



WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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The masses in Alexandra on the march for houses for all



Editorial

We start with an apology for the long delay of this issue. The rapid pace of events forces us to concentrate on four central points for this edition: Firstly that in July the Workers International Vanguard League (WIVL) will be in merger talks with the Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (FLT); secondly and thirdly the revolutionary eruptions in Zimbabwe and Madagascar hold important lessons for the working class; and we present a brief analysis of the 22nd April 2009 General Elections. Articles show imperialism capitalism in deep decline.

The stagnation of the world economy over the past 3 decades has accelerated the decline of capitalism and has plunged the world ever deeper into barbarism. Inter-imperialist rivalry has sharpened and caused many wars and terrible hardship for the world working class. 80% of the world's arable land is in the hands of imperialism. The wars in the DRC, the war against the Palestinians, the wars in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan and now Pakistan, the deliberate starvation of billions of people, are all reflections of the increasing crisis of capitalism. The restoration of capitalism in the Stalinist bloc of countries have not been enough to take capitalism out of its crisis, even though the suffering of the working class there has multiplied. The greater proletarianization of the masses across Africa, India and China, the shattering of the world Stalinist apparatus, have opened up the prospect for the world Socialist revolution. The deepening crisis has also meant the privileges of the working class in the imperialist centres and in Israel are coming under severe pressure. The prospect of revolutionary working class internationalism on a mass scale are thus greater. As imperialism-capitalism, through various mechanisms, attacks the gains of the working class, mass resistance by the working class has started. Although the world Stalinist apparatus has been shattered, Stalinism still controls many trade unions throughout the world.

Where the class struggles have been sharp, reformist trade union leaders have spearheaded the setting up of Popular Front governments such as the PT in Brazil, the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance in South Africa, the MDC in Zimbabwe, the MMD in Zambia. The purpose of these capitalist governments is to use their support among the trade unions to sidetrack the workers' struggle for Socialism, to prevent the working class from taking power directly. Other forms of government which imperialism uses and tolerates are Bonapartist regimes such as Chavez in Venezuela. Here the General Chavez poses as an above class figure, appearing to balance the demands of capital and the demands of the working class, in order to save capitalist relations itself. While the intensified class struggles in Africa has led to imperialism to use bourgeois democracy as a means of control; they have realized, after being defeated in their military quest to subdue the working class in Iraq, that force alone might lose them control of the entire Middle East and could not only weaken them across the globe but also in all the imperialist centres. This is one of the lessons that imperialism has also drawn from their attacks in Gaza in December-January. US imperialism, through their new saviour, Obama, proposes bourgeois democracy as a new mechanism of control.



It is not for nothing that the IMF and World Bank predicted greater social instability in the neo-colonial world. They are fully aware of the consequences of the greater plunder and forced starvation of the world's working class. They are trying a number of mechanisms to keep control, while they know that the working class will resist. To head off the working class uprising in Zimbabwe, they developed the MDC as a reserve mechanism to keep control, should their current puppet, Mugabe, be overthrown.

Imperialism has also established the World Social Forum, (WSF) as a counter-revolutionary force to divide the working class of the neo-colonies from those in the imperialist centres (through 'South- South solidarity' instead of real international solidarity); to act as a platform to boost the profile of pseudo-socialists like Chavez and Morales; to divide the unemployed movements from the organised labour movement- division of the employed from the unemployed workers; through funding of social movements, a culture of dependence has been actively encouraged by imperialism- working class activists and communities expect funders to cover all their costs and make no effort to build self-reliant organizations- various social movements have their agendas defined by the funders, such as the Treatment Action Campaign- fighting for HIV drug dispensing without fighting against the capitalist system that commodifies health care. The partial funding by imperialist agencies of the desperate working class activists is also to corrupt them. Some social movements and NGO's define themselves by what the funders will or will not fund. Raising funds becomes the perpetual aim, instead of advancing the working class struggle. The exposure of the World Social Forum becomes even more important now that the Cosatu leadership has invited capitalism's saviour in Venezuela, Chavez, to their September Congress this year. The fake Trotskyists of the WSF are already being used by the Cosatu leaders to attempt to launch a reformist reborn 'United Democratic Front'. Signs of imperialism wanting to prepare a new 'MDC' in South Africa are starting to emerge as they know that the newly elected ANC leadership will be exposed sooner than later, and imperialism is preparing another reserve mechanism.

The world working class resistance to the current onslaught of capitalism-imperialism has begun. In Zimbabwe last year, the imperialists used the MDC as a means to keep the masses demobilised, while fascistic attacks on the 1 million Zimbabwean refugees (among others) in South Africa, destabilised the working class further. Each heroic uprising and general strikes such as in Greece, Guadaloupe, Martinique, France, Madagascar, could not lead to the working class taking power due to a crisis of revolutionary leadership. This led to capitalist forces in the case of Madagascar filling the power vacuum, while in Greece the anarchists kept the struggle in the theatre instead of mobilising workers' councils. In Guadaloupe, Martinique and France, it was the forces of reformists, posing as Trotskyists, who assisted imperialism to keep control. These are the opening shots of a transitory period, which opens up the possibility for the rapid growth of revolutionary leadership. At the same time the ugly head of fascism is starting to rear its head, in Bolivia, South Africa, through the spread of so-called anti-terror legislation, etc. **It is time for revolutionaries to regroup in a International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction.**



Official document on the establishment of the Joint Committee for the International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (JC-ILTF) between WIVL of South Africa and FLT

This document, undersigned by - Workers International Vanguard League (WIVL) of South Africa and Fracción Leninista Trotskista (FLT) -composed by POI (CI) of Chile, LTI of Bolivia, FT of Brazil, LTI of Peru, CWG of New Zealand and LOI (CI)-Democracia Obrera of Argentina- represents the coming together and regrouping of ourselves, in first place, based on a joint international struggle that let us recognize each other as real revolutionaries seeking for a way to set up again the world party of socialist revolution. This internationalist struggle was focused on:

a-The struggle against the counterrevolutionary pacts that today besiege the resistance of the Iraqi masses, Palestinian masses, the Colombian resistance, and particularly fight against the wicked popular front policy that today strangles the Bolivian working class and poor peasants and pacts with fascism; and in South Africa after the betrayal of the 80-90s revolution, today the ANC-SACP-COSATU in the government places the costs of the crisis onto the backs of the working class and exploited masses.

b- A joint struggle against that real counterrevolutionary international that is the WSF (a fight that has been launched by both WIVL and FLT separately even before meeting each other). The WSF that convened a meeting in Kenya, Africa in 2007 and gathers together the rotten Stalinist and pro-imperialist forces preparing themselves to strangle the African revolution once more.

c- The need for a program and an internationalist praxis for the sake of the victory of our class, for which reason, during many years -rather for decades- our currents have been seeking a revolutionary path, in isolation and scattered because of the split of the Fourth International in the hands of the revisionists and opportunists who led it to its destruction.

d- A principled joint struggle, even with shades and differences, looking for the best program and surest way for the combat of the working class and people of Palestine and the entire Middle East to succeed. So, despite those shades and differences, our convictions as regards the required destruction of the Zionist State of Israel have united us. A task that can only be carried out by the proletariat of Palestine and Middle East along side the decisive intervention of the working class within the imperialist countries. It was possible to arrive at the present agreement due to the meticulous and deep discussions about each one of those shades and differences on the Palestinian question-in day and night meetings, because, as we have said, the need is to elaborate the best program so the Palestinian working class and people can achieve the victory of their heroic fight.



Thus, internationalists have recognized each other by fighting together against Stalinism and the electoral deception in South Africa, and while the world working class and exploited masses were developing the first battles of the imperatively needed worker counteroffensive in Greece, Madagascar, Guadelupe, France, Eastern Europe, etc., we have arrived at the following agreements:

Points of agreement between WIVL and FLT

The following points of agreement are based on a discussion on the 23 points which serve as a basis for the real regroupment of revolutionaries in the fundamental task of rebuilding/refounding the Fourth International -or setting up a Fifth International as the CWG comrades of New Zealand state- always basing ourselves on the program and legacy of the Fourth International in its founding Congress in 1938. This will be solved by an international revolutionary movement that achieves regrouping its forces, and settles historically this question by defeating the treacherous leaderships

1. We agree on the method of establishing the programme on the acid tests of struggle the working class faces today as a means of delineating the class line which must form part of the basis for regrouping;

2. On the point 1 (Socialism or Barbarism): we agree that this is the fundamental choice facing the working class today and that the crisis of imperialism today offers no way out for the working class. The only way out for the working class is to turn the current defensive into an offensive struggle for Socialism; this task of the revolutionary overthrow of the world capitalist system is inextricably linked with the political defeat of the misleaders of the working class (the fake trotskyists, the intelligent reformists, trade union bureaucracy, the Stalinist leaders, etc);

3. On point 23 (the international centre): without an international centre all revolutionary groups are bound to eventually lapse into 'national Trotskyism'; the building of an international centre is an immediate task as part of the necessity to centralise international experience, create internationalist cadres, create a centre to guide the building a revolutionary bloc to among others, call an international conference, to wage a political and theoretical struggle against all shades of treacherous leaders, as part of the struggle to build a new party of world socialist revolution. The construction of sections of this party on national terrain is part of this process. Without an international centre the fight for an internationalist programme can at best tail the developments of the unfolding struggles in the world; as Leon Trotsky stated in 1928 struggling against Stalinism, "the epoch of national programs is over"

4. We agree that the period is transitory (ie the current crisis of imperialism)- it is necessary to turn the current defensive struggles into offensive struggles; already the masses in Greece, Guadeloupe and Madagascar are showing the way; what is critically absent is a programme for the revolution and at the same time the necessary Trotskyist/truly revolutionary Communist parties as part of a revolutionary international. (the Transitional Programme is a guide to



the revolution in this period but its application varies on a national terrain depending on concrete conditions- in this sense the programme is absent); in every country across the globe the centre of the programme is based on the working class taking power and establishing a proletarian dictatorship; a revolutionary international can only develop on the basis of a multifaceted struggle for the working class to take power and must include combat against the reformist, intelligent reformist and counter-revolutionary leaderships and currents within the world working class movement; we are against so-called "reunification/unity" on a basis without revolutionary principles;

5. We agree that workers, poor peasants and soldiers' armed councils are necessary to defeat the restorationist bureaucracy in Cuba with a political revolution and so turn the isle into a real beacon for the world revolution. This is an international task, especially due to the international counter-revolutionary role the Castroite bureaucracy has played since the first days of the Cuban revolution;

6. The class collaboration policy of the Castroite and Stalinist bureaucracy has been retaken today by the World Social Forum as it is clear in South Africa and Bolivia. The struggle against the popular front in Bolivia as expressed in the FLT "International Workers' Organiser" ("El Organizador Obrero Internacional"-OOI nº 10) and the fight against the popular front in South Africa on the part of the WIVL comrades are fundamental points of the current agreement.

