"The majority of Zambians – workers, farmers, unemployed, urban and rural poor – are suffering. But the women who belong to these sectors – the overwhelming majority of Zambian women – are the ones who suffer the most."

"Who is burdened with budgeting the little income for the day's meals, if not with actually finding that income in the first place?"

Who ensures there's water in the house? Who ensures kids go to school, that the sick in the family are taken care of?"

Mpongo said Women's Day was an opportunity to recognise the labour of Zambian women.

"While the Zambian poor and people are burdened with the country's problems, Zambian women bear an additional burden."

"They work so hard and give so much of themselves, often without recognition, rest, or remuneration."

"Let us recognise this added burden of women and commit to reducing it."

● It started with bread and peace, Page 4

SP manifesto 'resonates with people's aspirations'

NYIMBA residents in Eastern Province have applauded the Socialist Party manifesto, saying, "it resonates with the aspirations of the people".

Speaking to a Socialist Party media team shortly after a party mobilisation meeting in Chief Ndake area, Moses Lungu said the party's manifesto was explicit in speaking to people's challenges.

He said that for the first time he had seen a political party with a manifesto that offered "so much clarity" in speaking to the issues affecting the majority of Zambians. "I have never before seen a political party openly sharing hard copies of its manifesto," he said.

Lungu said the manifesto commitments were very clear and would enable people to keep track of what had been achieved.

He challenged other political parties to emulate the Socialist Party by producing hard copies of their manifestos so Zambians could compare and make informed decisions.

Lungu said he was particularly impressed with the manifesto's support of the education sector.

Resident Maureen Miti said she was happy that the party had already started implementing programmes, such as the Fred M'membe Literacy Campaign.

Multiparty democracy ‘hanging by a thread’ in this environment

We must offer people a peaceful route to the resolution of injustices

Socialist staff reporter

THERE is a need for those in government and those managing the electoral processes to ensure that the August 12 elections are as free, fair and peaceful as possible, Socialist Party president Fred M’membe says.

“So far those in government have not created an environment where all can mobilise freely, fairly and peacefully – there is no level political playing field,” he said.

“I know that it sounds negative, but I have always thought it positive to say that the thing about multiparty democracy is that we can remove without bloodshed the people who govern us.

Rigged

“We can get rid of a Lungu – the same way we got rid of a Kaunda, a Banda – by peaceful electoral processes, but that cannot be done when electoral processes are manipulated, elections are rigged.

“We must ask what will happen when people realise that they cannot get rid of those who govern them through the ballot box because the electoral processes are manipulated and elections are rigged. If people lose the power to sack those who govern then one of the several things happens.

“First, people may just slope off.

ECZ revises the electoral calendar, delays presidential nomination

THE ELECTORAL Commission of Zambia has revised the electoral calendar, with the Presidential nomination pushed to between May 17 and May 20 this year.

The initial nomination calendar for Presidential nomination was between May 10 and 14.

Chief Electoral Officer Patrick Nshindano said the nomination had been delayed to ensure the exercise was conducted after the dissolution of Parliament.

Other nominations are for the National Assembly of Zambia, which is set for May 17, while mayoral candidates and nominations for chairpersons will file on May 18.

Mr Nshindano also said ward council aspirants would file their nominations on May 19. He said the campaign period would start on May 12 and end on August 11.

Mr Nshindano has also announced that nomination fees for aspiring candidates should be paid between May 1 and May 9.

Apathy could destroy our multiparty democracy. When the voter turnout drops below 50 per cent, we are in very serious danger.

“The second thing that people can do is riot. Riot is an old-fashioned method for drawing the attention of those who govern to what is wrong, unacceptable. It is difficult for those in government to admit it, but riots produce changes.

“The 1988 mealie-meal riots marked the beginning of the end of Dr Kenneth Kaunda and UNIP’s reign. Zambia was never the same after those riots. Ideas for change started to emerge. Riot has historically played a much bigger part in our politics since the first miners’ riots of 1935, which started in Mufulira and quickly spread to Nkana in Kitwe and Roan Antelope in Luanshya, than we are ever allowed to know,” Dr M’membe said.

“Thirdly, regionalism can arise. Regionalism is built out of frustration people feel when they cannot get their way through the ballot box. With regionalism comes repression and all sorts of negative things.

“I hope that it is not pessimistic – in my view it is not – to say that multiparty democracy hangs by a thread in Zambia today.

“Unless we can offer people a peaceful route to the resolution of injustices through the ballot box they will not listen to the politicians who have blocked off that route.”



THE SOCIALIST Party celebrated the annual Youth Day on March 12, saluting the contribution of the nation’s young people to Zambian society.

The party’s Youth League said that while times were hard for many of the country’s young people, there was something to celebrate this year: a socialist victory in the August election.

“We have on this youth day a renewed sense of optimism. We have this year the opportunity to rescue our futures, to secure out futures. We have exhausted our patience. There are five months between us

and victory for ourselves. While others say to the youth, ‘Wait your turn’, the Socialist Party calls us to, ‘Take your turn now’.”

Party president Fred M’membe said he cherished his younger years.

“They were years of heavy learning and of doing. I joined the revolutionary struggle during those years of my life.

“If you are not revolutionary as a youth it is highly unlikely that you will be revolutionary in your later years,” he said.

“The youths are the strength of society. They are the face of the future of a nation. The youths are impulsive and are sensitive,

but once they fix their target, there is no coming back.

“They are humble and kind, but they believe in power and ideologies. They are progressive and have the potential to bring a revolution. With their vigour and talent, they build up society and inspire others to do the same.

“Youth is a remarkable and massive gift of life. It is a lifetime experience that shapes an individual,” Dr M’membe said.

● Above: Dr M’membe is pictured with party youngsters. Below: Youth Day activities.

We need to prioritise employment, education

THERE are currently 3,491,404 (male 1,744,843/female 1,746,561) youths aged between 15 and 24, unemployed in Zambia, accounting for 20.03 per cent of its population.

Socialist Party president Fred M’membe says “the active engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is central to achieving a sustainable, inclusive and stable nation, and to averting the worst threats and challenges to sustainable development, including the impacts of climate change, unemployment, poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and migration”.

“While all other areas of human endeavour are important, if we don’t prioritise education and employment, very little will be achieved in improving the conditions of our young people. Education and employment are fundamental to overall youth development.”

Dr M’membe said unacceptably high numbers of young Zambians were experiencing poor education and employment outcomes.

“In education, many youths of upper secondary age are out of



school, and upper secondary enrolment rates are low. Moreover, many of the poorest 12- to 14-year-olds have never attended school, and many of the youth of the future are still unable to obtain an acceptable primary education.

“In most of our rural areas, young women face particular challenges in terms of securing and completing an education. Youth employment has worsened in recent years.

“Unemployment among youth aged 15 to 24 stands at 24 per cent

(male: 23.6 per cent/female: 24.4 per cent). Many of our young people are in precarious or informal work, and most of them are living in poverty even though they are employed.

“The challenges of securing and retaining decent work are even more serious and complex for vulnerable and marginalised youths, including young women and youths with disabilities. While entrepreneurship offers opportunities for some, a diverse and

robust employment strategy must include options and opportunities for all our young people.

“We need to start building programmes that address the individual and socioeconomic contexts in which our young people actually live, rather than simply repeating the skills-for-employability rhetoric which supposes there are formal sector jobs available.

“Equally, such programmes view entrepreneurship practically, as a part of livelihood strategy, rather than through an ideological lens. They believe young people can succeed in business but need support and face risks.”

Dr M’membe said it was important to recognise that the flourishing of youths was about more than successful transitions to employment. “Rather than focusing on narrow measures of educational or employment attainment, it is crucial that sufficient attention is paid to young people’s own accounts of what they value for their human development and for the sustainable development of their communities.”

Constitutional Court ruling on grade 12 an ‘absurd result’

THERE’S a mushrooming kerfuffle over the grade 12 minimum academic qualification required by the Constitution for someone to qualify to stand as a councillor, member of parliament, council chairperson, mayor and President. Many people in our politics don’t seem to have it, Socialist Party president Fred M’membe says.

“In the 2016 elections there was a looser or more liberal interpretation of this constitutional requirement. It was easy to meet it.

“The recent Constitutional Court interpretation has made it very difficult for many people to meet the requirement. The literal interpretation of this constitutional provision given by the Constitutional Court doesn’t seem acceptable to many people.”

Dr M’membe said the ruling seems to have produced an absurd result.

“The absurd result principle in statutory interpretation provides an exception to the rule that a statute should be interpreted according to its plain meaning.

“In an age of increasing debate about the proper approach to statutory interpretation, and of increasing emphasis on literal approaches, the absurd result principle poses intriguing challenges to literalism and to theories of interpretation generally.

“The absurd result principle is extraordinarily powerful. It authorises a judge to ignore a statute’s plain words in order to avoid the outcome those words would require in a particular situation. This is a radical thing; judges are not supposed to rewrite laws.”

Dr M’membe said that ordinarily, such actions would be condemned as a usurpation of the legislative role, an unconstitutional violation of the separation of powers.

“Even when a genuine question exists about the actual meaning of the statute’s words, it is generally considered to be illegitimate for a judge to make the choice between possible meanings on the basis that the real-life result of one meaning strikes the judge as somehow objectionable.

“The absurd result principle apparently gives that power and authority to a judge. Yet this principle enjoys almost universal endorsement, even by those who are the most critical of judicial discretion and most insistent that the words of the statute are the only legitimate basis of interpretation.

“The law can only work for people when

laws are fair. This grade 12 requirement, as interpreted by the Constitutional Court, has let people down. “The grade 12 requirement is perceived as outright unjust by the majority of the people. This is an outright case of utilising improper means for the pursuit of an apparently legitimate goal. It has generated requirements that do not reflect the values of the underlying population.

“Today individuals are facing legal prohibitions that conflict with their sense of justice or fairness. Unjust laws like these can be opposed through protest. Social opposition to unjust laws may trigger social norms that can have countervailing effects on legal intervention.”

Dr M’membe said the inadequacies the Constitutional Court was trying to address

with the grade 12 requirement could have been dealt with differently.

