

**A PRESENTATION DELIVERED BY CDE NELVIS QEKEMA TO THE ONLINE POLITICAL WORKSHOP
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Topic: Contradictions and Inner-Party Struggles

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not politically safe to have a member of AZAPO who is not grounded in the dynamics of Contradictions and Inner-Party Struggles. Everything is, and is about Contradictions. As you are reading this contribution, know that you are a Contradiction living with Contradictions in a Contradiction. Just your reading of this contribution plunges you in a Contradiction in motion. AZAPO is in itself a Contradiction. We will set out to break down and explain these seemingly complex things.

However, what we can say is that Contradictions are a bit theoretical and philosophical, whereas the Inner-Party Struggles are kind of practical. Inner-Party Struggles are a platform or scope within which Contradictions take place. Therefore, Inner-Party Struggles are Contradictions.

2. CONTRADICTIONS

Contradictions, which is sometimes called Dialectics, is the theory of development that holds that everything is in constant motion. That never-ending motion takes place inside (internally) and outside (externally) of the thing or process. This constant motion brings about growth and development as a result of the progression of the conflict of the thing's internal but united opposites. The point that is made here is that everything is made up of opposites that are forever in conflict. These opposites, which are united and interconnected, and in a never-ending conflict, are responsible for the life, growth and development of the thing. As the term itself suggests, Contradictions are about conflict, tension or fight that takes place inside and outside a thing.

This is how Mao Tse Tung explains the relationship between the external and internal Contradictions: "External causes are the condition of change, and internal causes are the basis of change, and the external causes become operative through internal causes". What this means is that the real being (essence) of a thing is determined by its internal Contradictions – the basis of

change - whereas the external Contradictions of a thing work through its internal Contradictions as and when it affects and influences the thing. To illustrate this point, Mao makes an example with the hen that has to sit on its eggs (incubation process) to provide warmth for a specific amount of time (20 to 21 days) for the chicken to hatch. Through this illustration, Mao is telling us that the hen and its warmth merely provide the external Contradictions to the eggs. The hen and its warmth are not the ones that determine that the chicken, and nothing else, will come out of the eggs. If that was so, a hen could sit on a stone for 21 days and a chick would hatch. We know that this is impossible because the internal dynamics of a stone are not the same with the internal dynamics of an egg, which is the basis of change that hatches a chick.

Let us try this example. A donor gives AZAPO R1 billion with conditions that AZAPO must win the Elections. This represents external Contradictions, which is a condition of the required change (winning Elections). However, this R1 billion is not a guarantee that AZAPO will win the Elections. For this R1 billion (external condition) to be effective, it has to work through the internal dynamics of AZAPO (basis for change). If AZAPO's message does not make sense to the voters; or that AZAPO does not have an election machinery; or that AZAPO does not have an energetic and hardworking membership; or that AZAPO is led by an inexperienced Leadership that is ever-quarreling among themselves; or that AZAPO is not a brand with an appeal to the voters; even R100 billion will not cause AZAPO to win the Elections. Even if the R100 billion sits on AZAPO for 21 days, no chicken will hatch from AZAPO.

Another example would be Zimbabwe offering AZAPO military camps, arms and training with the condition that AZAPO must repossess the land and liberate the people of Azania. All that amounts to external Contradictions (condition of change). You will still need a strong AZAPO with good and reliable cadres to be trained as Guerrillas. Once that happens, the conditions of the struggle must be ripe and conducive for an armed struggle inside Azania. All these are the internal Contradictions, or the basis of change that will determine whether or not AZAPO repossesses the land and liberate the people of Azania.

3. CATEGORIES OF CONTRADICTIONS

The Universality of Contradiction: The Universality of Contradiction speaks to the fact that Contradiction is Absolute and Permanent. There is nothing in the universe and the world that is free of Contradiction (contradictionless). Everything or process has internal Contradictions (basis of change) and external Contradictions (condition of change). While this Contradiction is absolute and permanent in the sense that it consists of the united but conflicting opposites, that conflict is the determinant of the thing's unique nature and the driver of its constant change.

