

French Communist Party backs killing of South African miners

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21 August 2012

The *World Socialist Web Site* notes with contempt the French Communist Party's defense of the massacre of 34 striking South African platinum miners by police at Marikana.

After sympathetically quoting South African President Jacob Zuma and cynically expressing its "indignation and horror" at the violence, the brief communiqué published August 17 by the Communist Party (PCF) states: "The PCF reaffirms its solidarity with all the political and trade union forces in South Africa in their struggle to reduce inequality, for progress and for social justice under the true rule of law."

It is public knowledge that the "political and trade union forces" defended by the PCF ordered and defended the massacre. The African National Congress (ANC) government's national police commissioner, Riah Phiyega, declared after the massacre that she "gave police the responsibility to execute the task they needed to do." She opposed any prosecution of those responsible for the miners' deaths, saying, "This is no time for finger-pointing."

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), whose former president Cyril Ramaphosa has gone on to amass a fortune of \$275 million, has opposed the miners' strike. NUM General Secretary Frans Baleni defended the police, stating, "The police were patient, but these people were armed with dangerous weapons."

The PCF's fellow Stalinists in the South African Communist Party (SACP), who historically have supported the ANC, dismissed the police killing of strikers as "worker-to-worker violence."

The massacre of South African miners is an event of international significance, testifying to the murderous hostility of bourgeois "left" parties and the trade union apparatus towards any militant movement of the

working class that threatens to escape the suffocating grip of the official unions. It is also a sharp warning to the working class internationally.

By praising police toadies in South Africa as fighters for justice and the rule of law, the PCF is signaling that it and PCF-affiliated unions like the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) will not object to similar acts of police violence to crush strikes in Europe.

The rest of France's petty-bourgeois "left," which operates within the CGT and with the PCF on the periphery of France's social democratic government, is maintaining a telling silence on this outrage. As of this writing, five days after the killings, the New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA) has still not commented on the Marikana massacre on its web site.

As for the Workers Struggle (LO) group, the CGT's most dogged promoter, it has published only one brief, eight-line news dispatch on the massacre. LO is totally silent on the role of the ANC and NUM, but concludes: "Whatever some kind souls may claim, the class struggle is still present, sometimes ferocious. This is proof."

LO's platitudes are calculated to allow the French petty-bourgeois pseudo-left to maintain its political support for the organizers of the Marikana massacre.



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