



## The Crisis of Croninism : A Response from the 9 COSATU Affiliates : Look in the Mirror Comrade Jeremy!

Jeremy Cronin has once more done his masters bidding and published a further attack on the elected leadership of NUMSA entitled **Irvin Gymnastics - the devious art of political contortionism**. He has also attacked the Nine Affiliates calling for a Special National Congress. We are promised more from him to follow, and so we will wait to answer in detail, but cannot resist the opportunity to help clarify his muddled thinking on a few of the matters he raises.

The article makes for interesting reading for those who need to remind themselves of one of the characteristics of the discredited Stalinism that Comrade Joe Slovo was courageous enough to oppose. Here we have the liberal use of quotes from the texts of Marx, Lenin and others to justify a certain crude and vulgar critique. And yet there is a total inability to self reflect and self criticise and to ask the simple question of whether the SACP, who Comrade Jeremy represents, is itself free of the criticisms that are being levelled against others. It's time for you and the SACP to look in the mirror Comrade Jeremy and we warn you, it is not a pretty picture!

In making his attacks on NUMSA and the other Eight Affiliates, Comrade Cronin lays bare his complete inability to observe the world around him. Does he mention the fact that South Africa has the highest disparity on the planet between rich and poor after twenty years of democracy? No! Does he mention that unemployment amongst young people in our townships is near 70%? No! Does he acknowledge that every day there are on average 34 serious protests in our poorer communities? No! Does he mention that the capitalist class in South Africa is enjoying an almost unparalleled period of accumulation? No! Does he acknowledge that without funds from Unions over the last twenty years, including from those unions he now attacks, the SACP would have been completely bankrupt? No! Does he dare admit that there are thousands of workers, and many who were once close to the SACP, who are completely frustrated with the state embedded orientation of the SACP and its cheer leading for a leadership that is corrupt and anything but progressive, being politically wedded to neo-liberal thinking and action? No he does not. We could go on! As with most

recent writings of Comrade Jeremy, it is what he does not say that is more revealing than what he actually tries to say. We say, look in the mirror Comrade Jeremy!

Instead of thinking for himself, as revolutionaries must do, it appears that Comrade Cronin allows himself to be wheeled out to issue forth regurgitated innuendos, half truths, untruths and plain lies in a desperate attempt to discredit the NUMSA leadership and to ingratiate himself with his friends in Government and in sections of the Alliance.

For this, Comrade Cronin is in serious danger of being known in future as **Comrade Cronyism!** (Cronyism : Encarta Dictionary definition : 'Doing favours for friends. Special treatment and preference given to friends and colleagues, especially in politics'). He is already known in workers circles as the Deputy Minister responsible for E-Tolls!

Comrade Jeremy displays a staggering ignorance of the motives of the Nine Affiliates and we wish he had read our statements and clarified for himself what we are campaigning for. If as he says :

*The vast majority of the worker memberships of these unions (and indeed of NUMSA itself) while they may feel sympathy for cde Vavi, do not support Jim's anti-ANC, anti-SACP views.*

Well Comrade Jeremy there is of course only one way to test who is right and who is wrong in terms of COSATU members, and that is to call for a **Special National Congress of COSATU!** This is one of our key demands and is supposed to be guaranteed by the COSATU Constitution. Why doesn't Comrade Jeremy support this demand, and stop making what we know to be half-baked presumptions about what workers want? In other words, Comrade Jeremy, stop being a stooge for your cronies and get with the working class comrade!

A Special National Congress will give the COSATU membership the right to decide whether they want Comrade Vavi back as General Secretary, to decide what type of leadership they want to take the Federation forward, and perhaps most importantly, to decide how they relate to the SACP, ANC and other forces in the struggle for a socialist society . These are proudly democratic demands. We are certain that if Comrade Jeremy were more sure of his facts and analysis he would be calling for them too.

Comrade Jeremy is well known to have apologised in the past for making statements that could have embarrassed the ANC, and perhaps endangered the standing of his own Party within the Alliance. Apologising for your mistakes can be a progressive action, but becoming an apologist for the actions of others is something very different indeed.

For our part, the Nine Affiliates will continue to campaign for a Special National Congress, for the Reinstatement of Comrade Zwelinzima Vavi, and for an end to the attacks on NUMSA and the rest of the Unions who want to see a vibrant, independent, worker-controlled and militant COSATU. The reaction we are receiving from all over the country convinces us that we are winning!

**Issued by the Nine COSATU Affiliates calling for a Special National Congress, the Reinstatement of Comrade Zwelinzima Vavi, and stopping the victimisation of NUMSA and the Nine Affiliates.**