7. We agree wholeheartedly that physical violence, slander, persecution as a means of resolving differences within the Marxist movement, is alien to us; we stand for the revolutionary morality of our class; In particular we condemn the physical attack by members of the PSTU and Qilombo Urbano on members of the FLT in Brazil and members of the committee for a null vote; WIVL needs to investigate further the question of the moral tribunal- WIVL would not oppose it; the Wivl position is that the matter needs to be exposed in the working class so that the politics that led to the physical attacks is understood;

8. On Greece: we agree with the position stated in the Greek thesis reprinted in OOI Nº 12 Part I of FLT and we affirm that a pre-revolutionary situation existed in Greece (lacking a real internationalist centre); the question was posed of building soviets of workers and soldiers, and of directing the revolution towards an all-European working class uprising- the anarchists and Workers Power and other similar groups turning the struggle into a parody of soviet; the situation in Madagascar proves more advanced as the army was split and came over to the side of the revolutionary working class- the question of taking power was more directly posed; we are not soviet fetishists and agree that there are only limited circumstances where soviets can arise; when such circumstances do arise, however, it is possible for a small Bolshevik party to win leadership of the masses and lead the working class to take power;

9. We agree to develop a common response to Lutte Ouvrier on the question of Guadeloupe; based on the agreement with the response given by FLT in its



OOI N° 12 Part I to the controversy developed in relation to the socialimperialist position of the NPA - that today is in Palestine preaching the imperialist policy of "two states"-, and against its "left" agents, the renegades of Trotskyism of PTS, MAS of Argentina and CRI of France who composed the CLAIRE Tendency within the French NPA –New Anticapitalist Party. Again a pre-revolutionary situation existed in Guadalupe, at a period 90% of the workers were in the streets and no call was made by the local part of the LO or the LO itself, for the defeat of the French imperialist troops, no call was made for workers and soldiers soviets and the uprising was contained into a trade union negotiation; the LO position thus is an expression of social chauvinism, ie defence of their imperialist bourgeoisie;

10. We agree that the task in Eastern Europe is for working class to take power through a revolution; WIVL feels that they need to more work to seek a more precise formulation on the nature of these states prior to capitalist restoration there; we stand for a soviet eastern Europe, Balkans and ex-USSR, including Russia (soviets of workers and soldiers); and we stand for, in the same way, for the working class to take power through revolution in China, for the Soviet Republic of China. In order to achieve that goal, it is necessary to put up again a true revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, which includes a revolutionary international with sections in each of these countries.

11. We agree that it is urgent to release a joint statement on the case of Mumia in the light of the US state rejecting any possibility for a new trial or release of Mumia;

12. We agree on our joint opposition to the pacts in Columbia and Bolivia which legitimise and strengthen a fascist counter-offensive against the working class in the entire Central and South America; we stand for a workers' united front to defeat the fascists; we are also against the counterrevolutionary pacts among the imperialist powers and the Arab and Middle East bourgeoisies; by applying those pacts they want to make the Iraqi and Palestinian masses and their heroic resistance surrender.

13. We share the view that the World Social Forum,WSF, is a counter-revolutionary international, brought to its feet by imperialism in order primarily to divert the masses away from struggle against the real cause of misery, namely the capitalist system and the capitalist class itself, to divide the masses of the world, and in particular the working class in the imperialist centres from the working class in the colonies and neo-colonies and to sidetrack our struggle into reform of capitalism;

14. We agree that the North American working class, as indeed the working class in all imperialist centres, must rise up against their own bourgeoisies and overthrow them; the successful struggle of the working class in the colonies and neo-colonies is interconnected with and dependent on this process;



15. We agree on condemning the reactionary strike of the British workers (British jobs for British workers) and the positions of the Workers Power, CPBG and other tendencies that support the strike in any way; we are for a sliding scale of hours and wages (jobs for all); in particular we defend the struggle of all immigrants employed at the workplace against the exploitation of the bosses; the essence of the international character of the socialist revolution is reflected in the defence of the immigrant workers and on the other hand the chauvinist character of the trade union bureaucracy and 'national socialist'/trotskyist' is exposed;

We agree with the method of the FLT in analysing the history of the FI; we agree that an important common task is the further study of the history of the FI in order to guide the process of its refounding/rebuilding. We repudiate the argument of the pabloists and other renegades of Trotskyism who affirm that because 'Trotsky is dead' therefore the prospect for overcoming the crisis of leadership at the end of the Second World War, during the whole post war and in our days is impossible. On the contrary, there have been many opportunities and revolutions where it was possible to put on its feet an international centre to give decisive leadership for the working class to take power, but Mandelites, Morenoites, Pabloites, Loraites, Lambertites, etc, failed to do so.

The FLT agree with the important and revolutionary contribution of the comrades of the WIVL on the international programme:

1. We stand by the lessons of the 1980's and the defeat of the SA revolution, of the defeat of the semi-dual power, through a process of strangulation of the revolution by international Stalinism, culminating in capitalist 'reconciliation'.

2. we stand by the position of the WIVL on the role of the World Social Forum, the International Socialists Zimbabwe, in the defeat of the uprising of the masses in Zimbabwe in 2008 and in the period before by supporting the creation of the imperialist-backed MDC (a popular front of the trade unions, churches and social movements);

3. We stand by the position of the WIVL for completing the transitional programme in the US on for example the question of housing, as an essential component, based on the unfolding struggle in South Africa and the need to combine for example the questions of wages with that of housing, and so on;

4. We stand by the WIVL on the programmatic question of the land in South Africa.

5. We agree that it is necessary to fully study and expose the counterrevolutionary role of Castroites in Africa in the last 40 years. The contribution of WIVL comrades about the role of castroism in Africa is a key issue since this allows us to explain till the end the counterrevolutionary character of castroism-stalinism at a worldwide level.

At the end of the Second World War, stalinism applying its class collaboration policy contained the revolution in Africa and prevented the new nations emerging from solving the problem of land and the national independence,



thus, these new nations were shaped by US imperialism leading them to fratricide wars and preventing their development.

In the '70s, castroism played this counterrevolutionary role since after smashing the revolution in Portugal with its thugs breaking up the councils of tenants, workers and soldiers it was able to strangle the struggle for the national liberation of the Portuguese colonies like Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique destroying the possibility of a new revolutionary Cuba in the African continent, so destroying the African revolution which was part of the revolutionary general rehearsal of the international proletariat during the 1968-74 period.

That was the role of the castroite-stalinist traitors, those traitors of the African revolution.

For Trotskyism, these lessons are key factors since there was one more chapter to be written on the history of treasons of Stalinism at worldwide level. And without these lessons it is impossible to build and set up African Trotskyism, since a bloody river divides Trotskyism from Stalinism and Castroism and that river was also delineated in African revolution.

This lesson is a key issue since now the task is clear so, the international Trotskyist revolutionary party of the African working class will be an African continental party or it will not exist, since the victory of the proletarian revolution –that is, the seizing of power by the proletariat- within each country and their borders shaped by imperialism is no more than an episode and a link of a single African revolution which will only be able to succeed definitely at international level with the victorious socialist revolution in United States, the European powers and Japan. That's the only way, by socialist revolution in Africa and at an international level it will be possible to put an end to the fratricide confrontations among the masses within the continent, confrontations created by imperialism and pushed by Stalinism and Castrism.

6. We support the WIVL's revolutionary intervention in the elections and support the preparation in the next period of extra-parliamentary period and commit ourselves to contribute to the next internationalist newspaper of the WIVL

The next joint tasks

1) Within 20 days we commit ourselves to develop a joint statement on Mumia, as part of an offensive to fight from inside USA to free Black workers-the heart of US working class together with the world and Latin immigrants-from the influence of castroism, the Democrat Party and their representatives like Jesse Jackson, who lead them at the feet of Obama, that new Mandela in USA.

2) Within 60 days we commit ourselves to develop the draft of a joint position on the struggle of the working class in Africa;

3) Prepare the basis and framework of a Joint partnership Committee. The establishment of such Joint Committee for the International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (as a provisory name) –amidst a world economic crisis and great struggles of the working class and the exploited who begin to fightback



the attack by the capitalist-, has the objective of starting a political, theoretical, programmatic and organizational struggle against revisionism in the name of the Fourth International (revisionism continuity of the school of falsifications of the Social democracy and Stalinism) and the enemies and traitors of revolution in the entire worker movement and international revolutionary movement; to call for an International Conference of Principled Trotskyists and revolutionary worker organizations, selecting in this regrouping all the forces that pass the acid tests of the international class struggles, and set up an international centre of Trotskyism to decisively intervene into the historical upheavals during the next period of revolution and counterrevolution.

For the running of this Joint Committee:

- 1.- Both the WIVL and the FLT will have one vote each in this joint committee.
- 2.- WIVL will have 50% of the pages of the OOI to write there all its positions and criticize and discuss openly FLT positions. The FLT will be able to criticize and openly discuss WIVL positions.
- 3.- We will have an internationalist bulletin for jointly internal discussions, so that militants of both organizations can convince and be convinced and assure a real Trotskyist democracy between both organizations.
- 4- From the approval of this agreement by the two organizations, all the internal correspondence of FLT immediately will be sent to WIVL comrades for their participation and discussion in the entire internal life of FLT and to make sure a jointly offensive over the intelligent reformists and “political booby-traps” at international level. All internal correspondence of the WIVL will immediately be sent to the FLT as part of this process.
- 5- We are going towards a merger Congress in July to study the new agreements that emerge from this document on, evaluate in common the internationalist combats we launch jointly and study the conditions to advance to a superior centralism of both internationalist forces.