“If there’s a deficiency of language – the English language – the solution is not to bar those not proficient in English, but to allow them to use languages they are fluent in. Other things they don’t understand – economics, law, security – can be taught to them as they perform their duties as councillors, council chairpersons, mayors, parliamentarians or presidents.”

Dr M’membe said the constitutional provision highlighted the class nature and elite domination of Zambian society.

“This is why this year we need to usher in a government of the humble, by the humble for the humble – a socialist government. Only under a socialist government can we truly have justice, equity and peace.”

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Socialist Party members out and about marking International Women's Day including, (second photo, bottom left, left to right) parliamentary candidate for Matero constituency Barbra Chekuda Marawidze, national party spokesperson Rehoboth Kafwabulula, and Mongu Central constituency parliamentary candidate Christine Musole

It started with bread and peace

Fred M'membe
Socialist Party president

FOR MORE than a century people around the world have been marking March 8 as a special day for women. Why?

International Women's Day grew out of the labour movement to become a recognised annual event by the United Nations.

The seeds of it were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay, and the right to vote. It was the Socialist Party of America that declared the first National Women's Day, a year later.

The idea to make the day international came from a woman called Clara Zetkin. She suggested the idea in 1910 at an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. There were 100 women there, from 17 countries, and they agreed with her suggestion unanimously.

It was first celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland.

This year we technically celebrated the 110th International Women's Day.

Things were made official in 1975 when the United Nations started celebrating the day.

International Women's Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, in politics, and in economics, while the political roots of the day mean strikes and protests are organised to raise awareness of continued inequality.

Clara's idea for an International Women's Day had no fixed date. It

wasn't formalised until a wartime strike in 1917 when Russian women demanded "bread and peace" – and four days into the women's strike the Tsar was forced to abdicate and the provisional government granted women the right to vote.

The date when the women's strike commenced on the Julian calendar, which was then in use in Russia, was Sunday, February 23. This day in the Gregorian calendar was March 8 – and that's when it is celebrated today.

Purple, green and white are the

colours of International Women's Day. "Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolises hope. White represents purity, albeit a controversial concept. The colours originated from the Women's Social and Political Union in the UK in 1908.

Is there an International Men's Day? There is indeed. It is on November 19, but it has only been marked since the 1990s and isn't recognised by the United Nations. People celebrate it in more than 80 countries worldwide. The day celebrates the positive value men

bring to the world, their families and communities, highlighting positive role models and raising awareness of men's wellbeing.

This year's International Women's Day campaign chose the theme #ChooseToChallenge, with the idea that a challenged world is an alert world and individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions.

"We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality," the campaign states. "We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements.

Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world."

"Gender parity will not be attained for almost a century," according to the International Women's Day campaign, referring to the World Economic Forum. It says, "None of us will see gender parity in our lifetimes, and nor likely will many of our children."

It has also recently been a very tough time, with data from UN Women revealing the coronavirus pandemic could wipe out 25 years of increasing gender equality. Women are doing significantly

more domestic chores and family care because of the pandemic, which in turn, can impact upon job and education opportunities.

And as we marked International Women's Day this year, we who are seeking and struggling for a more just, fair, and humane society, a socialist Zambia, remembered that Lenin said the proletariat cannot achieve final victory until it has achieved the complete freedom of women.

● Remembering Rosa, Global View, Page 9

We thank Fred M'membe for his unwavering support

Christine Musole

IN THE Socialist Party, International Women's Day is not only a day when we celebrate each other as women, but also a day for us to recognise comrades who have contributed towards the promotion and defence of women's rights.

We firmly acknowledge that the struggle to fight patriarchy and achieve gender equity is one that should be driven by all people, regardless of their gender.

This year, we choose to celebrate, among others, our party president Dr Fred M'membe, for his unwavering support for and contribution to the visibility of women in our party and multiparty dispensation.

In a highly patriarchal society dominated by male chauvinism, it hasn't been easy to advance the Socialist Party National Congress's resolution of fielding not less than 50 percent women at both local and parliamentary levels for the August 2021 elections. Dr M'membe has, however, demonstrated leadership saying the resolutions of the congress must be implemented in every province and at every level.

Today as a party, we can proudly reveal that the adoption of women so far is the result of proposals pushed by Dr

M'membe to the Central Committee and adopted by it. He has closely guided the implementation of the National Congress's resolution on gender equity. And today, the Central Committee is composed of 50 percent women.

We are also aware that Dr M'membe has a long history of championing and defending women and their causes.

In the early days of the *Weekly Post* newspaper, he worked very closely with Laura Harrison to defend and champion women's causes. He also worked very closely with Lucy Sichone, promoting and defending her at every turn. He further worked very closely with Emily Sikazwe at Women for Change, developing very strong bonds of friendship that extended to family ties, where today the two are as brother and sister.

Dr M'membe is also a friend to many Catholic nuns in Zambia and has supported their work in various ways. There are also many chieftaincies in this country who count on Dr M'membe as a reliable friend and ally.

When he was editing *The Post* newspaper, Dr M'membe supported and defended women's rights and their struggles in so many ways. Women dominated the last *Post* management. The deputy managing director was a woman, the managing editor was a woman, the general manager of



Socialist Party Mongu Central constituency parliamentary candidate Christine Musole on Diamond TV discussing "women and youth leadership"

finance was a woman, and the marketing manager was a woman. Nearly all key positions at *The Post* were held by women.

The current Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia, Madam Inonge Wina, would probably not have been where she is today without Dr M'membe's support in all sorts of ways. He has been a great friend and supporter of Sylvia Masebo. He worked closely with Maureen Mwanawasa and earned her great confidence. He has also been a great friend and supporter of Dr Christine Kaseba. Many, many women in our politics have enjoyed Dr M'membe's help.

In the Socialist Party, we women have enjoyed great support, solidarity and encouragement from Dr M'membe, helping us to be where we are, both in the party and in national politics. Most of us are the product of his promotion and defence of women's rights.

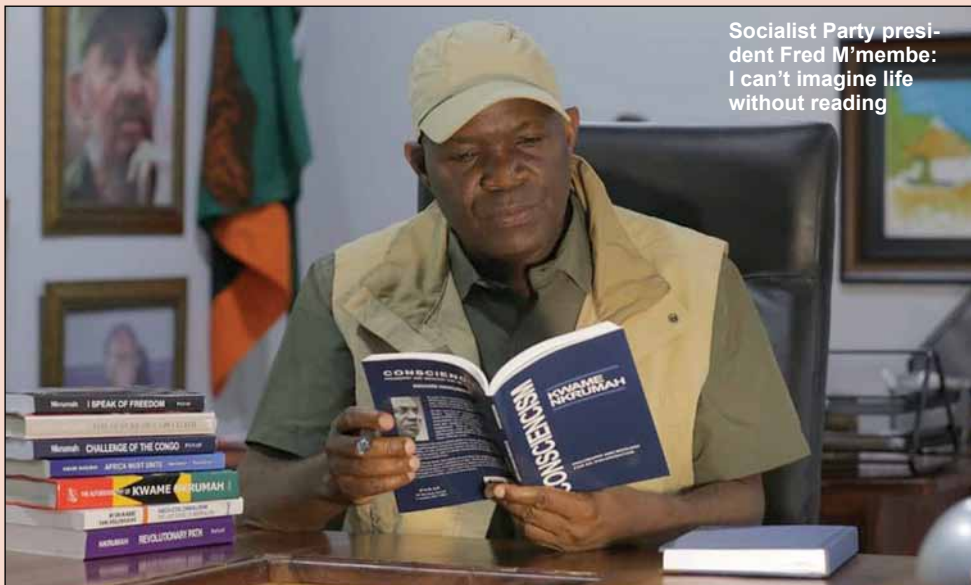
Most of our young women in the party were discovered and nurtured by Dr M'membe. He identified our national spokesperson, Rehoboth Kafwabulula, at the age of 17. He and the Socialist Party have supported her and many young women, such as Nancy Busiku Mpongo, Rachael Chimodzi Zulu, and Mable Tabaaka. Countless others have also received his support.

In addition, Dr M'membe's writings on women's issues – as well as their backing and defence – are well documented.

We have no doubt that with him as president of the Republic of Zambia, the position of women will certainly change for the better.

We, the women in the Socialist Party, believe that Zambia has no better supporter of women's rights than Dr M'membe. With a leader like this, we have no doubt that we will make progress as women on many fronts, including producing a female president, and breaking the chains of patriarchy that are embedded in our society.

JUSTICE • EQUITY • PEACE



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe: I can't imagine life without reading

Electoral bribes musn't blind us to the reality

ALL OF a sudden the Patriotic Front and its government have so much money to throw around to the Zambian voters.

Where is this money coming from in a government that is embarrassingly failing to meet its debt-servicing obligations?

And why this sudden benevolence? All of a sudden people are being given all sorts of handouts and gifts. What has happened?

It's not what has happened that we should set our eyes and ears on, but what is going to happen on August 12 that we should focus on. They are trying to buy our votes with money and "gifts". But are we so gullible? Can these bribes blind us from seeing reality and make us vote for them despite the enormous damage they caused to our country? Are these really people we can trust to continue presiding over our destiny? Our country is broke because of the reckless way they have been spending public funds.

Something in the way that they have been handling public money isn't working. Our issue isn't just that our country doesn't have enough money, but that when we have the money, they spend it recklessly. And they spend it on anything. Truly, 99 per cent of the troubles that we as a nation have with money isn't that there isn't enough of it, but that we spend it recklessly once we actually get it.

What prompts a voter in Zambia to cast her or his ballot in favour of a candidate or political party? Typically, the choice would be influenced by the candidate's identity, outlook, performance or ethnicity.

Cash bribes to voters are also widely thought to influence the voting choices of the poorest and most vulnerable voters.

Trying to buy votes with cash and other gifts in the run-up to elections by the ruling party is not unusual in Zambia. One main reason is that politics has become fiercely competitive. The margins of victory are getting smaller and smaller.

Our elections have also become volatile. Our ruling parties do not control voters as well as they might once have done. Our ruling parties and candidates are more uncertain about results than ever before, and try to buy votes by splurging cash on voters.