The Particularity of Contradiction: This is what makes a thing different from others. It is the essence of a thing – its real being or unique reality. It is the internal Contradictions in the egg, not the hen and its warmth that hatch the chicken. Assisted by the hen and its warmth over 21 days, it remains the united but conflicting opposites inside the egg that give rise to the chicken. That conflict and change that take place inside the egg constitute the Particularity of the Contradiction. These Contradictions are particular to the egg, and they must not be generalised to think that a stone, which has different Contradictions that are particular to it, will give us a chick if a hen sits on it over 21 days.

The Principality of Contradiction: There are a number of opposites and conflicts taking place in a thing. That makes us to differentiate between Principal Contradictions and Non-Principal Contradictions. Not that Non-Principal Contradictions do not matter, but the decisive and driving contradictions are the Principal Contradictions. Let us try and find our examples in society where there are a number of social classes. These social classes are characterised by Internal Contradictions (intra-conflicts) and External Contradictions (inter-conflicts) in relation to other social classes in, for instance, a capitalist state like we have in South Africa. These social classes range from Peasants (farm workers), Lumpen Proletariat (jobless youth), Proletariat (workers), Petit Bourgeoisie (intelligentsia), Comprador Bourgeoisie (managerial layer), Bourgeoisie (capitalists), International Bourgeoisie (imperialists). These social classes are what you generally have in capitalist states. However, the Principal Contradictions take place between the capitalists and the workers. All the Contradictions in and outside the other social classes are Non-Principal. The capitalists and the workers do not necessarily like each other. But they do not have a choice. They are the united but forever conflicting opposites we are talking about. Their conflict is what drives and shapes the capitalist state. The capitalist sees the worker as part of the production costs. Roughly put, the capitalist needs to reduce the production costs for her or him to make a profit. Therefore, he also needs to reduce the wages of the workers to the bare minimum for her or him to make super profits. Yet the worker feels the wage is never enough to take care of her or his needs and that of the family. For reasons we will later explain, AZAPO aligns itself with the working class as the driving force of the liberation and socialist struggle. White racism has made AZAPO to align more with the Black section of the working class.

The Antagonism of Contradiction: Not all the Contradictions in the social classes are Antagonistic. By Antagonistic Contradictions we mean those class differences or conflicts that are not reconcilable (Irreconcilable Differences) due to the diametrically opposed interests of the classes that constitute the Principal Contradictions. This conflict can never be mitigated because it is Antagonistic. The only time it can be resolved is when the workers overthrow the capitalist to form a new social order like a socialist state where the workers rule over the capitalists.

The Resolution of Contradiction: Like we have said above, the resolution of the Antagonistic Contradictions between the workers and the capitalists can materialise only when the workers overthrow the capitalists and their capitalist state and establish a New Order (liberated and socialist state), which will be characterised by the change of power standing, and social roles where the workers become the rulers, and the capitalists the ruled.

The Exchange of Places for Contradictions: is when the workers take over as the new rulers. However, do not forget that we have said Contradictions are Absolute and Permanent. Therefore, the resolution of the Contradictions between the workers and the capitalists is not the end of Contradictions. The establishment of the New Order brings with it New Contradictions. These conflicts and changes take place over a long period of time. It does not mean there are no changes taking place in a capitalist state only because we have not yet attained a socialist state. There are a lot of changes throughout the struggle where the workers and the people make gains. These are called Quantitative Changes because we have not yet achieved our ultimate goal of the repossession of the land, liberation and socialism. The changes may be good, but they are still happening under the rule of capitalists in a capitalist state. It is only when the workers and the people take over and establish a New Order that we can talk of a Qualitative Change. The familiar example is that water does not just boil on being heated on a stove. It takes a lot of time as the water molecules are being heated, and the warm water rising as the cold one goes to the bottom of the pot. These quantitative changes reach a point of saturation when the water boils to a point of qualitatively changing into a state of vapour as it continues to be heated.

4. CONTRADICTIONS IN SOCIETY

The different societies are sometimes called Social Formations, Modes of Production or Stages of Production. These Social Formations are shaped by their specific nature of production that takes place in them. The examples of such Social Formation are Communalism (Primitive Communism), Slave Society, Feudalism, Capitalism, Socialism and Communism.

Every society has Productive Forces (instruments to create wealth). These Forces of Production are used by human beings to take advantage of the nature, and develop themselves and their society through the creation of goods (commodities). By the Productive Forces or Factors of Production is meant the land, labour, capital, tools, machinery, companies and techniques by means of which economic goods and services are created. These Productive Forces are united with their opposite with which they stand in conflict. This opposite is the Productive Relations.