From the moment this current document is approved definitely by WIVL and FLT, such Joint Committee for the International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction will be established.

About the differences that remain:

The WIVL feels that the only way to work through the remaining disagreements, after having reached principled agreement on the essence of the programme, is through making a common experience, through merging with the FLT and in the spirit of real revolutionary internationalism, to place the advancing of the worldwide struggle for Socialism at the centre of our efforts and sacrifice.

We agree with the essence of the program of the FLT on Palestine; we agree that the state of Israel is a fascist state and that the central task is the destruction of this bastion of imperialism in the Middle East; we agree with the FLT position in that the task of every Jewish worker with class consciousness is to break with Zionism, break with Histadrut and get united into Palestinian unions and the combat for the destruction of the Zionist State of Israel. Both



currents agree in that it is necessary to put in place a one and only revolutionary party in the region against all the so-called “israeli worker party” as promoted by stalinism of an israeli CP, or as favored by french NPA, argentinean PO and the rest of fake trotskyst, which have israeli parties/groups. We consider that all these policies mean recognizing and approving the imperialist policy of the “two states”.

These principled agreements are based on the lessons and program for South Africa written by Leon Trotsky in 1935- “On South African theses” that WIVL comrades only knew the unauthentic version counterfeited by the renegades of Trotskyism till we met- on which WIVL and FLT have agreed. Having stated this, WIVL gives evidence that although it considers that the program is correct, it thinks that FLT has an incorrect understanding of the ‘South African Theses’. The WIVL understands the words under the heading ‘through the advanced workers’ ‘The proletariat of the country consists of backward black pariahs and a privileged arrogant caste of whites. In this lies the greatest difficulty of the whole situation.’, to mean that the greatest problem is that the working class is divided. This means that the problem of the necessary task of uniting them poses the greatest obstacle. Trotsky is clear that the basis of unity can only be without a single concession to any of the white privileges or prejudices but on support for the black workers and poor peasants against the British imperialists and local bourgeoisie. The point is that this is a question to be posed now and not at some distant future. The winning of this workers unity, on this basis, is the cornerstone of any successful insurrection against the Israeli state. In South Africa the winning of the unity of significant sections of the white working class with the black workers, can be said to be a pre-condition for a successful insurrection in South Africa. The labelling by the FLT of all Jewish workers as an ‘aristocracy’ does not taken into account differences among these workers (some being more exploited than others) and limits the necessary tactics that should be applied before and during an insurrection. For example, the Bolsheviks even developed cells within the most privileged layers of the army, the Junkers, in October 1917, kept them busy in meetings and managed to get a significant number of the Junkers to be inactive during the critical last few days leading up to the insurrection. Revolutionary work is even needed within the reactionary Histadrut to win workers away from it and to support of the struggle against the Israeli state. On the other hand, revolutionary work among the poorer sections of the Jewish workers is likely to, over time, to win them to the revolution- difficult work, but absolutely necessary. Already the majority of Jewish workers want ‘peace’- yes this is a pacifist notion, but it shows that there is the desire to live with the Palestinians. Of course the bourgeoisie give this desire for ‘peace’ its own interpretation, namely of 2 separate ‘states’, but it for us as revolutionaries to work out the correct tactics to win workers unity and to neutralise other sectors that cannot be politically won at this stage. Class conflict exists between the Jewish worker and the Israeli bourgeoisie and imperialism- even if on the surface there is the appearance of equilibrium. We must in every way encourage the Jewish worker to also come to the conclusion that the class conflict between them and the bourgeoisie is irreconcilable.



In Trotsky's History of the Russian Revolution (volume 3- chapter VI the art of insurrection), he spells out that the first task in 'every insurrection is to bring the troops over to its side.' How is this to be done, except through a protracted period of work by the party among Jewish workers to support the Palestinian cause and of exposure of the Israeli state and the role of imperialism? Those who are not won through political work will have to learn through the revolutionary fire. The WIVL feels the FLT crucially omits any tactic to win the troops over to the revolution, other than defeat in a revolutionary war. Defeat of the Israeli army in its invasion of Lebanon is one thing, but defeat of the Israeli state is quite another. In this same chapter Trotsky spells out the Marxist critique of blanquism, namely that its crucial error lay in not understanding that obeying the rules of insurrectionary tactics is not itself a guarantee of victory. The proletariat needs a suitable organization, it needs a plan, it needs a conspiracy and ... 'the soviets by themselves do not settle the question. They may serve different goals according to the programme and leadership. The soviets receive their programme from the party. Whereas the soviets in revolutionary conditions- and apart from revolution they are impossible- comprise the whole class with the exception of its altogether backward, inert or demoralized strata, the revolutionary party represents the brain of the class. The problem of conquering power can be solved only by a definite combination of party with soviets- or with other mass organizations more or less equivalent to soviets.' Thus, in the absence of a party, in a revolution, power will go to those who hold back the working class (as in the case of Madagascar recently).

The WIVL feels that the FLT too uncritically uses the principles of Blanquism and by the same breathe also underestimates the crucial role of the party before and during an insurrection.

On this and the matter of the history of the establishment of the state of Israel further discussion is needed.

**Further questions for discussion as part of the process of merger:
(summary)**

1. This involves the question of the differences between a soviet, national assembly and constituent assembly;
2. On the right of nations to self-determination and its application;
3. Reformists and counter-revolutionaries;
4. A question on the nature of the regime in Bolivia and Venezuela



USAS Protest at World Economic Forum (Africa) 10 June 2009



Uxwebhu olusesikweni ekumisweni kweKomiti eDibeneyo yeQhezu leTrotskyist Leninist yeHlabathi phakathi kwe WIVL yaseMzantsi Afrika neFLT

Elixwebhu elisayinwe yiWorkers International Vanguard League (WIVL) yaseMzantsi Afrika ne Fraccio`n Leninista Trotskista (FLT) –eyakhiwe yi POI (CI) yaseChile, LTI yaseBolivia, FT yaseBrazil, LTI yasePeru, CWG yaseNew Zealand nayi LOI (CI)-Democracia Obrera yaseArgentina- libonisa ukudibana nokuzihlanganisa kwakhona, okokuqala, ngokumayelana nomzabalazo odibeneyo wehlabathi osenze ukuba siziqonde njenge revolutionaries zokwenene ezikhangelela indlela yokumisa kwakhona intlangano yehlabathi ye revolution yobusoshali. Lo mzabalazo wehlabathi ugqalisele:

- a. Kumzabalazo ochasene nempembelelo zezivumelwano ezichasene ne revolution ezithi namhlanje zingqonge inkcaso yabantu baseIraqi, basePalestina, inkcaso yaseColombia, yaye ngakumbi olwa ngokuchaseneyo nepolisi ezikhohlakeleyo ze popular front ezithi namhlanje zikrwitshwe abasebenzi nabalimi belizwe baseBolivia nezivumelwano norhulumente benkohlakalo ngobupolisa; yaye eMzantsi Afrika emva kokungcatshwa kwe revolution zeminyaka yo 80-90, namhlanje i-ANC-SACP-COSATU kurhulumente zibeka indleko zengxaki emva kwabasebenzi nakwinyambalala exhatshaziweyo.
- b. Kumzabalazo odibeneyo ochasene nempembelelo ekhoyo echasene ne revolution kwihlabathi leyo eyi-WSF (umlo ubusele usenziwa zizo zombini iWIVL neFLT ngokwahlukeneyo kwa phambi kokuba zidibane). I-WSF eyahlanganisa umhlangano eKenya, eAfrika ngo 2007 yaye yaqokelela ndaweninye abalandeli bakaStalin ababolileyo kunye namaqela ohlaselo axhasa ama impiyali ezilungiselela ukukrwitsha irevolution yeAfrika kwakho.
- c. Imfuneko yenkqubo kunye nepraxis yobuhlabathi ngenxa yempumelelo yomgangatho wethu, ngesizathu sokuba, ngexesha leminyaka emininzi –kungathi ishumi leminyaka- iintlangano zethu bezisoloko zikhangelela indlela yerevolution, zime zodwa yaye zithe saa ngenxa yokughekeka kwe kwentlangano yesine yamakomanisi ehlabathi Fourth International ezandleni zabaxhasi benguqulo nozungulichele abayikhokelele ekutshabalaleni kwayo.
- d. Kumzabalazo odibeneyo oyingqobo, nasekungafanini ekwahlukaneni, sikhangelela eyona yona nkqubo ilungileyo nendlela eqinisekisileyo yomlo wabasebenzi nabantu basePalestina nakuMbindi-Mpuma wonke uphumelele. Ngoko, nangaphandle kokungafani nokwahlukana, ukuqiniseka kwethu malunga nemfuneko yokutshatyalaliswa korhulumente weZionist wakwaSirayeli kusimanyile. Umsebenzi kuphela onokwenziwa ngabasebenzi basePalestina nakuMbindi-Mpuma ngokungqameneyo nokungenelela okugqibeleleyo ngabasebenzi abangaphakathi kumazwe ama impiyali. Bekunokwenzeka ukufikelela kwesisivumelwano sangoku ngenxa



yengxoxo ezinzulu nezinomgqalisela gqitha imini nobusuku malunga nokukungafani nokwahlukana nganye nganye ngakumbuzo wePalestina-kwintlanganiso, ngoba, njengokuba besitshilo, imfuneko kukucacisa eyona yona nkqubo ukwenzela abasebenzi nabantu basePalestina bazuze uloyiso kumlo wabo wobukroti.