But our national experience is that bribing voters in general elections may not necessarily fetch votes. It works much more in by-elections, but not in general elections.

Competitive elections prompt the ruling party to distribute handouts – primarily cash and gifts in kind – for strategic reasons. While knowing that handouts are largely inefficient, they end up facing a prisoner's dilemma, when each prisoner's fate relies on the other's actions.

But as we saw in 2011, cash handouts and other gifts influenced a miniscule number of voters. Michael Sata's "Don't Kubeba" worked. The voters have become astute, having realised that it was near-impossible for candidates and their political parties to "monitor" their voting behaviour. So they pocketed the cash and betrayed even the most generous candidate.

But there seems to be an overwhelming belief in our ruling parties that they can buy votes of poor people. That's why they bribe voters.

Bribing voters could have a cultural explanation. There's a feeling that our poor voters appreciate wealthy or generous candidates. And that in a highly unequal society, cash bribes and gifts create a sense of reciprocity. We have a long history of patronage politics.

Our voters have been made to expect feasts or handouts from candidates – tulyemo! Our electoral politics are increasingly being articulated in the traditional idiom of patronage. The donor-servant relation is increasingly becoming the basic formula through which people exchanged things, exercised power and related socially.

In specific historical contexts bribery may make elections less predictable, dissolving the existing ties by which the electorate is already bound to those seeking office, rather than reinforcing them.

Bribery may be considered an evil because

of secondary, knock-on effects. The need to bribe implies the need to raise money. This may take place by corrupt means, or may produce financial and/or political debts, which corrupt the behaviour of politicians when in office. It may be a way in which people outside the political process, whether legitimate businessmen or criminals, such as gangsters and drug-barons nowadays, seek to control it.

If pursued on a vast scale, bribery may have unfortunate political consequences by dangerously expanding credit. Moreover, if bribery is prevalent in elections, this will affect the perception of politics both by office-seekers and those who elect them. Office-seekers may come to despise the venality of an electorate, which may, unknown to it, be exercising a considerable degree of independent judgement; the electorate for its part may deduce from the bribes that it is offered, that those pursuing public office are merely self-seekers who are not concerned with the general interest of the public.

This is the reality we have to confront as we head towards August 12.

What books I read is a story without an end

I HAVE been asked about what I read and what I am reading right now. Here is my brief response.

From the time I was able to read, I have read as many books as I could, and it pains me a lot that I don't spend more time reading. I can't imagine life without reading. It's sad I can't spend my life reading and studying.

I have read all kinds of literature. What I liked best of the first things I read were books of history: the history of Zambia, African history, and world history.

I have read a lot about the Bantu and their migrations. I have read all the writings on the Bemba people that I could lay my hands on. I have enjoyed reading the heroic history of the Ngoni people and warriors, especially their resistance to colonialism. I have also spent a lot of time on Lozi history.

I like reading biographies, and I think I have read all the classical biographies. Naturally, the Bible is one of the classical works I read. Anyone who analyses the way I speak or write will find that I use a lot of biblical terms. I was in Catholic schools for 12 years, with the Capuchin Fathers, the Irish Christian Brothers, and the Sacred Heart Brothers.

I read many novels when I was in junior secondary school – James Hadley Chase, Nicky Carter, Allister Maclean and so on and so forth. I have also enjoyed reading African writers series – Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiogo, Sonyika.

Then there's political literature. I began to dip into political literature as a student at the University of Zambia. I was greatly attracted to Marx, Engels and Lenin. I read a lot about all of them. My spirit became fertile ground for Marxist-Leninist ideas. I am always reading. I read the Qur'an a lot. It has a lot of great teachings.

It's hardly necessary to mention that I have read many books about revolutions and wars. I think I have read all the English books on the French Revolution, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the Cuban Revolution, and the Bolivarian Venezuela Revolution.

I have paid a lot of attention to economic writing and problems. I try to follow what children are learning in primary and secondary schools.

In a word, I can say I read everything or anything I can lay my hands on. I try very hard to read as much as I can about things I detest or do not agree with. I learn more from this.

Right now, among other things, I am reading a book by Daniel Posner – *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*.

I am very fortunate to have a cousin who is a brilliant history lecturer and researcher – Dr Sishuwa Sishuwa. He is my tireless supplier of very good reading material.

This story doesn't seem to have an end, I could go on and on. But for today, let me end it here.

SP 'will set up a national airline after 3 or 4 years'

It will be key pillar of country's transport and logistics matrix

Socialist staff reporter

THE SOCIALIST Party has been asked if it will set up a national airline when it is in power, and the answer is not if, but when, Cosmas Musumali, Socialist Party general secretary and first vice-president has said.

Dr Musumali said that despite the difficulties the industry was facing worldwide, the aviation sector would be a key pillar of the transport and logistics matrix of a socialist Zambia.

"When you are a land-linked country and seriously intend to build an equitable and viable 21st century economy, the minute details of aviation, as well as the bigger picture of logistics and transportation, must be on your radar.

"We are cognizant of the necessity of an interlinked and optimised transportation network serving our domestic, regional and international passenger and cargo needs," he said.

"Currently, the interface between rail, road, maritime and aviation platforms is extremely poor. Our socialist government will literally have to define and set up interfaces that are nonexistent today. This is both a challenge and an opportunity."

Dr Musumali said it was important to remember that the aviation sector consisted of more than just the presence of a national airline.

"Airports, a diversity of airlines, repair and maintenance services, an ICT backbone and first-class



Cosmas Musumali: It's a matter of when, not if

aviation training schools are all prerequisites for success."

He said Zambia was "at the tail-end" of both regional and global standards in all areas of aviation.

"Years of neglect, sheer incompetence and short-term thinking have all worked against the aviation sector. The ongoing construction of new airports in Lusaka, the Copperbelt and a few other areas, is just a drop in the ocean. We therefore have to take an aggressive but long-term view of the sector.

Skilled

"For a start, we need at least three universities with a bias in aerospace engineering and sciences. Without the appropriate engineers, technologists, mechanics, air traffic controllers, airport designers, fire fighters, security specialists, operations managers and many other skilled personnel we will not make much progress.

"We also need a number of aviation schools in the country. These will produce the required pilots, flight/cabin attendants and other airline personnel. The Zambia Air Services Training Institute has seen better days and will need a complete overhaul. With the required human capital in place, we can then confidently start tackling other critical areas.

"The setting up of a national airline will precede most of the outlined social capital formation. However, the airline's sustainability will depend on the human, infrastructural and organisational capacities being built."

Dr Musumali said that despite the slow down in aviation business due to COVID-19, the medium- and long-term prospects were huge.

"Our economy will increasingly depend on aviation. There will be more air traffic into and out of Zambia over the next 50 years. Air traffic between Lusaka and other cities, as well as between major towns and foreign destinations, will also increase.

"To nurture and safeguard these developments, a national airline is a critical factor. The development significance of a national airline goes beyond its profitability. It creates and supports an economic environment that is central to development."

Dr Musumali said the only question was when the national airline could be up and running. "Given what must be put in place, we reckon it will take about three to four years of systematic work after we get into power to set it up."

M'membe: I believe in press freedom, no ifs or buts . . .

THE PRESIDENT of our republic says he is "a firm believer in press freedom", but . . .

"Everybody in our public life claims to believe in press freedom. And the mantra of the moment seems to be, 'Of course I believe in a free press, but . . . and the 'buts' are getting bigger. 'But', they insist, there must be tougher press regulation," Socialist Party president Fred M'membe has said.

"Let me, then, try to enter into the spirit of the age. I, too, believe in press freedom. I am a man of the Left who cut his journalistic teeth writing for and editing revolutionary publications.

"As the young Karl Marx described it in his first newspaper articles arguing against Prussian state censorship in the 1840s, a free press was seen as 'the embodiment of a people's faith in itself, the eloquent link that connects the individual with the state and the world, the embodied culture that transforms the material struggles into intellectual struggles'.

"But I also believe that freedom is inevitably a messy business. It is not a privilege to be handed out only to those who meet your moral standards. The fact that some journalists and publications might choose to misuse and even 'abuse' their 'vital rights' is no reason to try to limit or restrain press freedom. To seek to sanitise press freedom is to risk killing it.

"A 'bad', 'toxic' and 'unethical' press that is free will always be better than a 'good', 'clean' and 'pure' press that is not free, if we want to stand a chance of getting close to the truth.

"But me, no 'buts' about press freedom, please. Press freedom is not some fluffy but impractical ideal, like 'free love', to be butted out of existence by those who

disapprove of its consequences. Without the freedom to think, say, write, publish, read, hear, love and hate what we choose, other freedoms would be impossible to imagine. Freedom of the press remains the only hope we have of knowing anything. A free press, in all its forms is the lifeblood of a free society and a vital citizenry."

Dr M'membe said the suppression of a free press had always been the early hallmark of dictatorship.

"So yes, I believe absolutely in the principle of a free press. And yes, it is clear that the exercise of that freedom can cause plenty of trouble for people. Nobody should be naive or complacent about the problems of journalistic standards today. Nor should we try to take a morally neutral view of an irresponsible press.

"But the far more important point is that freedom of the press is always a messy affair. It means allowing others the freedom to publish things that we may not want to see.

"A free press must be one that is free, not from being judged or subjected to normal criminal law, but from being restrained or punished on the grounds of taste or 'decency' or offended feelings or outraged sensibilities. The misuse of our freedom by some is not an excuse for allowing the authorities to misappropriate it.

"Press freedom is not something to be rationed out like charity, to only the most 'deserving' cases. A right is a right, and it is not limited by any incumbent responsibilities. Of course any good journalist should be prepared to stand up and take responsibility for what they write, and for the methods they use to get that story. But the wish to see responsible journalism cannot be used to trample on the freedom of others."

‘No big fish’ people’s representatives set a new path for Zambia Musumali: We walk the talk over equity

PEOPLE’S representatives in the Socialist Party aren’t there because of the size of their pockets. They “go with truth, genuine, justifiable people’s representation”, general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali told his audience at a presentation of new parliamentary candidates.

