

Winnie's dismissal

An attack on struggle?

Workers' Solidarity Federation

1995

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In April, Winnie Mandela, Deputy Minister of Arts, Technology and Culture was dismissed from the Government of National Unity. Winnie was one of the so-called “populists” in the ANC.

She is well-known for her criticisms of the gravy train and of the ANC’s failure to deliver on its promises. This was why she was freed, and not because she was “undisciplined” or “corrupt”.

But who was behind the attack? The capitalist press had a field day trying Winnie, just as it had when similar charges were placed against Peter Mokaba. The racist NP also jumped on the band wagon.

Because of this, some believe that the bosses want to attack and discredit Winnie (and the ANC) before the local elections. It has even been suggested that the bosses’ newspapers are trying to dictate to the ANC government.

ANC LEADS

But the truth is that the ANC never defended Winnie against these attacks. It was the ANC who led the offensive. Winnie was a thorn in the ANC’s side. She was an embarrassment who was “undisciplined” enough to condemn the fact that the ANC Ministers and MPs had achieved nothing in their period of office, except enrich themselves from the state coffers. The ANC was purging the populists.

The idea that the bosses are somehow scared of the ANC and want to undermine it before the local elections is ridiculous. The ANC has proved a loyal defender of the bosses against workers struggle. Rocky Malebane Metsing’s claim that the capitalists were trying to undermine the so-called “national- democratic revolution” is just laughable.

CAPITALISTS

We do believe that other GNU ministers like de Klerk are more worthy of dismissal. De Klerk and his cronies in the NP are guilty of large-scale terrorism against the Black working class. These racists must of course be punished.

But sacking de Klerk or the NP will not change the nature of the GNU.

The ANC gives priority to capitalism over dealing with the legacy of apartheid. This is because it is part of the capitalist state apparatus. It wants to “stabilize” South Africa, attract foreign investment and restore economic growth. This will supposedly help fund the RDP and benefit the historically oppressed.

So it has been the ANC ministers who have been the prime actors in the crushing of working class struggles. The ANC holds the Police, Education and Labour portfolios.

NO ALTERNATIVE

Winnie raised important issues facing the working class. But she does not offer an alternative for her impoverished supporters. She is herself a rich person. She is as much a beneficiary of the GNU gravy- train, earning R360 000 a year.

When push comes to shove she will stand against socialism and defend the capitalist wage system. We must make the revolution for ourselves!

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Retrieved on 29th October 2021 from struggle.ws
Published in *Workers Solidarity* Number 1 May/June 1995.

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