These are not just any type of relationships. These are the relationships that are formed as human beings are occupied in the work of production. That is why they are called Productive Relations or Relations of Productions. According to Karl Marx, these are the sum total of social relationships that people must enter into in order to survive, produce and reproduce their means of life. An example would be between the bosses and workers, capitalists and proletariat, landowners and farm workers, or serfs and feudal lords.

We must take into account that the change of new and superior Productive Forces may sometimes result in the change of that particular society (Mode of Production or Social Formation). The new and advanced tools are either discovered or created by the human beings involved in the process of production. An example that has been made is that a hoe may help produce food that is able to feed the clan/family, while an ox-driven plough may speed up production such that there is also surplus to exchange some crops to other clans/families to get what the clan does not have. That is called the Barter System. Further, the discovery of the steam engine was able to change the Feudal State into the Capitalist/Bourgeois State. That change of the Productive Forces also brings a corresponding change of the Productive Relations.

Now that we have described the Productive Forces and the Productive Relations, and further explained that they are the united opposites that are in a permanent conflict (Contradictions), we may proceed to state that the combination of the Productive Forces and the Productive Relations gives us what is called Substructure or the Economic Base of society. There is also the Superstructure of society. This one involves other things that do not have a direct relation with production. These would be Culture, Morality, Government, Education, Family, Politics, Law, Philosophy, Media, Science, Religion or Metaphysics. Superstructure is the domain of Ideology. Marx views it as all that “men say, imagine [and] conceive” in a particular era within the context of a Social Formation or Mode of Production. We now know that a society consists of the Substructure and the Superstructure. The Absoluteness and Permanence of Contradictions apply to the Substructure and Superstructure, which are in conflict.

As we have said, Capitalism has its own Internal Contradictions, which are shaped and driven in the Principal Contradiction between the Capitalists and the Workers. Remember that we have said the Contradictions at this level are Antagonistic. The Capitalists constitute the ruling class, whereas the Workers and the rest of the social classes are the ruled classes. This form of Contradiction or Conflict is generally referred to as the Class Struggle, which result in an Economic Crisis in the capitalist state. This Class Struggle is resolved through the Revolution that is led by the Black Working Class in the context of Azania. You will remember that it is white racism that has coopted the white section of the Working Class and stripped it of its potential revolutionary content. In that case, the white section of the Working Class becomes what is called a Labour

Aristocracy that lacks the necessary revolutionary consciousness. The Black Working Class, in alliance with the other social classes, remains the Agents of Change that becomes the driving force of the struggle for Land, Liberation and Socialism. Led by the vanguard party, which is AZAPO in this case, the revolution should lead to a New Order we know as socialism. Unless guided by a political force that is armed with a Revolutionary Theory (Black Consciousness and Socialism), the struggle may easily be aborted and bring about Reformation, instead of Transformation.

5. EXAMPLES OF THE UNITY OF OPPOSITES

Workers and Capitalists	Truth and Falsity
Substructure and Superstructure	Girl and Boy
Rich and Poor	Man and Woman
Theory and Practice	Parent and Child
Perceptual Knowledge and Rational Knowledge	High and Low
Liberation and Bondage	Light and Darkness
Freedom and Oppression	Pain and Relief
Ignorance and Knowledge	Life and Death

6. INNER-PARTY STRUGGLES

We have said that the Inner-Party Struggles are a form of Contradictions taking place inside a political organisation like AZAPO. By its very nature, the structure of AZAPO is hierarchical from the lowest Unit, Branch, Region, Province, Standing Committee, National Council, Central Committee to the highest National Congress. Within each structure, there is also hierarchy. For instance, a Branch has Members and the Leadership, which is the Executive Committee. There is also a hierarchy in the Branch Executive Committee. In the Regions and Provinces, you also have hierarchies in the form of Branches, REC, Regional Council and Regional Congress on the part of the Region, while the order will be Branches, Regions, PEC, Provincial Council and Provincial Congress for the Province.