Ngale ndlela, ama-internationalist aqondene ngokulwa kunye ngokuchasene neStalinism nenkqatho yolonyulo eMzantsi Afrika, yaye ekubeni abasebenzi behlabathi nabantu abaxhatshaziweyo beqalisa imilo yokuqala ngokunyanzelekileyo efunekayo abasebenzi beziphindezela ngokuhlasela eGreece, eMadagascar, eFrance, kwiEurope eseMpuma, njalo njalo, sifikelele kwesisivumelwano silandelayo:

lingongoma zesivumelwano phakathi koWIVL ne FLT

Ezingongoma zilandelayo zesivumelwano zisekwe phezu kwengxoxo zengongoma ezingamashumi amabini anesithathu ezisebenza njengesiseko sokwenene sokwenza amaqela kwakhona ee revolutionaries kumsebenzi obalulekileyo wokwakha ngokutsha/ukuseka ngokutsha intlangano yesine yamakomanisi ehlabathi Fourth International –okanye ukumisa iFifth International njengokuba amaqabane e-CWG yase New Zealand exela- lonke ixesha sisoloko siselekezele phezu kwenkqubo nelifa le Fourth International kwiNkongolo yokusekwa kwayo ngo 1938. Oku kuzakucaciswa yimpembelelo ye revolutionary yehlabathi ephumeza ukuseka amaqela ayo kwakhona, yaye igqibe ngokwembali lombuzo ngokoyisa iinkokheli ezingathembekanga

1. Sivumelene ngendlela yokumisa inkqubo ngokwemizabalazo abasebenzi abajongene nayo ngoku njengendlela yokucacisa intshaba zomgangatho ekumele ibeyinxalenye yesiseko sokukwenza amaqela kwakhona;
2. Kwingongoma yokuqala (iSocialism okanye ubungcwangu): sivumelene ukuba kukukhetha okubalulekileyo okujongene nabasebenzi namhlanje yaye iingxaki zama impiyali namhlanje aziniki ndlela yakuphuma kubasebenzi. Indlela kuphela yokuphuma kubasebenzi kukuguqula lemizabalazo ikhoyo yokukhusela ibe yeyohlaselo lweSocialism; lomsebenzi wotshintsho olululo lwenkqubo yobungxowankulu behlabathi ngabasebenzi abathabatha ulawulo awunakuconjululwa wodwa ngaphandle koloyiso ngokwezopolitiko lwenkokheli ezilahlekisa abasebenzi (iitrotskyists zenkohliso, ireformists ezihlakaniphileyo, inkokheli ezisemagunyeni zemanyano zabasebenzi, iinkokheli zefuthe likaStalini, njalo njalo);
3. Kwingongoma yamashumi amabini anesithathu (intlangano eyintloko yehlabathi); ngaphandle kwentlangano eyintloko yehlabathi zonke intlangano zotshintsho olululo zimele ekugqibeleni zivele 'kwiTrotskyism yelizwe' ; ukwakhiwa kwentlangano eyintloko yehlabathi ngumsebenzi ongxamisekileyo njengenxalenye yemfuneko yokubeka embindini amava ehlabathi, kwakhiwe umkhosi osisigqina kwihlabathi,



kwakhiwe ulawulo oluyintloko lukhokele ukwakhiwa kwembumba ye revolutionaries phakathi kwezinye, kubeth' ikhwelo lenkomfa yehlabathi, kuqhutywe umzabalazo wezopolitiko nowemfundiswano ochaseneyo nazo zonke indidi zenkokheli ezingathembekanga, njengenxalenye yomzabalazo wokwakha intlangano entsha ye revolution yobusoshali behlabathi. Ukwakhiwa kwamacandelo alentlangano kwisigaba selizwe yinxalenye yale nkqubo. Ngaphandle kwentlangano eyintloko yehlabathi umlo wenkqubo ekwisimo sehlabathi ungathi okungamandla ulandele emva kwemizabalazo ebonakalayo evelayo ehlabathini; njengokuba uLeon Trotsky waxelayo ngo 1928 ukuzabalaza ngokuchasene nenkqubo kaStalin, "ixesha (epoch) lenkqubo yesizwe liphelile"

4. Sivumelene ukuba isigaba sexesha (period) siyagqitha (ukuthi iingxaki zangoku zama impiyali)- kuyimfuneko kuguqulwe lemezabalazo yangoku yokukhusela ibe yimizabalazo yohlaselo; inyambalala yabantu eGreece, eGuadaloupe naseMadagascar sele bebonisa indlela; into enzima (critically) engekho yinkqubo ye revolution yaye kwangexesha elinye iintlangano zamaKomanisi angama revolutionary okwenene/iTrotskyist eziyimfuneko njengenxalenye yotshintsho olululo lwehlabathi. (Inkqubo yokugqitha sisikhokele esiya kwi revolution kwesisigaba sexesha kodwa ukusetyenziswa kwayo kwahlukene ngakwimihlaba yesizwe kuxhomekeke kwiimeko ezithe ngqo-ngale ndlela inkqubo ayikho); kumazwe onke ehlabathi intloko yenkqubo isekelezelwe kubasebenzi bathabathe ulawulo yaye bamilisele ulawulo ngokozwi lakhe lwabasebenzi; impembelelo ye revolution ekwisimo sehlabathi ingabheka phambili phantsi kwesiseko samacala amaninzi emizabalazo ukuze abasebenzi bathabathe ulawulo yaye mele ukuke umlo ochasene nabalungisi (reformist), abalungisi abahlakaniphileyo kunye neenkokheli zempembelelo yokoyisa irevolution nabathile phakathi kwempembelelo yabasebenzi behlabathi; sichasene nento ebizwa "ukuhlanganiswa kwakhona/ubunye kwisiseko ngaphandle komthetho siseko wotshintsho olululo;
5. Sivumelene ukuba amabhunga axhobileyo abasebenzi, abalimi belizwe abasokolayo nawamajoni ayimfuneko yokoyisa abalawuli abangabavusi (restorationist) eCuba nge revolution yezopolitiko yaye ke kuguqulwe isiqithi sibengumqondiso wokwenene we revolution yehlabathi. Lo ngumsebenzi wehlabathi, ingakumbi ofanelekileyo kwindima yempembelelo yehlabathi yokoyisa irevolution abalawuli bakaCastro abathe bayidlala kususela kwintsuku zokuqala ze revolution yaseCuba;
6. Ipolisi yokusebenza kunye notshaba lomgangatho yabalawuli bakaCastro noStalin ithathiwe kwakhona namhlanje yiWorld Social Forum njengokuba kucacile eMzantsi Afrika. Umzabalazo ochasene nombutho othandwa ngabantu (popular front) eBolivia njengokuba ubonakalisiwe kwi "International Workers' Organiser" (El Organizador Obrero Internacional)"-OO1 n` 10) yeFLT kunye nomlo ochaseneyo nombutho othandwa ngabantu eMzantsi Afrika ngakwicala



lamaqabane e WIVL zingongoma ezibalulekileyo kwesisivumelwano sangoku.

7. Sivumelene ngamxhelo-mnye ukuba ukubetha emzimbeni, isingcikivo esibubuxoki, ukutshutshisa njengendlela yokusombulula ukungavani phakathi kwempembelelo yeMarxist, akuqhelekanga kuthi; simele ubulungisa botshintsho olululo lomgangatho wethu; ingakumbi siyalugxeka uhlaselo emzimbeni ngamalungu ePSTU ne Qilombo Urbano kumalungu e FLT eBrazil nakumalungu ekomiti aphakamisa ukungavoti; u-WIVL kufuneka ephengululile ngakumbi umbuzo weqonga lokulungileyo- u-WIVL ebengazukulichasa; uluvo lukaWivl lelokuba lomcimbi kufuneka ubhentsiswe kubasebenzi ukwenzela ipolitiks ezikhokelele kuhlaselo emzimbeni ziqondwe;
8. Ngakwi Greece: siyavumelana noluvo oluxeliweyo lwengcingane ebhaliweyo engqinelwe ziingxoxo yaseGreece ezishicilelweyo kwakhona kwi 001 N` 12 Isiqendu sokuqala seFLT yaye siyangqina ukuba imeko yaphambi kwe revolution ibikho eGreece (kwakuswele intlangano eyintloko yehlabathi yokwenene); umbuzo wavela wokwaxhiwa kwamabhunga (soviets) wabasebenzi namajoni, kunye nowokunika ikhondo irevolution ebheka kuphakamo labo bonke abasebenzi baseEurope- abagrorisi neWorkers Power kunye namanye amaqela afana nawo aguqula umzabalazo bawenza osinga mabhunga; imeko eMadagascar yazibonakalisa iqhubele phambili ngaphezulu njengokuba umkhosi wawohluka kubini yaye wawelela kwicala labasebenzi abaphakamileyo- umbuzo wokuthabatha ulawulo wavela ngqo ngaphezulu; asingobanquli (fetishists) bamabhunga yaye sivumelana nokuba kukho kuphela imeko izincinane apho amabhunga anokuthi avele; xa ezomeko zivela, kanti, kunokwenzeka kwintlangano yeBolshevik encinane izuze ukukhokela inginginya yabantu yaye ikhokele abasebenzi bathabathe ulawulo;
9. Siyavumelana sivelise impendulo efanayo kwiLutte Ouvrier ngakumbuzo waseGuadaloupe; phezu kwesisivumelwano kunye nempendulo enikwe yiFLT kwi 001 N` 12 Isiqendu sokuqala kwimpikiswano evela malunga nobume bama impiyali malunga nentlalo yeNPA – namhlanje isePalestina ishukumayela ipolisi yama impiyali “yorchulumente ababini”-, yaye ngokuchaseneyo ne agents zayo “zasekunxele”, abakreji benkolo kaTrotsky bePTS, MAS yaseArgentina neCRI yaseFrance eyenze impembelelo yeCLAIRE phakathi kwiNPA yaseFrance – iNew Anticapitalist Party. Kwakhona imeko ebakho phambi kwe revolution ibekhona eGuadaloupe, kwixesha apho ipesenti ezingamashumi asithoba zabasebenzi bezisesitratweni yaye khange kubekho khwelo lwenziweyo lisebe lendawo le LO okanye I-LO yona ngokwayo, lokoyisa imikhosi yama impiyali aseFrance, khange kubekho khwelo lwenziwayo lamabhunga abasebenzi namajoni yaye uphakamo lwabanjwa lwenziwa ingxoxo zemanyano zabasebenzi; ngalo ndlela ubume be LO yimbonakaliso yokuzingca ngentlalo ngokugqithisileyo, ukuthi ikhusela ama impiyali ayo;