Dr Musumali presented 37 candidates as well as a nomination for Kitwe mayor at Kingfisher Garden Court in Lusaka.

“We have Northern Province giving us seven today, Luapula three, Lusaka three, Southern six, North-Western three, Central one, Muchinga two, Eastern six, Western three and the Copperbelt three,” Dr Musumali said.

“Out of the three from the Copperbelt, we have a mayoral candidate for Kitwe. In the next weeks, we’ll wind up with the adoption of the MPs and also adopt mayors. All those from the bigger towns will be done centrally and then the rest will be decentralised, especially for council chairpersons,” he said.

Dr Musumali said the party pledged equity and “we are walking the talk”.

“We are also committed to the youth because they are the majority of the population. Among the candidates today, we have eight below the age of 30. This is history in the making.”

Two of the adoptees are just 21 and 22, both female, and Dr Musumali said a range of humble occupations were represented. He said Lindiwe Mawere, 21, for Kawambwa Central constituency, was a hairdresser, and 39-year-old Lubinda Silishebo, for Nalikwanda, was a female bricklayer.

“We have a young comrade who sells tomatoes and about three trained teachers who are unemployed and sustaining themselves through peasant farming. None of these comrades can be called a big fish. It’s not the big fish who needs change,” Dr Musumali said.

“It’s not the elite of this country who seek better lives for themselves and their children. The poor have been betrayed for too long and in the Socialist Party they are standing up and saying enough is enough. They want to lead themselves.”

He said the poor wanted to be part of the change process that was going to take place in the country in August this year.

“The Zambian Parliament will never be the same with this crop of people. The time for the suffering masses to delegate political power is gone,” Dr Musumali said.

“Zambia is entering a new phase, it is a new challenge, but full of hope. We are setting a path for the rest of Africa and humanity.”

● The adoptees are: Roydah Mulenga Chongo (Kaputa), Mark Mpundu (Chilubi), Marian Chisela (Lupososhi), Twiza Sikazwe (Mpu-lungu), Mavis Mutale (Lukashya), Judith Ngo’nga (Chimbamilonga), Lindiwe Mawere (Kawambwa), Paul Davis Musenge (Mambilima), Lukas Mwansa (Lunga), Jacob Chimfutwe (Nchelenge), Juliet Nalwimba (Isoka), Morris Nkata (Chama South), Pastor Jack Yobe (Rufunsa), Ben Malupande (Chongwe), Morris Njema (Chilanga), Eviness Chipatika (Choma), Beckham Mudenda (Magoye), Sampson Siabwengo (Gwembe), Willes Michel (Moomba), Melody Buumba (Mbabala), Margaret Moono (Monze Central), Espina Chulu (Solwezi East), Chishimba Kapungwe (Mkushi North), Amos Wambili (Solwezi West), Kevin Kanyama (Manyinga), Fridah Mbe-we (Malambo), Dominic Mbewe (Vubwi), Marie Jesy Banda (Lundazi), Learmore Lungu (Nyimba), Nkhumbwiza Banda (Sinda), Mathews Mwale (Milanzi), Kerryne Kampinda (Wusakile), Joyce Mubanga (for Kitwe mayor), Dennis Mulenga (Mpongwe), Lubasi Liuna (Sesheke), Sharon Sinonge (Mulobezi), and Lubinda Silishebo (Nalikwanda).

PROFILES

Peter Banda

PETER Whyson Banda is the parliamentary candidate for Kapoche constituency.

He went to Mlela and Kaulu schools in Sinda and Petauke districts of Eastern Province before going on to gain a pre-school diploma at Chipata Skills Training Institute.

He said he was attracted to the Socialist Party because of the “humble and honest” leadership of Fred M’membe. “We are lacking a good leader in Zambia and it is good that we have found him,” he said, adding that he knew Dr M’membe to have leadership skills from his days on *The Post* newspaper.

Banda said key socialist policy areas included providing free education from grade one up to university level, creating jobs, and putting in place a financial system that supported the working masses.

He said pressing issues in his constituency included a lack of dams, inadequate healthcare facilities and poor roads.

“My message to the people of Kapoche constituency and Zambia at large is: let’s join this party and work together with the socialist government. Let’s put our hands together and develop our country because, as our president says,

things that you can’t do for yourself, no one can do for you.”

Paul Chilenga

PAUL Chilenga is parliamentary candidate for Kapiri Mposhi constituency and has a diploma in development studies as well as a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Bugema University in Kampala, Uganda. He joined the Socialist Party after returning to Zambia in 2018.

Chilenga said he joined the party because of its “people-centric” policies as well as its principles of humility and servitude, “which is a rarity in Zambia, Africa and the world at large”.

He said youth unemployment was a major issue in his constituency. “Working together with the youth we will create small industrial hubs for food processing, environmentally sustainable projects, and promotion of the arts as a means of survival.”

Lack of clean and safe drinking water and insufficient schools and health facilities were also pressing issues, especially in the rural communities. “With heavy involvement of the various communities we will work towards building these facilities close to where people live to alleviate the problem of them having to walk long distances,” he said.

Chilenga said the Socialist Party was unlike any other, with most political parties preaching but failing to practise. “The Socialist Party is one that Zambians can comfortably call their own,” he said. “So I would like to urge every well-meaning Zambian to join this revolutionary movement to create a better Zambia for generations to come.”

Michael Chimponda

MICHAEL Bwalya Chimponda is the parliamentary candidate for Lubansenshi constituency, and says it was his childhood dream to eventually play a part in revolutionary politics.

“My decision to be a part of the revolutionary movement stems from my childhood, right back to grade two,” he said.

“I chose to make a difference in the way the leadership and governance of the nation was looked at and struggled to co-exist with other political parties, yet their agendas have all been totally different, until the Socialist Party came to light. Now I feel we are pursuing a common goal with a common agenda to help the masses, poor Zambians.”

Chimponda said major issues were expensive education with low standards and agriculture. “With proper leadership Lubansenshi constituency can be a food basket



Some of the latest people’s representatives adopted to stand for parliament in the August election

for the region and nation, and yet no attention has been given to help peasant farmers graduate to commercial farming. Only when we have the right agricultural policies will we see the area realise its full potential.”

He said healthcare was another pressing issue. “When I see a pregnant woman covering 20km or more just to access maternity services my heart bleeds,” he said. “Poverty levels, especially in rural areas, make it feel like it’s the end of the world. I see families going two or three days without a proper meal and I break down in tears.

“The solution to all these, and many more, local problems is to let the people govern with me as their leader. Together we will change the narrative,” he said.

Phides Hamayobe

PHIDES Hamayobe, parliamentary candidate for Siavonga constituency, attended Mazabuka primary and Rusangu secondary schools before employment as an accounting clerk, working in the hospi-

tal industry and as a teacher. Hamayobe says she went into politics “to join the many Zambians who believe in and are driving this progressive movement”.

“The Socialist Party believes in collective governance where all members and communities are involved in decision-making, meaning power belongs to people,” she said. “It has given us an opportunity as ordinary people to participate in a politics that makes a difference to the lives of poor and disadvantaged people.”

She said constituency issues included youth unemployment and a lack of infrastructure.

“Despite Siavonga being a tourist attraction there is no proper infrastructure, no proper road network linking producers and consumers. Marketeters are subjected to harsh weather conditions, yet they form part of a group that accounts for the economic development and growth of Siavonga. They need proper shelter.”

Hamayobe said the country needed to turn its back on selfish, greedy and corrupt leaders who

had failed to run the country in the interests of the majority.

“People need to know that under the Socialist Party, the people will govern for themselves.

“To my fellow women: I encourage you to join the revolutionary movement now because it is our time to liberate ourselves from the stress we encounter every day in order to feed our families. Women are key to national development.”

Kenmax Hamoonga

KENMAX Hamoonga describes his Dundumwenzi constituency as “long suffering” and says the Socialist Party has the answers to its problems.

“I joined the party because of my passion to struggle for equity, justice and peace, and a better Dundumwenzi and Zambia,” he said. “I love my country and want to represent the voiceless to address the everyday challenges they face and bridge the gap between rich and poor.

“Our main struggles in Dundumwenzi include, but are not



Barbra Maramwidze



Mirriam Kapenda



Musoka Hastings



Felistus Kuku



Peter Banda



Ruth Luapula



Juliet Mwape



Kenmax Hamoonga



Michael Chimponda



Mumembe Nyambe



Paul Chilenga



Phides Hamayobe

limited to, bad roads, poor health-care and education facilities. The Socialist Party, through its three key programmes – health, education and agriculture – is committed to creating jobs as well as ensuring access to quality clean water and sanitation for all,” he said.

Hamoonga completed Grade 12 at Canisius Secondary School. He studied for a diploma in community development at Monze Community Development College, and for a secondary education diploma at Mufulira University.

He has worked as a community development facilitator with World Vision Zambia for 18 years.

Musoka Hastings

MUSOKA Hastings, parliamentary candidate for Zambezi West constituency, hails from Sefu village, Northwestern Province. He attended Nyathanda basic and Sanjongo secondary schools and has worked as a teacher at Lindumbi Primary School for six years.

Hastings said he joined the Socialist Party because of its ideology and manifesto. “It is the best for the poor masses,” he said. “I live with my people and I know their everyday hectic struggles. Only socialism will get us out of the misery, the anguish, the poverty we face every day.

“The roads in my constituency are impassable, people lack decent houses, water and sanitation. Hunger is another challenge and we also lack of medicines in hospitals.

“My message to the people is: let’s not just change the government but also the system of capitalism that has failed us.”

Mirriam Kapenda

MIRRIAM Musangu Kapenda is the parliamentary candidate for Liuwa constituency.

She went to Mishulundu primary, Kuuli basic and Kalabo secondary schools before studying for a primary teaching certificate at Nkana College of Education in Kitwe.

Kapenda says she joined the Socialist Party because of the challenges her community had faced ever since independence.

“The road network is poor, as is water and sanitation,” she said. “Healthcare is bad and there are high levels of poverty, with early marriages the talk of the day.

“I am a born and bread of Liuwa constituency and I face the same challenges that my fellow youths and parents do.