To manage the Contradictions (Conflict) arising out of this broad hierarchy, AZAPO uses the principle of Democratic Centralism. In a nutshell, Democratic Centralism directs that the Lower Structures must submit to the Higher Structures, and the Individual to the Collective, and the Minority to the Majority. A decision taken by the Branch is binding to all Members of that Branch,

and no one individual has the power to singlehandedly change that decision. If your view was defeated in a meeting, you have to drop your view and follow the decision of the Branch (Majority). You may even be mandated to go to the media and speak in favour of the decision with which you are not comfortable - since yours was defeated. The hierarchy comes into play here. The Lower Structures cannot change or ignore the decisions of the Higher Structures. The same principles apply to the Individual and the Collective, and the Minority and the Majority. The principle of Democratic Centralism is itself a form of a Contradiction in that it is the unity of conflicting opposites, which are Democracy and Centralism.

Inner-Party Struggles are also Ideological Struggles that take place inside AZAPO and its Organs. Despite the fact that AZAPO has one Ideology and one Political Line, AZAPO Members are recruited from within the capitalist society, and therefore reflect this society's ideological influences and shortcomings. These Members are recruited from different social classes and different educational backgrounds. You can already see that AZAPO is full of Contradictions (Conflict) right from the hierarchical structure and Members from different and conflicting backgrounds. Let us add that AZAPO Members are of Rural and Urban backgrounds; Matriarchal and Patriarchal orientation; Parental and Children standing. In this regard, and if AZAPO is not careful, it is possible that New Members in big numbers may contaminate the Political Line of the organisation with the "alien" influences with which they come into the organisation. That does not mean New Members should be avoided. In fact, AZAPO does need New Members to rock the boat with their fresh and new ideas and challenge the old ways through which things are done in the organisation. That is a healthy and necessary Contradiction (Conflict) that will help the organisation to grow and develop. All that is needed is that the New Members must be inducted into the organisation through Political Education and Leadership Training. In simple terms, this means that they must be socialised and cultured into AZAPO. It is advisable that the New Members should have the humility to want to learn and humble themselves to the new challenges and institutional environment in AZAPO. Even if a New Member may be highly educated, or was highly senior in the political organisation from which they come, they would still have to be socialised into the AZAPO ways of doing things. There are no readymades. Short cuts can prove disruptive and disastrous for AZAPO.

Having spotted the challenges of New Members, we should never make the mistake of thinking there are no challenges with Old Members. Sometimes they become complacent and take AZAPO for granted. Some of them tend to resist change and the new ways of doing things. To them, AZAPO is what it was. When you hear somebody complaining that "AZAPO has changed", or that "AZAPO is not what it used to be", you must know you are dealing with conservatism that wants to keep AZAPO stagnant. These old Members may want to block the progress of New Members who distinguish themselves through hard work and shine on arrival. Old Members do sometimes

leave the organisation for one reason or another. Nonetheless, take note that Contradictions (Conflict) are to be found between Old and New Members.

That notwithstanding, Inner-Party Struggles cannot be wished away. They are the essence of an organisation. They help drive the growth and development of an organisation. Though the Inner-Party Struggles are also an instrument to resolve Contradictions and Conflicts in our AZAPO, they have the potential to destroy AZAPO if not well managed. For the Inner-Party (Ideological) Struggles to function progressively, they need to operate within the environment of Inner-Party Democracy.

7. ALIEN TENDENCIES IN AZAPO

By way of an example, we list a few alien tendencies that might be found in AZAPO:

Commandism: This is a tendency where an organisation believes it is better-equipped than the masses in terms of thinking and understanding the struggle. The temptation is for the organisation to run ahead and leave the masses behind. The language used by the organisation may be high-flown and not understood by the masses. Instead of doing simple things with the masses, the organisation wants to do complicated things without the masses.

Close-Doorism: Here we are dealing with a tendency where the Membership and the Leadership treat the organisation as their “private property” and keep the masses and the public out of the organisation. They forget that AZAPO is a Movement, a People’s Organisation. Beyond its Members, AZAPO belongs to the people. AZAPO must be responsive to what the people think about it.

Tailism: This is the opposite of the tendency of Commandism. While in Commandism the organisation runs ahead of the masses, in Tailism it is left behind by the masses, who are a step ahead of the organisation. AZAPO must not be ahead, nor must it be behind the masses. It must be with the masses, and move along with them as the Vanguard Movement of the people.