10. Sivumelene ngokuba umsebenzi kwiMpuma-yeEurope ngowokuba abasebenzi bathabathe ulawulo nge revolution; u-WIVL ucinga kufuneka umsebenzi ongaphezulu wokukhangela ukucacisa ngqo ngobume babarhulumente phambi kokubuyisela (restoration) ubungxowankulu phaya; simele iMpuma-Europe, iBalkani nesakuba yiUSSR yamabhunga, ukuquka iRussia (amabhunga abasebenzi namajoni); yaye simele, kwangendlela enye, ukuba abasebenzi bathabathe ulawulo nge revolution eChina, iRiphabliki yaMabhunga yaseChina. Ukuze kuzuzeke lonjongo, kuyafuneka kumiswe kwakhona inkokheli zokwenene ezingama revolutionari zabasebenzi, eziquka intlangano yehlabathi eyi revolutionary enamasebe kulo ngalinye kulamazwe.
11. Sivumelene ukuba kungxamisekile sinikezele ingxelo edibeneyo kwityala lika Mumia egameni lokuba urhulumente waseMelika esala nakuphina ukuchotshelwa ngokutsha okanye ukukhululwa kukaMumia;
12. Sivumelene ngokuchasa kwethu okudibeneyo kwezivumelwano eColumbia naseBolivia ezibeka emthethweni yaye ziqinise ukoyisa ngohlaselo lwenkohlakalo yobupolisa ngokuchasene nabasebenzi kuMbindi wonke woMzantsi Melika; simele abasebenzi abamanyene phambili boyise orhulumente benkohlakalo ngokobupolisa; kananjalo sichasene nezivumelwano zempembelelo yokoyisa irevolution phakathi kwezilawuli zama impiyali kunye nama Arab noongxowankulu abakuMbindi Mpuma; ngokusebenzisa ezozivumelwano bafuna ukwenza abantu baseIraqi nasePalestina kunye nenkcaso yabo yobukrothi banikezele.
13. Sinoluvo olunye lokuba i-World Social Forum, WSF, yimpembelelo yehlabathi echasa irevolution, ezokumiswa ngenyawo zayo ngama impiyali ukwenzela okokuqala ukuphambukisa abasebenzi kude kumzabalazo ochasene nentsusa yembandezelo, ebizwa ngokuba yinkqubo yobungxowankulu kunye nongxowankulu ngokwabo, ukwahlula abasebenzi behlabathi, yaye ingakumbi abasebenzi kumbindi wama impiyali kubasebenzi bamazwe ayecinezelwe nasacinezelweyo kwezimini yaye ukujika injongo zomzabalazo wethu zibe sekuhlaziyeni ubungxowankulu;
14. Sivumelene ukuba abasebenzi beMelika engaseNtla, ngenene abasebenzi kumbindi wonke wama impiyali, mele baphakame ngokuchasene nongxowankulu babo yaye babasuse elulawulweni; umzabalazo wempumelelo wabasebenzi kumazwe ayecinezelwe nasacinezelweyo ngokwezimini idibene kunye yaye ixhomekeke kule nkqubo;
15. Sivumelene ekugxekeni intshukumo zoqhankqalazo zabasebenzi baseBrithane ezahlula abasebenzi (imisebenzi yaseBrithane yeyabasebenzi baseBrithane) kunye noluvo lweWorkers Power, CPBG kunye nezinye intlangano ezixhasa ezintshukumo nangaziphina indlela; simele ukunyuka kwemali xa iyure zinyuka nokunyuka



kwemivuzo xa amaxabiso enyuka (imisebenzi kumntu wonke);
ingakumbi sikhusele imizabalazo yabo bonke abemi bamanye amazwe
abaqashwe emisebenzini ngokuchaseneyo noxhatshazo lwabaqeshi;
umongo wesimo sobuhlabathi be revolution yobusoshali
bubonakaliswa ekukhuseleni abasebenzi abangabemi bamanye
amazwe yaye kwelinye icala isimo sokuzingca ngobuhlanga
kwabalawuli bemanano zabasebenzi kunye 'namososhali
elizwe/'itrotskyist' sibhentsisiwe;

Sivumelene nendlela yeFLT ekucaluleni imbali yeFI; sivumelene ukuba
umsebenzi obalulekileyo wethu sonke kukufunda ngakumbi ngembali yeFI
ukwenzela ukunika ukukhokela inkqubo yayo yokuyiseka kwakhona/
yokuyakha kwakhona. Siyayikhanyela ingxoxo yabalandeli bakaPablo
neyabanye abakreji beTrotskyism abangqina ukuba ngenxa yokuba 'uTrotsky
efile' ngoko umbono wokoyisa ingxaki yenkokheli ekupheleni kwemfazwe
yeSibini yeHlabathi, ngexesha lonke emva kwemfazwe yaye nakwelixesha
lethu awunakwenzeka. Hayi kanti, ebekhona amathuba amaninzi yaye
iirevolutions apho bekunokwenzeka ukumisa ngenyawo zayo intlangano
eyintloko yehlabathi inike ubunkokheli obugqibeleleyo kubasebenzi
bathabathe ulawulo, kodwa abalandeli bakaMandel, Moreno, Pablo, Lora,
Lambert, njalo njalo abaphumelelanga ukwenza njalo.

**Qaphela: Esi sisiqendu sokuqala sesivumelwano phakathi kweWIVL ne
FLT. Isiqendu sesibini kunye nemiba esingavumelani ngayo yaye
esephantsi kwengxoxo silandela kwiphepha elilandelayo.**



United Struggles Against Starvation pickets at World Economic Forum



Zimbabwe: The revolution betrayed- drawing the lessons

24.05.09

The mistakes made by the International Socialist Organization-Zimbabwe (ISOZ) can be traced back to the reformist politics of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Britain. The SWP and the trend of the International Socialists (IS) all distort Trotsky's position on entrism into a Labour Party. This semi-permanent entrism into not only Labour parties but also bourgeois nationalist parties, has at its centre the watering down of the revolutionary programme, with the resultant opportunist politics. The opportunist politics of the ISOZ in Zimbabwe has played a major role, if not the major role, in the betrayal of the revolution in Zimbabwe. We place the responsibility for the betrayal at the feet of the British SWP and the IS trend, as at all times the ISOZ looked to them for political leadership and guidance.

On the so-called dual nature of reformism

The SWP justify their entry into capitalist reformist parties by the following: "*We in the IS Tendency understand that reformism is a contradictory formation that both expresses and contains working class struggle. Relating to it means knowing how to work with and against people to our right- with them when they want to fight against the bosses and the regime, against them when they hold the struggle back.*" (letter from Alex Callinicos to ISOZ, responding to a request for advice on how and when the split with of ISOZ with the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) should take place : May-June 2002 Socialist Worker-Zimbabwe).

But, working together with reformists in a united front and entering a capitalist reformist party are 2 completely different things. A United Front is a temporary front for a specific purpose in which all the participants maintain their separate identity and discipline, while we 'strike together' against a common enemy. We can break from it at any time. To enter a capitalist reformist party means subjecting yourself to the discipline and programme of capitalism. This creates illusions in such a party and undermines the fundamental principle of working class independence. Such entrism is thus generally permitted into a Labour/workers' party only when such party is in the process of formation before its programme is fully established; it is also normally of short duration as the clash of programmes (revolutionary versus reformist) would lead to a split; it is also possible in the case of a reformist labour party in the process of formation, that the revolutionary group wins the day, resulting in a mass revolutionary party. The MDC was never a labour/workers' party as from the beginning it had capitalist representatives. It had been initiated and funded by imperialism from the beginning.

It is not a question of being '*with the reformists when they fight the bosses and the regime*', but a question of exposing at all times in the eyes of the working class that the reformists cannot be depended upon to wage a fight against the bosses and the regime to its end.

In fact at times of revolutionary upsurge of the masses, the capitalists class are forced to put reformist leaderships forward to head off or side track the masses from the revolutionary path. This is the central reason why the capitalist class needs a Popular



Front at a time that its traditional capitalist parties have been discredited in the eyes of the masses. Thus the question of maintaining working class independence at all times, and especially not forming part of Popular Fronts, is so crucial. How else will the masses see the importance of independent working class action, if false hope is placed on reformists to act against ‘the bosses and the regime’ and in this case, of putting hope of reformists in a capitalist party to act against ‘the bosses and the regime’. The masses also need to learn about the capitalist nature of Popular Fronts. Popular Fronts are in essence reformist capitalist parties that base themselves on support from the trade unions, either directly forming part of them (through ex-trade union leaders forming part of their leadership and/or in alliance with the current leadership of the trade unions). The masses need to learn about the nature of the middle class and about the middle class nature of the leadership of the MDC, Zanu-PF and other pro-capitalist parties. To support the reformists when they appear to act against the bosses and their regime is to help contain the masses.

In the heat of the fire of the 1917 Russian revolution, when the threat of counter-revolutionary military coup by General Kornilov against the interim government led by Kerensky, was raised, the Bolsheviks led the fight to put down Kornilov. The Bolsheviks used the opportunity to openly arm the masses, in other words, to advance their own programme, not to ease for one second any criticism of the Kerensky government that they had; they correctly analysed the class nature of Kerensky, that he and the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were not consistent fighters against Kornilov and were, behind the scenes and sometimes openly, cutting deals with the counter-revolution (**Trotsky: History of the Russian Revolution** book 2, see Chapters on *Kornilov insurrection* and *Bourgeoisie measures strength*). The SWP would have supported Kerensky, by even joining his party, against Kornilov, as they have supported a vote for Zuma in the April South Africa elections (just because of the promise of free education). Bolsheviks support the masses against Kornilov and for the struggle for free education while warning the masses about the Kerensky’s and Zuma’s of the world. The SWP supports Tshivangerai against Mugabe, instead of the masses against the Zimbabwe state, instead of at the same time exposing the middle class nature of Tshivangerai. The SWP policy of duality of the reformists acts as a containment, a brake on the revolution of the working class. It is not for nothing that Trotsky said that the experience of entrism into the British labour party had yielded more negatives than any gains.