“It is time for a revolutionary movement, and the Socialist Party is the way to go because of its values of honesty, humility, solidarity and an equitable life.”

Felistus Kuku

FELISTUS Kuku is the parliamentary candidate for Kabompo constituency.

Kuku attended Mapachi primary and Nkulwashi basic schools, going on to complete GCE exams at Kabompo secondary and Kabulamema day schools.

She said she had joined the Socialist Party because she wanted to work for the people to help address some of the challenges affecting development in the district.

“The township roads are in a bad state,” she said. “I will work with the local council to use part of the CDF to improve them.”

There was also a lack of electricity in the Kabulamema and Chikenge areas of Kabompo. “I will engage the rural electrification authority through the government to have these areas electrified,” she said.

“There is a lack of empowerment for the youth and women in the district and I intend to work hard to form cooperatives and lobby for funds from the central government and well wishers to fund projects.

“Let’s vote for the Socialist Party under the leadership of Fred M’membe for real change and better living,” Kuku said. “And women: let’s wake up and turn up in good numbers to vote and support the party.”

Ruth Luapula

RUTH Luapula is the parliamentary candidate for Chililabombwe and was educated in the constituency before obtaining a certificate in occupational health and safety at the University of Zambia.

She says she joined the revolutionary movement because the country needs change. “Socialism is the way to go in this revolution,” she said.

Lupaula said hardships in her constituency included unemployment, poor roads, education, teenage pregnancies and early marriages.

She said she’d like to see employment contracts currently given to foreigners and people from outside the constituency given to local people.

“Also give road projects to local people as this will help create jobs and make maintenance easier,” she

said. “Provide quality education for every child and set up recreational centres.”

Luapula said that with Socialist Party support women could make a huge contribution to Zambia’s future, “So let’s join hands and make a difference by participating.”

Barbra Maramwidze

SOCIALIST Party parliamentary candidate for Matero constituency Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze is an entrepreneur, qualified accountant, and actress by profession.

“I joined SP because I am tired of complaining about issues and have decided to stand up and be a part of much-needed change”, she said.

“The key pressing issues in my constituency include sanitation, lack of water, bad road infrastructure with many impassable, lack of proper drainage systems, blocked sewers, multiple leaks leading to bad smells, and high levels of unemployment among young people. There are so many youths wasting on the streets despite having good qualifications.

“The Socialist Party has a comprehensive manifesto that guides us on how we will address the challenges in my constituency and across the country. Key programmes include education, health and agriculture. The manifesto also addresses issues of sanitation, water, infrastructure and housing.

“The party has a clear jobs strategy that is aligned with three key programme areas; health, education and agriculture.”

Maramwidze said her message to the Zambian people was that the time had come for change. “It’s about time we changed the way we live, the way we think and the way we vote. Let’s say no to oppression, no to exploitation.

“My message to female voters is: let us for once stand together and support each other.”

Juliet Mwape

JULIET Mwape is the parliamentary candidate for Chinsali constituency. Born in Nakonde district, she went to Ntumbila primary and Mwenzo girls’ secondary schools.

Mwape has a diploma in modern management and administration from Cambridge International College, and is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in public administration at the University of Africa.

Her jobs have included clerk of works at the economic expansion in outlying areas programme, secretary to Chinsali District Council, and administrative assistant at the National Assembly of Zambia

Mwape said she joined the Socialist Party because of its values – justice, equity and peace – and its support for women’s liberation.

“The current situation in our country is what has made me play a part in this revolution,” she said.

“The Socialist Party is the only one with the ideology to be able to help women, including supporting marketeers to be members of parliament.”

She said clean drinking water, education, poor road networks, and employment were major issues in her constituency.

“The Socialist Party is the only solution to the challenges we are facing because education will be free for all up to university level, there will be universal access to healthcare services, and agricultural diversification will provide more food for our country.”

Mumembe Nyambe

MUMEMBE Musweu Nyambe, parliamentary candidate for the Lwena constituency, was born in Mongu district and attended Malengwa primary and Lukona high schools.

She studied accounting at ZCAS and NIPA colleges and has worked for Adolescent Reproductive Health Advocates as a logistics officer in Kaoma district, and assistant accountant in Mongu.

Nyambe said Zambia needed to vote out capitalism and replace it with a socialist agenda because if it continued on the capitalist path of greed, corruption, individualism and unbridled competition, Zambia “would perish”.

“I am a victim and survivor of the endless struggles we have in Western Province, which has the highest poverty level of 82.2 percent,” she said. “If I don’t stand up and fight for our collective liberation then I am destroying my today and tomorrow, and that of others. Our people are dying because they don’t have health centres nearby and medicines. Our youths are into drugs because they lack of employment.”

Nyambe said areas of strategic importance included constitutional reform, education, and focusing health services on the needs of women and children.

“Women should be the leading target group in all programmes designed to reduce poverty and disadvantage,” she said. “We can change our situation if we work together and make collective decisions.”

Bricklayer Lubinda builds on humble foundations

SOCIALIST Party general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali said the candidate adoptions were “an example as to what people’s democracy looks like”.

“If democracy has to make sense, then it has to be the government of the majority, for the majority. Power, democracy, cannot be delegated to another group, another class of people that do not understand your pain, your suffering, and your aspirations,” he said.

“The example we are showing is that if you have carpenters, we want to see carpenters in parliament, if you have bricklayers among the workers of Zambia, we want to see those bricklayers in our parliament. Marketeers play a huge role in our lives, we want to see those in parliament.”

Dr Musumali cited 39-year-old Lubinda Silishebo, a bricklayer, as an example of the



humble professions set for parliament. She is to stand for Nalikwanda constituency in Mongu district, Western Province.

Mother-of-four Silishebo said she started out training to be an electrician but switched

to bricklaying in 2004. “I was doing power electrical at Mongu Trades Training Institute, but because I had the desire to become a bricklayer, I shifted from the class of electrician students,” she said. “I joined the bricklaying class at Mongu Trades. That was in 2004 and the course was for six months, sponsored by World Vision.

“I thought instead of just going for a course that will make me sit in an office waiting for a salary at the end of the month, I would do something where I can earn money every week or two.”

Silishebo said her profession, plus being nominated to stand for parliament, showed just how unpredictable life can be.

“No one knows where life will lead them,” she said. “Whatever comes your way, learn and do it.”

COVID-19: workers labour to save lives

Ruling elite hits back at worldwide strike wave

Jerry White

JUST over a year ago, an early manifestation of opposition by the working class to the homicidal response of the ruling class to the COVID-19 pandemic began with a series of wildcat strikes in Italy.

Over the next week, strikes spread to other European countries and to North and South America. At the time, the deadly disease was surging in northern Italy and cases were rising in the US and around the world. Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resisted any emergency measures, even as the death toll approached 500.

Conte would soon deploy army trucks to transport the dead in Bergamo to crematoriums. On March 9, he finally announced a partial national lockdown. However, bowing to the demands of the major industrialists' association, Confindustria, Conte allowed factories and other large workplaces to remain open.

The strike wave began the following day when thousands of autoworkers at Fiat Chrysler's Pomigliano plant in Naples, forced to stay on the line to produce luxury Alfa-Romeo cars, walked out spontaneously to protest over unsafe conditions.

The following day, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) announced the temporary closure of the Pomigliano plant, along with factories in Melfi, Atessa and Cassino. Management made it clear, however, that production would resume by March 14 after the plants had been "sanitised".

Over the next three days, wildcat strikes spread across Italy; to the steel mills in Bergamo, Brescia and Genoa; the Liguria shipyards and the Electrolux factory in Treviso; car parts plants in Corman; Amazon warehouses in the provinces of Piacenza and Rieti, and the poultry and meat processing facilities in the Po Valley.

The opposition of workers quickly spread internationally. On Thursday, March 12, Royal Mail workers walked out at several London facilities over safety conditions. Across the Atlantic in Canada, Fiat Chrysler workers at the Windsor, Ontario, plant halted production the same day that FCA management acknowledged the first COVID-19 case at a North American plant, a facility in Indiana. Production was resumed the following day only after the intervention of the Ontario labour minister and the Unifor union.

As in Italy and the UK, the action by workers in Canada and the

United States would take the form of a rebellion against the trade unions, which kept workers in the plants despite the spread of the deadly disease.

While United Auto Workers union sent its top staff home to work remotely, UAW warned workers against "spreading rumours" about outbreaks in the plants and instructed them to wash their hands and "avoid contact with others within two to three feet, if possible". Workers labouring shoulder-to-shoulder inside the factories denounced the statements with contempt, with one Indiana worker saying that both the UAW and the company "don't give a damn about any one of us or our families".

By Monday, March 16, Warren Truck Assembly Plant workers in suburban Detroit downed tools in the paint shop, where at least four workers would die from the disease. Earlier the same day, 5,000 workers at the Vitoria Mercedes-Benz plant in the Basque Country, Spain, walked out against unsafe conditions.

On Tuesday, March 17, FCA transmission workers in Tipton, Indiana, just outside Kokomo, refused to operate their machines, along with Lear seating workers in Hammond, Indiana. The same day, Detroit bus drivers conducted a sickout. That evening, the UAW announced it had a deal with the Big Three automakers for rolling temporary closures. Having no faith in the UAW, a few hours later workers at Sterling Heights Assembly Plant (SHAP) in suburban Detroit – one of the largest auto plants in the US – halted production.

By Wednesday, March 18, the morning shift at SHAP was continuing the job action and was joined by workers at the Jefferson North Assembly Plant in Detroit, the Dundee Engine Plant



Amazon workers in Staten Island, New York, protesting over unsafe working conditions last year

near Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the Toledo Assembly Complex in Ohio, where rank-and-file workers stormed into the UAW offices to denounce the union officials. In the early afternoon, the Big Three automakers announced the closure of their plants, claiming this had been done out of concern on the part of the companies and the UAW for the safety of the workers.

The following day, Thursday March 19, wildcat strikes erupted at call centres across Brazil, with workers at Italian-owned Imviva declaring, "We are not going to die in our cubicles." The strike occurred three days after the company's 2,800 workers in Palermo, Italy, struck after a confirmed case of COVID-19, forcing the closure of in-person operations.