Departmentalism: This tendency tends to be biased to the part, and treats it as the whole to the detriment of the organisation. This happens when, for instance, a Province of the organisation regards itself as so important that it must be the leading influence of the organisation. It may not be happy if the Leadership of the organisation comes from outside that Province. Sometimes, this is referred to as Regionalism. Departmentalism may also be in place where a Secretariat or Formation of the organisation behaves as though it is a competitor or a rival of the organisation. Departmentalism may soon worsen into factionalism.

Militarism: This tendency is active where the trained Guerrillas of the organisation began to behave as though they were important and superior to the political Leadership of the organisation. In this example, AZANLA would view itself as superior and a Mother Body to AZAPO. In no time, you would hear the (former) Guerrillas referring to their fellow Combatants who are not trained combatants as “civilians”. The soldiers who may be understood if they referred to the rest of the nation’s citizens as “civilians” are the country’s soldiers that belong to a regular army. While they trained militarily, AZANLA Combatants had a bias towards being political activists. They were highly politicised Guerrillas who knew that the Armed Struggle played an auxiliary or secondary role to the Political Struggle. Again, you can see the Contradiction between the Political and Military Formations. However, there is some form of Departmentalism in this Contradiction.

“Digitalism”: We have coined this term to refer to the tendency where Comrades are locked in the social networks to the extent of neglecting to form and belong to the physical Branches of AZAPO. Every Structure creates a WhatsApp Group or a Facebook Page where Comrades discuss the important business of the organisation. The human touch is lost, in this instance. Structures and activism become so digitised that the AZAPO Branch, Region, Province, Standing Committee and Central Committee become virtual. The Membership and the Leadership become virtual. The liberation struggle becomes virtual. Election campaigning becomes virtual. This is the problem of Digital Revolutionaries. Social networks are important in facilitating organisational work. Even so, they are merely a means towards an end, and should never be promoted to being the end in themselves.

“Wheelbarrowism”: This is yet another term we coined. It explains the tendency of Comrades who expect that they should be transported by AZAPO as and when there are political activities to be embarked upon. But who is AZAPO? AZAPO is the Membership and its Supporters. There is no AZAPO that exists separately from its Members. If AZAPO has any money, it presumably gets that money from the contributions made by the Membership. It is not just unfair, but reactionary for the Membership to expect to be “Wheelbarrowed” around the country to embark on protests and attend the events of AZAPO.

8. CONDITIONS OF AZAPO MEMBERSHIP

We sometimes make the mistake of thinking it is enough to pay Membership and Subscriptions Fees? That is never enough. It is just the starting point. Some Comrades don’t even meet their financial obligations. However, we need to be physically available to attend meetings and make inputs. We also need to get involved in the physical implementation of the organisation’s Programmes. This is possible when we commit to the AZAPO Constitution, Principles, Political Programme, Political Line and Values.

The Constitution stipulates that we must “Undertake individually and collectively, a constant study of AZAPO’s Political Programme to remould outlook and political consciousness”. It enjoins us to “resolutely criticise and correct errors and left and right deviations in theory and practice”. While the Constitution instructs us to “subject to AZAPO Discipline at all times”, it also cautions us to “never betray, sabotage or subvert the plans, programmes, projects and any activities of AZAPO”.

9. AZAPO PRINCIPLES

There are a number of AZAPO Principles like Anti-Racism, Anti-Sexism and Anti-Capitalism. Nevertheless, we choose to single out the ones in the Constitution.

Democratic Centralism: Lower Structures must subject to Higher Structures; and the Minority to the Majority; Personal Interests to Organisational Interests.

Collective Leadership: The Leadership should act as a Unit. It owns up to, and defend their Collective Decision. No one must contradict, or act against the collective decision of the organisation.

Recall and Active Participation: A Leader who fails to perform due to negligence should be removed from their positions. Leaders must be active in the implementation of AZAPO Programmes.

Criticism and Self-Criticism: Criticise others to build, and criticise yourself to grow.

10. CONCLUSION

We trust that Comrades will not treat this discussion as a once-off event. It must be a continuous discussion in our Branches and smaller political education groups. It does mean that we must also take the responsibility of doing some further reading to improve our understanding of the topics. Slide Presentation and an Audio-Visual Recording of our presentation is available from the Head Office.

Thank You.