Watering down of the programme

The entrism supported by the SWP, is not only based on watering down of the revolutionary programme under the guise of being close to the masses, but leads directly to opportunism and tailing the consciousness of the masses: In 2002 Callinicos asks the ISOZ: “*How much has changed since you joined the MDC? Crucially, are the most advanced workers and activists in the process of breaking from it?*” The ISOZ in their letter to the MDC (8 April 2009) point out that the MDC Bridge programme was in fact a structural adjustment programme of the IMF, yet Callinicos, having seen this letter, still asks: ‘How much has really changed?’ Thus for the SWP, the programme of the MDC does not matter; all that really matters is where the so-called advanced workers are. The ISOZ points out that scope for criticism in the MDC has all but vanished and all the SWP is concerned about is that the fact that the ISOZ has a parliamentarian in the name of the MDC, makes the timing of the withdrawal ‘critical’. The SWP sees it as ‘odd’ for the ISOZ to depart



even though the MDC has adopted the programme of the IMF! Trotsky in his 1932 discussions on the Labour Party question in America was clear: We cannot stand before the masses with 2 banners, one cheaper ticket and a first class ticket. At all times we have to have one banner and one programme. The SWP has no problem for the ISOZ members to be associated with the IMF programme and at the same time with a 'revolutionary' programme. The ISOZ, under the guidance of the SWP presented a second class ticket (a watered-down programme) and a third class ticket (the capitalist programme of the MDC) to the masses.

But the political mistakes do not start in 2002 when the ISOZ, to their credit, initiated a break from the MDC. They start in 1999 when the MDC was formed.

The revolution starts in Zimbabwe; SWP betrays

The 1980 transfer of power to Zanu-PF meant that Mugabe became the favoured agent for imperialism in Zimbabwe. Although minor aspects of the economy were nationalized, the bulk remained in the hands of imperialism. The 1980's were characterized by heroic fights by the world working class but these ended in defeats of the working class by Thatcherism and Reaganism; on local soil the uprising of the peasants for land in Matabeleland was brutally put down in 1983-4 resulting in the death of about 20 000 peasants and their families. The protection of the rule of imperialism-capitalism was perpetrated by the armed forces of the Zanu-PF and supported by North Korean troops. The support of US imperialism for the massacres was also implied by the fact that they gave open military support to Mugabe right up to 2001. The stagnation of the world capitalist economy resulted in imperialism-capitalism creating various mechanisms to shift their crisis onto the working classes of the world; structural adjustment programmes were forced onto the Soviet bloc of countries as they were in Africa and elsewhere; the cutbacks on social expenses contributed to the uprisings of the working class in the Soviet bloc countries which resulted in the restoration of capitalism there although the Stalinist world apparatus was shattered- a new market for imperialist exploitation was opened. Even this was not enough to bring imperialism out of their crisis. Everywhere the cutbacks on social expenses and privatization of the means of production were being resisted by the working class. In Africa country by country was forced to adopt structural adjustment programmes, and here too resistance by the working class limited the plans of imperialism. In Zambia the resistance of the masses was so great that imperialism created the MMD (Movement for Multi-Party Democracy) led by former trade union general secretary, Chiluba, to head off the uprising and direct it into parliamentary channels.

In Zimbabwe the Structural Adjustment programme was formally adopted in 1991, although cutbacks on social expenses has started before this. The cutbacks on social expenditure went hand in hand with the collapse of the local agriculture as self-sufficiency in food production was replaced by single crop commodity-for-export production. The imperialists forced the creation of new markets for their processed food and other products on the bones of the peasantry, the workers and the unemployed. From 2002 to 2007 the food monopolies exported US\$ 400 million in 'aid' to Zimbabwe, on the back of the deliberate collapse of local agriculture. The old bureaucracy (aligned to the Zanu-PF) in the ZCTU (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions) were overthrown in 1988 when the stagnation of the economy had already taken serious proportions. In 1994 there was a general strike against the effects of



structural adjustment; by August 1996 revolt from the masses burst into open rebellion; a form of workers' councils, labour forums, became widespread and these meetings of rank and file worker delegates called and ran the strikes over the head of the trade union bureaucracy. The open revolt of the Zimbabwean working class at the same time of world economic crisis in 1997 posed an international danger for imperialism- they had to head off the revolt by any means necessary. The danger was that this revolt may spread to South Africa and any other part of the world. The new trade union bureaucrats placed themselves at the head of the strike wave and turned it into a wave of 5 day stayaways instead of 5 day factory occupations, thus actively discouraging factory seizures. The trade unions offered no solution, while the working class demanded a united fight against the state and their system.

In the absence of a deep tradition of a Communist Party, in the context of the restoration of capitalism in the East bloc countries and with the ISOZ being only a handful of activists, the formation of a Labour Party was placed on the agenda.

The ISOZ correctly, under these circumstances, called for the formation of a workers' party and attempted to provide a left pole around which the working class could rally. The WIVL condemned the MDC as a reactionary organization, created by imperialism to head off the revolution. While this was true, WIVL's call should have been linked with the call for a workers' party and this critique (of the MDC) taken into movement leading up to the formation of the MDC as a party. The centre of this critique should have been to break the working class from the capitalist party, the MDC, and to call for an independent labour/workers' party. In this sense that the WIVL was not for the ISOZ to call for a labour party within the labour forums and making propaganda for this (counter-posing the workers' party to the MDC) among the base of workers discussions that were debating the 'people's convention' (the fore-runner of the MDC), our position was sectarian. The ISOZ entered the MDC, creating illusions that it was a workers' party when in fact it was a capitalist party. To its credit when the MDC had adopted the economic programme of the IMF, the ISOZ initiated a split from it in 2002. The ISOZ leaders also acknowledged that the MDC had already isolated them as far back as 2001. Thus even in this split from the MDC, the ISOZ were tailing developments. The MDC is not a United Front but a Popular front as it had capitalist representatives in them from the beginning (such as Eddie Cross of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Industries). Despite the failure of the WIVL to call for a workers' party in Zimbabwe at that time, that the SWP directed the ISOZ to not to pose certain critical transitional demands, to not openly warn the masses of the treacherous nature of Tshivagerai and to stay join and stay in the MDC and build the Popular Front, means that WIVL was to the left of both SWP and ISOZ. While the WIVL position was sectarian initially, the SWP position was opportunist through and through (*'Entrism requires patience'* wrote Callinicos, as he argued in 2002 for the ISOZ to remain even longer in the MDC).

After 2 failed attempts to build reformist parties in Zimbabwe, imperialism finally realized they needed the support of the trade union bureaucracy as they had in the case of Zambia. In order to head off the revolt, imperialism funded the calling of a people's convention in 1998-9, leading to the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) to be formed in September 1999. The British Tories funded the formation of the MDC while the imperialist Frederick Ebert Foundation funded the formation of the NCA (National Constitutional Assembly) and actively promoted Tshivangerai as



its leader. The NCA was a major player in the calling of the ‘People’s Convention’, and thus in the formation of the MDC. The SWP failed to warn the working class of the counter-revolutionary aims of those who were leading the setting up of the MDC, instead they merely referred to it then as an ‘enigma’ (mystery). They failed to direct the ISOZ to expose this from the very beginning. Clearly, at this stage, the SWP gave support to Tshivagerai, instead of supporting the working class and warning them about him.

Further, no call was made to set up soviets or workers’ councils as the main basis to unite the struggles and to make attempts to win over the army. The call for soviets would have created a basis to counter-pose this workers’ assembly to the ‘people’s’ assembly being led by the capitalists.

Further, the ISOZ programme at the initial stages of the formation of the MDC, before its programme and structure had been finalized, was defective in a number of ways:

1. There was no call for the expulsion of all capitalist representatives from the ‘People’s Convention’ and thus from any efforts to form a worker’s party; this fight would have helped to expose the true capitalist nature of the MDC and facilitated the development of a workers’ party in opposition to it - a successful battle on this front would have meant the setting up of a labour party- not a guarantee of a revolutionary party, but the first step to take independent political organization of the working class forward; in the absence of even raising this demand, the SWP, through the ISOZ created, if not supported the illusion that the MDC was a labour party and not a Popular Front
2. There was no call for the formation of soviets or the transformation of the labour forums into soviets;
3. There was no call for the formation of a workers’ militia (which Trotsky in the 1938 discussions on the Labour party emphasized as an essential part of a set of transitional demands to be presented by Fourth International groups entering labour parties);
4. There was no demand for an end to unemployment and a sliding scale of hours;
5. there was no call for a workers’ and peasants government, ie a workers’ government which has the support of the poor peasants
6. while there was a call for nationalization – this was not linked to expropriation of imperialist assets without compensation, under workers control of production

In short the programme of the ISOZ was a left bourgeois programme, a minimum programme. This shortcoming is to be blamed on the SWP and the IS tendency, who have access to all the writings of Trotsky and Lenin, and should have given direction to the ISOZ.

Trotsky warned in 1938 that the formation of a labour party shows that the class conflict is sharpening and that the capitalist class would prepare a fascist option if necessary. He went further to warn that the programme that we present should be transitional and not a minimum programme. Trotsky said in the 1938 discussions on the labour party “*we also have the possibility of spreading the slogans of our transitional program and see the reaction of the masses. We will see what slogans*



should be selected, what slogans abandoned, but if we give up our slogans before the experience, before seeing the reaction of the masses, then we can never advance.”

