



WORKS

A ZACF anarchist in the Landless People's Movement **Lekhetho Mtetwa** *(2013)*

Lekhetho Mtetwa, a member of the Zabalaza Anarchist Communist Front (ZACF) discusses his role in the Landless People's Movement (LPM), formed in South Africa in 2001. While the LPM was affiliated to Via Campesina, and linked to the Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra: MST), its activities centred on urban squatter communities, rather than farm occupations or organising alternative agrarian systems. Then-living in a squatter camp in Protea South, Soweto, Mtetwa served as the local secretary; by 2013, this was the key LPM branch. Several attempts were made by political parties to capture Protea South LPM, using patronage and promises, leading to the eventual implosion of the branch. Mtetwa provides an essential analysis of the rise and fall of the LPM, and the role that anarchists can play in such social movements.

Part 1: Lekhetho Mtetwa:

The Landless People's Movement fights for the people's rights

I am from the Landless People's Movement (LPM), a movement that engages the people on land issues. People have been protesting for their right to land, while the state is trying to privatise and control land, and also push shack-dwellers away from the cities. The eviction of people is ongoing, so we fight for the "right to the city," and for the right to land and housing.

Another issue we address is unemployment: land is not enough. The workers and the unemployed should occupy factories and workplaces, so that we can have jobs and meet our needs.

What does the word 'state' mean? The state rests on violence against the working class. At election times, politicians make empty promises, but after the elections they deploy violence against us, the working class. Our structures have been attacked by police and by vigilantes. In 2004, we had comrades who were arrested and tortured when they campaigned at election time, saying "No Land! No Vote!" In 2007, on the 3rd September, we were barricading roads, and we lost one comrade: he was knocked over by a van that rode away. The police attacked us, although we were exercising and demanding our rights.