There were a number of significant aspects to this wave of struggles. First was its global character. The pandemic is an inherently global crisis, and the COVID-19 virus did not and does not respect international boundaries. Workers throughout Europe and the Americas were responding in an effort to save lives over the profit interests of the corporate and financial elites.

Struggles

Second, these struggles were emerging when the pandemic was still in its early stages. On March 10, the worldwide death toll from the pandemic stood at about 6,500. By the end of March, it had risen sharply to 45,000. In the US, the first recorded death came at the very end of February, and the wildcat strikes at auto plants broke out as the national toll approached 100.

One year later, the global death toll stands at a staggering 2.6 million people, including more than 538,000 in the United States alone.

Third, while the corporate-

owned news media did everything it could to black out reports of the spreading resistance of workers, the World Socialist Web Site provided detailed accounts of the strike wave. The SEP (US) statement, of March 14, "Shut down the auto industry to halt the spread of coronavirus!" was viewed more than 130,000 times.

The initial action of the working class, which in the US included 260 strikes and job actions triggered by the pandemic and involving a wide variety of workers between March 1 and May 31, forced the partial lockdowns of businesses and schools, saving countless lives.

These actions were of immense significance, but they remained largely uncoordinated. While workers were striving to impose a policy that would save lives, they were not led by a network of independent workers' organisations or guided by a clear political perspective and programme.

The ruling class responded by going on the offensive. In late March, the US Congress, with the near unanimous support of Republicans and Democrats, passed the CARES Act, which financed an estimated US\$4 trillion handout to Wall Street and major corporations. The limited financial assistance to workers included in the CARES Act was used to buy the ruling class time to embark on a systematic campaign to reopen the schools and workplaces, with the support of the unions, based on the slogan that "the cure can't be worse than the disease".

This was accompanied by the promotion of fascist forces demanding an end to lockdowns, including the April 30 storming of the Michigan state capitol by armed right-wing militias, a dress rehearsal for the January 6 coup attempt in Washington D.C.

wsws.org

Amidst these developments, the World Socialist Web Site and the Socialist Equality Parties throughout the world advanced a programme to stop the pandemic.

On February 28, when the death toll was just 3,000, the International Committee of the Fourth International issued a statement calling for a "globally coordinated emergency response to the coronavirus pandemic", including the mobilisation of the social and scientific resources of the entire world to stop the disease.

On March 17, when the US death toll was 170, the National Committee of the SEP (US) published a statement titled, "How to fight the COVID-19 pandemic: a programme of action for the working class". It is an undeniable fact that if the policies advanced by the International Committee of the Fourth International had been implemented, hundreds of thousands of lives would have been saved.

A year later, the working class is at a crossroads. All over the world, remaining restrictions are being lifted even as experts warn of a "hurricane" surge of the pandemic.

The working class must forge a new political leadership and build rank-and-file committees, independent of the unions, to prepare strike action to close schools and all non-essential production, and demand full compensation for workers and small businesses until the population is widely vaccinated and the pandemic is under control.

This must be combined with the fight for a socialist programme, including the expropriation of the pandemic profiteers, a radical redistribution of wealth, and massive infusion of resources needed for testing, contact tracing, vaccination, and other health care measures necessary to wipe out COVID-19.

wsws.org

CHINA WATCH

INTEREST in China is growing, yet most news and analysis outside the country is produced by mainstream media from the global north. To provide access to Chinese perspectives, the *Dong Feng Collective* – researchers from various countries – offers a China digest of news. This is an edited selection.

Friends team up

CHINA, Russia and Venezuela have announced the formation of a new bloc to defend the UN founding charter against US unilateralism. The "Group of Friends", including Cuba, Bolivia, Angola, Iran and 10 others, calls for principles of multilateralism, non-interference in countries' internal affairs and peaceful conflict resolution.

Newsweek

Over the moon

AFTER recent moon mission successes, China has signed an agreement with Russia to build and operate the International Scientific Lunar Station. The station will be on and/or orbit the moon, serving for numerous remotely-operated research projects toward future prospects of human bases on the Moon.

The Verge

Chipping in

CHINA is raising tax-break criteria for domestic chipmakers, a priority for the national economy after US sanctions. State-backed semiconductor investments (US\$21.5 billion) grew fivefold in 2020, but some projects failed due to lack of experience. The increased standards for receiving aid includes a minimum number of patents, R&D spending and staff education level.

Nikkei Asia

Working on retiring

CHINA is to gradually raise its retirement age as life expectancy increases, the population ages, and pension deficits rise (US\$103 billion). The retirement age for men (60) and women (50-55) has remained unchanged since 1950s, while life expectancy has nearly doubled (40-77.3 in 2019), the country faces a declining birth rate, and the elderly population has increased from 200 to 460 million.

Global Times

Tech coal goals

LED by Huawei, tech giants are focusing on transforming the coal industry to improve workers' safety and develop a "digital China". Hit by sanctions, Huawei is diversifying operations and applying 5G technology, automated machinery and smart sensors to help reduce fatal work accidents and limit exposure to toxic coal dust.

South China Morning Post

Going for growth

CHINA expects 6 percent growth in 2021, relying more on industry and household consumption than the financial and real estate sectors. Measures to increase consumption include raising incomes, lowering spending on housing, and expanding domestic consumer goods industries.

Nikkei Asia

Military on target

CHINA'S defence budget (US\$209 billion) has maintained steady growth, with an increase of 6.8 percent for 2021. Chinese military spending accounts for 1.22 percent of its GDP, lower than the global average of 2.6 percent.

CGTN

China boosts vaccination aid programme

CHINA is continuing to expand its aid and support for other countries, especially the developing and least developed ones, in getting access to COVID-19 vaccination, the country's official state-run press agency reports.

It says a shipment of 200,000 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines donated by China has arrived in Zimbabwe, with Peru receiving 700,000 more doses of Sinopharm vaccines after a previous first shipment.

China is providing vaccine aid to 53 developing countries, according to the Foreign Ministry, which says the country has also decided to provide 10 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to the COVAX global initiative to meet the urgent needs of developing countries.

The agency says these moves prove that China "walks the talk" as it pledged to make its COVID-19 vaccines a global public commodity once they were developed and put into use.

"China provides vaccines to developing countries as a responsible big country. It is trying its best to conduct vaccine cooperation with other countries in various ways," the agency says.

"Chinese companies are running full-steam to produce more vaccines in light of the limited number of doses available for export, including completed vaccines, concentrates, and semi-completed products. The latter will be processed further in recipient countries.

"China's determination to provide vaccines to others originates from its flagship vision of 'building a community with a shared future for humanity'.

"It addresses the question of how the international community should face turbulence and change and collectively face global challenges. It calls for sticking together through thick and thin and building a world that is open and inclusive.

"As China started to provide vaccines

to other countries, some Western critics labelled its efforts as 'vaccine diplomacy' aiming at expanding the country's political influence.

"Such attempts to stigmatise or politicise China's vaccine development blatantly disrespects the country's scientists and health professionals. Such unfair remarks against China are not helpful for building up the trust in global communities in the battle against the pandemic, diminishing the light at the end of the tunnel.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded the world in the most powerful way that we are interconnected, and nobody wins unless everybody wins.

"The international community has long been cleaved by deep disparities in wealth, education, and access to vital necessities, such as electricity and clean water. The provision of COVID-19 vaccines must not aggravate the situation," it says.

Xinhua

Remembering Rosa: one of the most important Marxist leaders

150 years ago, on March 5, 1871, Rosa Luxemburg was born in the small Polish town of Zamość. Despite her premature and violent death at the age of 47, she was, together with Lenin and Trotsky, one of the most important revolutionary Marxist leaders of the 20th century

ROSA Luxemburg is remembered for her political and revolutionary skills, playing a key role in the founding of the Polish Social Democratic Party and Spartacus League, a movement that became the Communist Party of Germany.

She went on to develop a humanitarian theory of Marxism, stressing democracy and revolutionary mass action to achieve international socialism.

Luxemburg combined personal courage, an unbreakable fighting spirit and unwavering principles with an outstanding intellect and extraordinary theoretical and rhetorical abilities. She was highly educated, spoke German, Polish, Russian and French fluently, and understood other languages. She was capable of tremendous passion and possessed a fascinating personality that attracted both workers and intellectuals.

She loved and was familiar with literature. At the age of six, she began writing for a children's newspaper, began translating Russian poetry into Polish shortly thereafter, and wrote her own poems.

Like all great progressive figures in world history, Luxemburg was either persecuted and slandered by her opponents, or embraced and falsified by false friends. Attempts have been made to co-opt her as a feminist, portray her as an advocate of a non-revolutionary road to socialism, and misuse her as a key witness against Bolshevism.

Rosa Luxemburg was the youngest of five children of a lower middle-class Jewish family in Russian-ruled Poland. She became involved in underground activities while still in high school. Like many of her radical contemporaries from the Russian Empire who were faced with prison, she emigrated to Zürich in 1889. There she studied law and political economy, receiving a doctorate in 1898.

In Zürich she became involved in the international socialist movement and met Georgy Valentinovich Plekhanov, Pavel Axelrod, and other leading representatives of the Russian social democratic movement, with whom, however, she soon began to disagree.

Together with a fellow student, Leo Jogiches, who was to become a lifelong friend and sometime lover, she challenged both the Russians and the established Polish Socialist Party because of their support for Polish independence. Consequently, she and her colleagues founded the rival Polish Social Democratic



Clockwise from the top: Communist and rights activist Clara Zetkin with Rosa Luxemburg at the Polish Socialist Party congress in Magdeburg in 1910; portrait of Rosa Luxemburg; her funeral on June 13, 1919

Party, which was to become the nucleus of the future Polish Communist Party. The national issue became one of Luxemburg's main themes. To her, nationalism and national independence were regressive concessions to the class enemy, the bourgeoisie. She consistently underrated nationalist aspirations and stressed socialist internationalism. This became one of her major points of disagreement with Vladimir Lenin and his theory of national self-determination.