Further he said: *“These demands are transitory because they lead from the capitalist society to the proletarian revolution, a consequence insofar as they become the demands of the masses as the proletarian government. We can’t stop only with the day-to-day demands of the proletariat. We must give to the most backward workers some concrete slogan that corresponds to their needs and that leads dialectically to the conquest of power.”*

Thus the posing of a minimum programme by the SWP for the entry of ISOZ into the MDC, not only disarmed the Zimbabwean working class but also the ISOZ itself. This meant that the ISOZ presented 2 reformist programmes to the working class, the ultra-cheap MDC ticket and the 2nd class ISOZ one. This resulted in confusion in the minds of the working class. If a transitional programme had been presented by the ISOZ in the beginning stages of the formation of the MDC to help expose it, this would have drawn the class line between the ISOZ and the MDC. This might have led to a quicker expulsion from the discussions of the ranks of the People’s Convention but at least the working class would have seen the revolutionary programme that the ISOZ stood for and the masses would know which door to come knocking on when the analysis of the ISOZ became reality. But a more positive outcome could have developed, namely that the ISOZ could have grown as a revolutionary pole for the creation of a labour party as opposed to the MDC, with a possible development into a mass revolutionary party- this would have placed the ISOZ in a world historic leading role in the struggle for Socialism.

Of course, analysis is always easier with hindsight but the importance of this analysis is to draw the lessons for the world proletariat so as to clarify our tactics and strategies for the present and future.

The degeneration of the ISOZ

In the March 2000 elections, the ISOZ put up a candidate (Gwisai) in one of the working class neighbourhoods, Highfield, in Harare. He had been scheduled to stand in central Harare where there were capitalist factories in the constituency. Due to pressure from the capitalist elements the ISOZ then shifted the candidacy to Highfield. With an approach of forming soviets and a workers’ militia, and considering the militant mood among the masses at the time, they should have contested the central Harare constituency. But even in the Highfield constituency, no attempts were made to form workers’ councils or even the beginnings of a workers’ militia. This was part of the ongoing opportunist adaptation by the ISOZ (under guidance of the SWP) to the capitalist order.

From 2000 up until the present date, the fascist crackdown against the working class by capitalism imperialism, through Mugabe, has intensified. While the selected land invasions by Mugabe’s rich peasant base took place, his troops stood guard over commercial farms, factories, shops and mines owned by imperialism. The response of the National Co-ordinating Committee of the ISOZ to the fascist crackdown was to place faith in the church: *“we could start with prayers at designated local churches followed by marches and protests from the churches led by the pastors and leadership of the movement”* (NCC statement 11.06.05, Harare).



In the run-up to the June 2008 presidential elections a pre-revolutionary situation existed in Zimbabwe, the masses had voted earlier in the year, despite huge intimidation by Mugabe's fascist gangs, for the MDC; at a point one of the military heads of Zanu-PF fled to South Africa citing that 75% of the armed forces were against Mugabe; when the masses started to turn even against Tshivagerai, who did nothing to mobilize the masses to arm themselves in self defence, the ISOZ was still mobilizing support for the MDC: *"we are demanding a constitution that enshrines basic socio-economic rights and labour rights and ensures their enforceability centrally through a constitutionally guaranteed budgetary system as illustrated by the Venezuelan constitution."* Whereas the ISOZ initially opposed a government of national unity they now called for *"speedy finalization of the current ongoing talks for a government of national unity"*. (Fortune Rera ISOZ NCC 20 Nov 2008- letter to WIVL).

On the 23rd Sept 2008 Gwisai presented his analysis of the current situation: *"we are cognizant that in the short term the possibility of massive mass action is slim.....we welcome the position taken by the ZCTU and NCA for a continued demand of a genuine people driven constitution and the holding of free and fair elections thereafter.....it is imperative that there be the urgent regroupment in a united front of the radical, anti-neo-liberal and left forces, including organized labour. We are hoping the coming Zimbabwe Social Forum in October provides a further platform for the remobilization of radical forces....a united front struggleimmediately means....a new people's driven constitution..."*

Although the ISOZ has now split into 2 fractions around Rera and Gwisai respectively, the above positions show that their position in essence the same: namely promoting faith in a bourgeois constituent assembly, instead of exposing at every step of the way that such processes, irrespective if they are worker driven, would not result in the demands of the masses being met. While the masses were in the streets and soldiers even left their barracks for the streets in support of the masses, neither fraction of ISOZ made any attempt at calling for workers councils and workers' militia. But then how could the ISOZ do this while they were still 'patiently' implementing the SWP position of support for the MDC, although supposedly 'critically'! Yet another example of the SWP marching with the reformists instead of with the masses.

The ISOZ and SWP support Chavez, who is cracking down on the Venezuelan working class and safeguarding capitalism there. They support the World Social Forum whose main aim is to divert the working class masses from revolution against capitalism.

Was it sheer coincidence that the wave of so-called xenophobic violence, against Zimbabweans and other black Africans, was swept up in South Africa at the same time that there was a pre-revolutionary situation in Zimbabwe? Did the imperialist utilize the nationalist sentiments in the petty bourgeois layers of the ANC and the desperation of the lumpen proletariat, to their advantage by creating fascistic gangs to destabilise the Zimbabwean masses and to divert attention of the rising masses away from the taking of power? The mass attacks against black foreigners in South Africa took place in May 2008, weeks before the June Presidential elections in Zimbabwe.



At the time there were over 1 million Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa (by far the largest group of refugees). The capitalist media fanned the flames of violence by openly showing front page pictures of a foreign worker burning while the police were laughing and doing nothing. This handed a blank cheque to the fascist gangs to opportunistically act and sweep many workers along with them. The aim of the fascistic violence against black African refugees was 3-fold: Firstly to destabilize the Zimbabwean working class from launching a mass revolutionary uprising against the imperialist-backed Zimbabwean state; secondly, such an uprising could have had serious spill-over into South Africa, one of the key bastions of imperialism in Africa- the masses protests against the state and capital in South Africa could have intensified and opened the road to mass uprising in South Africa; thirdly, it could have provided a beacon to the rest of the working class in the world in the current global attacks by capitalism-imperialism.

The massive devaluation of the Zim dollar since 2002 was not due to ‘farm invasions’ but were a deliberate ploy by imperialism to starve the Zimbabwean working class, to break its spirit of resistance. The masses may be tired but the events of 2008 show that the Zimbabwean masses can never be written off, the masses will rise again. The dollarisation of the Zimbabwean economy is another mechanism to shift the burden of the crisis of capitalism onto the masses in Zimbabwe. It was a vicious attempt by imperialism to break the fighting spirit of the Zimbabwean masses. This comes at a time when the value of the US dollar is less than the Zimbabwean dollar in real terms but the violence of world imperialism imposes an artificial value to the US dollar- one of the chief means of super-exploiting the masses of the world and a means to extract surplus value from the workers of the world.

The way forward

The first step for the members of ISOZ is to break decisively with the opportunist politics of the SWP and IS tendency and to make a public self-criticism available to the Zimbabwean working class. If this means breaking from the ISOZ or refounding it or forming a new revolutionary working class formation, it is not for us to prescribe to you.

Secondly, we invite you and the heroic Zimbabwean working class to join in discussions with the WIVL and the FLT (Leninist Trotskyist Fraction) to form an International Leninist Trotskyist Fraction as part of the process of co-ordinating the fight against capitalism imperialism from here onwards.

Thirdly a programme of transitional demands needs to be developed for Zimbabwe for the current situation and we invite you to give the lead in developing such proposals. It is this programme that should be counter-posed to the Constitutional referendum, not calling for a no or yes vote for questions that may be manipulated to give no choice to the working class in any case. The cornerstone of such a programme has been confirmed by the negative experience of the MDC, namely that to achieve the full democratic demands, can only be realized through the working class taking power in Zimbabwe, through the application of the permanent revolution. Such a programme can be the only way that an independent revolutionary working class party can develop in Zimbabwe, as part of the rebuilding/refounding a revolutionary International; we believe this to be the Fourth International. Shinga Mushandi Shinga! Qina Msebenzi Qina!



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How the ANC-SACP-Cosatu Popular Front ensures imperialist control in Zimbabwe

No exposure on the revolution in Zimbabwe would be complete without a reflection on the role of the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance.

By far the biggest import from Zimbabwe is Nickel. Last year, during which a pre-revolutionary period existed, the imports in Nickel amounted to over R1,2 Billion (about US\$ 150 million). The major Nickel mines (such as Bindura) are owned and controlled by Anglo American. Rio Tinto also controls a major Nickel and Cobalt refinery, Empressa. Common to both companies are major shareholding stakes by Citibank and JP Morgan Chase. The dominant imperialism in Zimbabwe, by far, is thus US imperialism. At a time when the working class in Zimbabwe is suffering extreme hardships, the major exports to South Africa are still minerals, tobacco and cotton. The tobacco and cotton plantations have been safeguarded by Zimbabwean government troops, which shows that the Zanu-PF regime is the agent of imperialism, despite its supposedly anti-british imperialist rhetoric.

It is this dominance by US imperialism that the ANC government has been safeguarding through its 'quiet diplomacy'. But the actions of the ANC government are far from being neutral. South African Arms companies are the largest supplier of weapons to Zimbabwe. In 2004, the SA government sent 2.6 tons of revolvers to Zimbabwe, along with 7.5 tons of ammunition. In April 2008, when there was a massive arms shipment from China blocked by workers of Satawu, the transport union, the contract for transporting the weapons had been given to Armscor. The SA government saw no contradiction between the workers uprising in Zimbabwe and the shipment of arms to the Zimbabwean government. In fact they were acting out their mandate from the US imperialists to help safeguard their exploitation of the Zimbabwean working class.



The chair of the National Conventional Arms Control Committee until recently was Sydney Mufamadi, an SACP leader, who oversaw and approved all the arms shipments to Zimbabwe. Thus when the workers of Satawu blocked the arms from the Chinese ship, they were acting against the real policy of the SACP, which is to safeguard imperialist control in the region.

During the revolutionary days in April-May 2008, the SACP released a statement, that the principal cause of the deteriorating situation in Zimbabwe was that the Zanu-PF regime was not 'buttressed by the people's will'. They called for an early release of election results and an end to the crisis. No call was made to the SA or Zimbabwean working class to take action. 75% of the armed forces were prepared to turn against Zanu-PF, the masses were in the streets, and all the SACP could say was that the crisis should be resolved through elections. What they meant is that either of Zanu-PF and MDC, both pro-imperialist formations, should gain control of the masses. In other words, for imperialism to continue to maintain its exploitation of the masses, they needed a party in control, that had the support of the masses, that would act as a 'buffer' to neutralise the demands of the masses on behalf of imperialism.