Powerful

In 1898, after marrying Gustav Lübeck to obtain German citizenship, she settled in Berlin to work with the largest and most powerful constituent party of the Second International, the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Almost at once, she jumped into the revisionist controversy that divided the party.

In 1898 the German revisionist Eduard Bernstein argued that Marxist theory was essentially outdated and that socialism in highly industrialised nations could best be achieved through a gradualist approach, using trade-union activity and parliamentary politics. This

Luxemburg denied categorically in 1899 in *Sozialreform oder Revolution?* (Reform or Revolution?), in which she defended Marxist orthodoxy and the necessity of revolution, arguing that parliament was nothing more than a bourgeois sham.

Karl Kautsky, the leading theoretician of the Second International, agreed with her, and revisionism consequently became a socialist heresy both in Germany and abroad, although it continued to make headway, especially in the labour movement.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 proved to be the central experience in Luxemburg's life. Until then she had believed that Germany was the country in which world revolution was most likely to originate. She now believed it would catch fire in Russia.

She went to Warsaw, participated in the struggle, and was imprisoned. From these experiences emerged her theory of revolutionary mass action, which she propounded in 1906 in *Massenstreik, Partei und Gewerkschaften* (The Mass Strike, the Political Party, and the Trade Unions).

Luxemburg advocated the mass strike as the single most

important tool of the proletariat – Western as well as Russian – in attaining a socialist victory. The mass strike, the spontaneous result of “objective conditions”, would radicalise the workers and drive the revolution forward. In contrast to Lenin, she de-emphasised the need for a tight party structure, believing that organisation would emerge naturally from the struggle. For this she was repeatedly chastised by orthodox communist parties.

Released from her Warsaw prison, she taught at the Social Democratic Party school in Berlin (1907–14), where she wrote *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals* (The Accumulation of Capital) in 1913. In this analysis, she described imperialism as the result of a dynamic capitalism's expansion into underdeveloped areas of the world. It was during this time also that she began to agitate for mass actions and broke completely with the established Social Democratic party leadership of August Bebel and Kautsky, who disagreed with her incessant drive toward proletarian radicalisation.

The Social Democratic Party backed the German government at the outbreak of World War I,

but Luxemburg immediately went into opposition. In an alliance with Karl Liebknecht and other like-minded radicals, she formed the Spartakusbund, or Spartacus League, which was dedicated to ending the war through revolution and the establishment of a proletarian government. The organisation's theoretical basis was Luxemburg's 1916 pamphlet *Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie* (The Crisis in German Social Democracy), written in prison under the pseudonym Junius.

Overthrow

In this work she agreed with Lenin in advocating the overthrow of the existing regime and the formation of a new International strong enough to prevent a renewed outbreak of mass slaughter. The actual influence of the Spartacus group during the war, however, remained limited.

Released from prison by the German revolution (November 1918), Luxemburg and Liebknecht immediately began agitation to force the new order to the left. They exercised considerable influence on the public and were a contributing factor in a number

of armed clashes in Berlin. As a result, Luxemburg was vilified as “Bloody Rosa” in the bourgeois press.

Like the Bolsheviks, Luxemburg and Liebknecht demanded political power for the workers' and soldiers' soviets, but were frustrated by the conservative socialist establishment and the army.

Amid the revolutionary struggles, the Spartacus League formed the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in Berlin at the end of 1918. Rosa Luxemburg wrote the party programme and presented it to the delegates. It explicitly formulated the goal of overthrowing bourgeois class rule. The alternative was not reform or revolution, the programme stressed. Rather, “The World War confronts society with the choice: either continuation of capitalism, new wars, and imminent decline into chaos and anarchy, or abolition of capitalist exploitation . . . in this hour, socialism is the only salvation for humanity. The words of the Communist Manifesto flare like a fiery menetekel above the crumbling bastions of capitalist society: socialism or barbarism.”

The government was determined to prevent the socialist revolution. On January 15, 1919, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were, on the explicit orders of Reichswehr Minister Gustav Noske, brutally murdered. The crime was carried out by the Freikorps “Garde-Kavallerie-Schützendivision”, which had been brought to Berlin by Noske to militarily suppress the uprising. They kidnapped the pair and took them to their headquarters at the Hotel Eden, where they were interrogated and abused. Luxemburg was subsequently struck to the ground with rifle butts in the entrance to the hotel and bundled into a car, where she was shot. Her body was thrown into the Landwehr canal, where it was found only several weeks later. Karl Liebknecht was executed by three shots fired at close range in the Berlin Tiergarten.

The murders were fully endorsed by the state, and the officers directly involved were acquitted by a military court in May 1919.

The murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg was a heavy blow to the international workers' movement. With Luxemburg leading the KPD, German and even world history would probably have turned out differently. There is much to suggest that the KPD would have taken power in October 1923 had it possessed an experienced leadership. Humanity may well have been spared Adolf Hitler, whose rise occurred above all thanks to the paralysing of the working class by the disastrous “social fascist” policy of the Stalinised KPD. Stalin's own rise would have faced bitter opposition from within the Communist International.

Rosa Luxemburg's heritage – her internationalism, her orientation to the working class, her revolutionary socialism – has been defended and developed by the world Trotskyist movement, represented today by the International Committee of the Fourth International. It is a crucial weapon in the struggle for socialist revolution.

Britannica, wsws.org, edited

Top court frees Lula to run for president

Charges against Brazil's former leader dropped

Chris Banks, S. Rodrigues

IN A major victory for left and progressive forces, all criminal convictions against Brazil's former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva have been struck down by the Supreme Federal Tribunal, Brazil's highest court. This restores the political rights of Brazil's most popular political figure, including his right to run for president in 2022.

The possible return of Brazil, the world's seventh largest economy and South America's largest, to the progressive camp in Latin America is of great significance, both regionally and globally.

The SFT ruling was issued by a single member of the court, Justice Edson Fachin, who reversed the convictions after finding that the federal court in the city of Curitiba did not have jurisdiction to try the cases. He said they could be retried from scratch in the jurisdiction of Brasília, the capital. This could be a highly time-consuming process that even if successful may not be quick enough to block Lula from

challenging the fascist incumbent president Jair Bolsonaro in 2022.

Since 2014, right-wing judicial and law enforcement authorities in Curitiba functioned as tip-of-the-spear in a politically motivated persecution of Lula.

In order to stop him from running in 2018, they imprisoned Lula for alleged corruption just as he was set to win the presidential election by a landslide.

Fachin's ruling confirms what has been known all along: the right-wing judicial machinery in Curitiba had no right to prosecute Lula.

Vigorous

The scope of Operation Car Wash investigations conducted in Curitiba was strictly limited to cases involving the state-owned Petrobras oil company. Lula's defence team and his supporters vigorously pointed out from the beginning that Lula's case did not meet that criteria.

Why did Fachin, one of the most consistent defenders of Operation Car Wash within the Supreme Federal Tribunal, concede such a victory for Lula?

Fachin's ruling came just as the Supreme Federal Tribunal pre-



Supporters carry former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva through the streets of São Paulo after his release from jail

pared to take up the charges that Operation Car Wash judge Sérgio Moro did not act with the impartiality required of a judge.

Leaked private messages between Moro and prosecutors published by *The Intercept* in June 2019 revealed that they worked together to rig the trials and secure the conviction of Lula on political grounds. The scandal severely damaged the credibility of Moro, the prosecutors and Operation Car Wash as a whole.

If the SFT were to find that Moro was partial against Lula, not only the case against Lula but many others under the Operation Car Wash could be annulled. Furthermore, much of the evidence obtained against Lula under legal authorisations granted by Moro would also become void, dashing any hopes of the right wing securing a conviction against Lula in a retrial.

In declaring that Moro had no jurisdiction over Lula's case, Fachin argued that his decision rendered the debate over Moro's partiality irrelevant and immediately moved to quash all 14 cases

before the SFT related to the matter. In his calculus, granting Lula this victory would protect Moro and Operation Car Wash.

As it stands, Fachin's move did not sit well with some of the other members of the Supreme Federal Tribunal. Justice Gilmar Mendes is pushing forward with the hearings on Moro overruling Fachin's decision. The outcome of this internal conflict in Brazil's highest court remains to be seen.

Lula, a former metalworker union leader, served two terms as president from 2003 to 2011. The Workers' Party that he co-founded oversaw an historic period of economic growth and poverty reduction that lifted millions out of poverty. When he left office he enjoyed an approval rating in the mid-80s. Workers' Party candidate Dilma Rousseff won the next two elections.

Having lost four elections in a row, Brazil's traditional right-wing parties were in a panic. Unable to win at the ballot box, they turned to the country's legal system to eject the left from office. "Operation Car Wash" was launched in 2014 as an

investigation into money laundering. The investigation soon turned its sights toward the Workers' Party and Lula, who was accused of corruption based on outrageously flimsy evidence.

Lula was in prison from April 2018 until November 2019. A global movement emerged demanding his freedom, and as more evidence of the sham nature of the Operation Car Wash prosecution became public the pressure grew.

Damage

The campaign led to a breakthrough in court when a judge ordered his freedom, but did not clear him of the criminal convictions that prevented him from running for president. The restoration of his legal rights mark another victory for the movement to free Lula.

Much of the damage wreaked by Moro and Operation Car Wash cannot be undone. Lula was almost certain to win the 2018 election. His imprisonment made him ineligible to run and paved the way for Bolsonaro's victory whose government unleashed a tidal wave of

attacks on workers and oppressed people in the country.

Bolsonaro's Trump-style opposition to the most basic public health measures to address the pandemic has led to more than 270,000 deaths, the second highest in the world. He has taken aim at labour unions and the gains they have won for the working class. Police forces and vigilantes are murdering black and indigenous Brazilians in huge numbers. Bolsonaro has promoted vile, open bigotry and violence against LGBTQ people. His government facilitated the rapid acceleration of the destruction of the Amazon rainforest.

The political coup against Dilma Rousseff in 2016 and Lula's imprisonment in 2018 were the most severe attacks on Brazilian democracy since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985. The consequences were severe for not only the Workers' Party, but the entire Brazilian left. The new legal breakthrough is a major step in overcoming these setbacks and wresting the country from the grips of Brazil's right-wing elites.

Liberation

ICC set to investigate 2014, 2018 Israeli Gaza war crimes

Hajira Asghar

THE International Criminal Court is to officially investigate war crimes in Gaza.

After years of non-member status at the United Nations, the Palestinian territories successfully petitioned for signatory status with the ICC allowing Palestinian Authority officials to file an official complaint against Israel as a last resort in pursuit of accountability.

The scope of the probe is expected to cover allegations of Israeli war crimes in Gaza during the 2014 war, the 2018 Great March of Return clashes, as well as the question of whether or not Hamas rocket fire constitutes war crimes.

During the 2014 Gaza war alone, more than 2,000 Palestinians were killed. Hundreds of other Palestinian protesters, journalists and medics were shot, maimed, and attacked during the 2018 border clashes.

Apart from the investigation into war crimes, the probe aims to address widespread

illegal Israeli settlement of occupied Palestinian territory in the West Bank.

This critical investigation by the ICC into the illegal annexation of Palestinian land marks a new avenue for justice in the pursuit of accountability outside of US-Israeli dominated international institutions that have long undermined Palestinian grievances.

While the Palestinian territories are signatories to the ICC statute, Israel is not. Regardless, the ICC investigates international crimes committed by individuals, not states.

Top Israeli figures like Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Benny Gantz, who are now subject to criminal charges for their role in the coordination of war crimes in Gaza and the illegal settlements, immediately came out in denunciation of the probe as anti-Semitism in an attempt to deflect from their crimes.

In a recorded statement, Netanyahu openly claimed that the state of Israel was "under attack". As internal coordination began among Israeli



Palestinian demonstrators gather east of Gaza City in the Gaza Strip in 2019 during a protest marking the 71st anniversary of the "Nakba" or "Catastrophe" in 1948

officials to limit international travel to avoid detention, the United States quickly came out in defence of Israel by announcing sanctions against various ICC officials. This included placing ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda on the

"specially designated nationals" blacklist.

A similar situation occurred earlier in 2020, as the ICC pledged to investigate the United States for war crimes in Afghanistan. The Trump administration immediately

moved to sanction ICC officials, including banning entry into the United States and freezing their assets.

Criticisms of the ICC itself have arisen in recent years for its failure to take on nations like the United States and

Israel, instead focusing all of its nine legal efforts since 2016 on African nations. With this latest development, however, the ICC has shown a capability of holding powerful Western nations accountable despite threats and harassment toward its members.

While the sanctions had been placed during the Trump administration, the Biden administration's open failure to repeal them reveal a continued commitment to obstruct any form of justice for Palestine.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken recently tweeted in defence of Israel, claiming the United States firmly opposes the investigation into the "Palestinian situation", and that the Biden administration would "continue to uphold our strong commitment to Israel and its security, including by opposing actions that seek to target Israel unfairly".

As the ongoing investigation develops, various Israeli officials are in fear of criminal charges, and the Palestinian cause for justice takes a long overdue step forward.

Liberation

Privileges of power and property protected by bullets and teargas

Billions of people lack basic household, sanitation and healthcare facilities

Vijay Prashad

STENCILLED in red on the walls of Santiago, Chile, is a statement of fact: “Your privileges are not universal” (*tus privilegios no son universales*). This is a factual declaration because the privileges of power and property are not shared across the gaping class divide.

Consider the fact that before the pandemic struck last year, more than three billion people – or half the world’s population – had no access to healthcare. This data appears in a 2017 World Health Organisation (WHO) report that tracks important matters such as access to basic household sanitation (lacked by 2.3 billion people) and medical care for uncontrolled hypertension (suffered by one billion people).

An Oxfam report from January this year, called *The Inequality Virus*, points out that, “the pandemic could cause the biggest increase in inequality since records began, as it precipitates a simultaneous and substantial rise across many countries”.

Before the pandemic, the World Bank calculated that about two billion people “remain in poverty, that is, living below the standards their own societies have set for a dignified life”. Because of the pandemic-triggered jobs crisis, it is likely, the United Nations notes, that half-a-billion more people will sink into poverty by the end of the decade. World Bank numbers concur.

“And with the pandemic,” write World Bank analysts, “the newly poor are more likely to live in congested urban settings and to work in the sectors most affected by lockdowns and mobility restrictions; many are engaged in informal services and not reached by existing social safety nets.” These are the billions who will slide deeper into debt and despair, with education and healthcare slipping away from them as hunger rates rise.

Nothing of what is written above is an exaggeration. All of it comes from researchers and analysts at mainstream organisations, such as the World Health Organisation and the World Bank, neither of



Aleksandr Deyneka (USSR), *Unemployed in Berlin, 1932*

which are known to inflate the ill-effects of capitalist policy. If anything, these organisations have a tendency to minimise the perils of privatisation and corporate-based policies, urging on further cuts to public systems.

During the tenure of Gro Harlem Brundtland at the helm of the WHO (1998-2003), the organisation encouraged the creation of Private-Public Partnerships (PPPs) and Product Development Partnerships (PDPs). The WHO’s emphasis on the private sector – alongside pressure from the International Monetary Fund to cut public sector funding – accelerated the haemorrhaging of public health systems in many of the poorer countries.

When the WHO should have led the fight to deepen public health systems and to create regional and national pharmaceutical production systems, the agency produced PPP platforms, such as the underfunded Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisations (GAVI). Along with other agencies, GAVI is now spluttering forward to provide COVID-19 vaccines to low-income countries. The people who produced global austerity, a desert of possibilities, only now recognise the perils of the inequality virus.

Because of the pandemic-triggered jobs crisis, it is likely, the United Nations notes, that half-a-billion more people will sink into poverty by the end of the decade. World Bank numbers concur

To be anxious about inequality is insufficient. A range of possible, commonsense reforms are being demanded by people’s organisations across the world, which include:

- Free Universal Healthcare. This has been achieved in poorer countries like Costa Rica and Thailand as well as in socialist states and should, therefore, be the objective of every country on the planet.
- A People’s Vaccine. Momentum toward the availability of a people’s vaccine is growing, which should include not only open access to all patents for the COVID-19 vaccine, but also the creation of pharmaceutical production facilities in the low-income states and in the public sector.

These two basic measures could be easily financed by the money now exported to service odious debts. But such logical solutions that would provide immediate relief to people are set aside. Despite

the strong words about the problems posed by austerity, more austerity will be demanded, and more social disorder will be produced.

Rather than focus attention on the actual problems that the planet’s people face and acknowledge the democratic demands coming from people’s organisations and manifestations, government after government has taken refuge in undemocratic behaviour. For example, the farmers and agricultural workers in India continue their months-long protest against three anti-farmer laws pushed through by the extreme right Indian government. The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi knows that its commitment to big capital – personified in the wealthy Adani and Ambani families – prevents it from any serious negotiation with the farmers and agricultural workers. Instead, the government has tried to portray the farmers and agricultural workers as terrorists

and as anti-national. When this did not work, the government went after reporters and media houses that amplified the farmers’ struggle. Many who have reported on, participated in, or shown solidarity with, protestors have been arrested – such as in the cases of journalist Mandeep Punia, worker rights activist Nodeep Kaur and activist Disha Ravi, who created and shared a toolkit to support the farmers.

Finally, in an act of lawfare, the government conducted a 113-hour raid against NewsClick, one of the key media houses to cover the protests; accusations of money-laundering tried to sully the name of NewsClick, which has earned the trust of millions of readers and viewers with its frontline reporting that lifted up the sentiments and demands of the agriculturalists.

Meanwhile, India’s Ministry of Education released an order on January 15 that required any online conference or webinar that might discuss India’s “internal matters” and those that receive foreign sponsorship to seek prior government approval.

Similarly, the French government started a process to investigate academic research that pro-

motes “Islamist-leftist” ideas and thereby, according to the Minister of Higher Education, “corrupts society”. In the name of order, freedom of speech is easily set aside and the fragility of the formal nature of democracy is exposed. The attack on NewsClick, alongside the investigation of academics in France, reveals the yawning gap between democratic ideals and the practice of statecraft.

Despite the US\$364 billion *prêt garanti par l’État* (PGE) programme to provide relief for the French population, there is a serious long-term problem of inequality and joblessness. Rather than focus on this, the French government has whipped around to fight an illusory adversary – Islamists.

In the same way, faced with mass dislocation and social suffering deepened by the pandemic, the Indian government is prosecuting a war against farmers and media platforms that are sensitive to the issues raised by the farmers. Both these formal democracies retain their constitutions and their laws, their elections and their public hearings – all part of the panoply of modern democracies. They fail, however, to actually listen to the suffering of the people, let alone the demands made by the people. They remain insensitive to the possibility of a more viable future for our societies.

During the period of the military dictatorship in Pakistan, the communist poet Habib Jalib wrote:

*Kahin gas ka dhuhan hae kahin
golian ki baarish
Shab-e-ehd-e-kum nigahi
tujhay kis tarah sarahein
Teargas smoke is in the air,
bullets are raining around.
How can I praise you, the
night of the period of myopia?*

Your privileges are not universal, since your privileges earn you – the few – the vast bulk of social wealth; when the people put forward our views, you fire teargas and bullets. You believe that your myopia will allow your night time to last forever.

We praise the hopes and struggles of the people, whose desire to advance history will cut through your repression.

Tricontinental



Jagdish Swaminathan (India), *Untitled, 1974*



José Balmes (Chile), *Lota el Silencio, 2007*



DR FRED M'MEMBE

INCOMING PRESIDENT



#REALCHANGE

JOIN THE PARTY • DOWNLOAD OUR MANIFESTO • MEET US ON THE WEB • LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

To join the party: contact us at the address or on the phone number below, find us at www.socialistpartyzambia.com or look us up on Facebook at www.facebook.com/socialistpartyzambia

You can download our manifesto here: <http://socialistpartyzambia.com/manifesto-2>

LUS/10545, off Lumumba Road, P. O. Box 38278, Lusaka, Zambia. Tel: 09 5662 6995

www.socialistpartyzambia.com