Further, on the 27th April 2008, the Politbureau statement of the SACP, called for minor travel restrictions to be placed on the Zimbabwe army leaders, and as a last resort, for AU or UN intervention. This was a virtually identical position to that of the Bush administration. For the SACP, if the masses had to rise, it was necessary for the might of imperialist troops to intervene to crush the revolution.

The position of the Cosatu leadership is best seen by the joint statement of the ZCTU and Cosatu on 29 January 2009. Consistent with the SACP position to keep the struggle limited to elections, this demand (for elections) was placed as the central demand of both federations. ZCTU is the main support base of the MDC, while Cosatu is the main support of the ANC. Both MDC and ANC are Popular fronts and the stance of the Cosatu and SACP leadership over a revolutionary situation in Zimbabwe is instructive for the role they will play in South Africa under similar conditions. This joint ZCTU and Cosatu statement was concerned that the MDC, if they were forced to compromise too much, such as in the 15 Sept 2008 agreement that set up a 'unity' government, they would lose support among the masses. In other words, imperialism would have a major problem that none of the horses they were backing, would be in control of the masses. Under these conditions, the masses might rise up and overthrow capitalist relations. When the Satawu workers acted to block the Chinese arms shipment, they were taking the Cosatu leadership at their word when they called for solidarity actions.

But the Cosatu leadership actions in support of the Zimbabwean working class remained only at that, words. Token demonstrations and pickets in support by a handful of workers and officials, and election monitors, were all that the Cosatu leadership organised. Cosatu is organised at many workplaces that are at the centre of Anglo American linked companies in South Africa. There was no call for any general strike in support of the



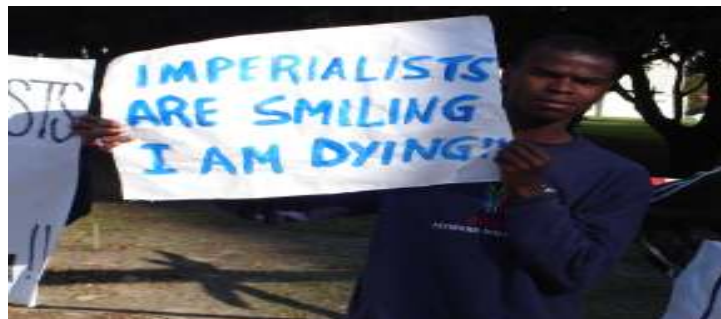
working class in Zimbabwe. Yet, when the reactionary DA picks an all-male cabinet, the leaders of Cosatu were very quick to organise a general strike. If it was correct to call for militant action against a local reactionary force, how much more so was it necessary to strike against a fascistic imperialist agent in Zimbabwe. The inclusion of a woman into a regional bourgeois cabinet does not advance the cause of the working class woman but will merely mean co-optation of women into the upper middle class. In fact the illusion would have been maintained that the government structures are gender sensitive, when in fact they are not. Working class action in South Africa would have been decisive in supporting the Zimbabwean working class to take power. But the revolution would not have stopped there and would have expanded to South Africa, if not to the entire Southern African region. The policy of the Cosatu leadership on Zimbabwe has been to leave it to the NGO's (so called civil society conferences), in other words, to leave the fate of the working class in Zimbabwe to the reformist, capitalist layers of the middle class. Thus the Cosatu leaders use the working class to support upper-middle class demands while using the middle class to 'support' the working class in Zimbabwe. Upper middle class demands are given real working class support while the working class in Zimbabwe is given only symbolic support.

By supporting pro-imperialist forces like the MDC in Zimbabwe and failing to organise mass action by the working class, the Cosatu leaders show that they are themselves pro-imperialist. They have to go. It is time to establish real workers' control in Cosatu, to replace its leaders with independent working class fighters, to break the alliance with the capitalist ANC and the pro-imperialist SACP.

Now, more than ever it is necessary to establish revolutionary working class parties across Southern Africa, as part of the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

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Madagascar- the revolution begins

The world capitalist system is based on a higher rate of exploitation in the neo-colonies. After the second world imperialist war, time and again, the imperialists have shifted the burden of their crisis of falling profits more onto the working class in the colonies and neo-colonies. The working class has always resisted exploitation to varying degrees. In Cuba, capitalist relations were overthrown but the revolution was not completed as the guerrilla movement sided with Stalinism and a bureaucracy was installed instead of the dictatorship of the working class (class rule through workers' councils, among other things). The working class was the driving force in the struggles for liberation from colonial rule but each time, due to the lack of revolutionary working class parties, the siding of the Fourth International leadership with Stalinism, the dominance of world Stalinism, the process of 'decolonization' yielded neo-colonies- in other words, in the absence of the working class taking power, local bourgeois forces took power and ruled on behalf of imperialism. Madagascar was no exception.

In the context of already a high rate of exploitation and several years of resistance by the working class and poor peasants in Madagascar, the latest crisis of world capitalism placed even greater strain on the working class there. It is in this context that the heads of the IMF and World Bank have said that they expect greater social 'unrest' in the 'Third World' (read neo-colonies). Once again, imperialism-capitalism wanted to escape from its crisis through even greater exploitation of the working class in the neo-colonies. In this sense, the working class in Madagascar, Greece, Guadeloupe, have played a leadership role in the resistance to the latest of attacks by imperialism. The struggles in Madagascar shows the difficulties that face the working class under current conditions. Thus we attempt to learn from the heroic efforts of the working class in Madagascar as they shed light on the tasks faced by the world working class.

The revolution begins in Madagascar

On March 8, 2009 the revolution in Madagascar began. The former French colony, an island of almost 20 million inhabitants, bigger than France, is located in the Indian Ocean, about 250 miles off the coast of Mozambique and South Africa. On that day the armed forces refused to obey the orders of the President Ravalomanana, to repress the workers and poor peasants who had been in a state of rebellion since mid-January. Hundreds of rank and file mutinied and took control of the Soanierana base, the main arsenal of the Malagasy armed forces, 6 kilometres from Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. Their press release said: "We no longer respond to the orders of our officers, we respond to our hearts. We were trained to protect the people and property, not to attack the people. We are the people".

Why did the ordinary soldiers side with the exploited?

Since late January, the working class and poor peasants had been fighting in the streets, holding demonstrations, general strikes and clashes with the police and the mercenary presidential guard. Over 100 have been killed.



During those two months of fighting, the union bureaucracy of the four unions of the CTM (Confederation of Malagasy Workers) set up a "Council of the Republic for economic and social affairs" uniting government, employers and unions and condemning the struggles of the workers and peasants as "vandalism".

There had been several uprisings of the masses before in Madagascar and each time the police acted to defend capitalist and thus imperialist interests. Years of suffering and exposure of the treacherous role of the trade union leadership, as the agent of the capitalists within the workers' movement, led to the masses rising on their own initiative. Such suffering and hardship was also being felt within the ranks of the army. This new uprising reflected a qualitative change in the masses to refuse to be exploited in the old way. This was demonstrated when militant workers and peasants lynched some of the police, and left their bodies hanging from trees and lampposts in Antananarivo. These actions proved to the rank and file soldiers that the workers and poor peasants – their parents, brothers, uncles, cousins etc - were willing to go all the way in their campaign. This uprising finally gave the soldiers the courage to mutiny against their officers and with their weapons, join the rebellion.

As Trotsky said of the revolution of February 1917: *"... the disarmament of the Pharaohs [police. Ed] becomes a universal slogan. The police are fierce, implacable, hated and hating foes. To win them over is out of the question. Beat them up and kill them. It is different with the soldiers... The critical hour of contact between the pushing crowd and the soldiers who bar their way has its critical minutes. That is when the gray barrier has not yet given way, still holds together shoulder to shoulder, but already wavers, and the officer, gathering his last strength of will, gives the command: "Fire!"... The guns waver. The crowd pushes. Then the officer points the barrel of his revolver at the most suspicious soldier. From the decisive minute now stands out the decisive second... At the critical moment, when the officer is ready to pull the trigger, a shot from the crowd forestalls him... This decides not only the fate of the street skirmish, but perhaps the whole day, or the whole insurrection. ... The street fighting began with the disarming of the hated Pharaohs, their revolvers passing into the hands of the rebels. ... The way to the soldier's rifle lead through the revolver taken from the Pharaoh."*

(History of the Russian Revolution, Gollanz 1934: 128-142, our emphasis).

In Madagascar, during this uprising of the masses, the way to the soldier's rifle was through the policemen hanging from trees in Antananarivo with their pistols passing into the hands of the rebellion, which then gave the soldiers the confidence to disobey their officers when given orders to suppress the people. In this way, the March 8 revolution began. Since late January a growing crisis developed out of a split in the bourgeoisie between the pro-US fraction led by President Ravalomanana and a pro-French fraction behind Andry Rajoelina, mayor of Antananarivo. Ravalomanana appointed himself president of a "Transition Authority" to hold a referendum. At that point, the rank and file soldiers who had remained "neutral", as the guarantors, ultimately, the interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole, mutinied.



This mutiny on March 8 was the beginning of a workers and poor peasants armed insurrection that overthrew Ravalomanana and his regime. This could be called a classic "February Revolution" that causes a revolutionary crisis and creates a power vacuum in the regime.

The revolutionary uprising creates a power vacuum in the regime

For nearly a week between 8 and March 16, there was no government in Madagascar. Faced with the insubordination of its base and the opening of the revolution, the leadership of the armed forces had remained on the sidelines, waiting for an agreement between the two bourgeois fractions. It issued an ultimatum saying that if the two fractions had not come to an agreement in 72 hours, the generals would take control of the government. Ridiculous: no one could believe that a handful of generals and colonels whose troops had mutinied and taken over the largest arsenal in the country, could mount a coup.

Ravalomanana ignored the ultimatum and remained in one of his palaces surrounded by the mercenary presidential guard and a few thousand followers. Rajoelina, along with the generals and palace officials, formed a "junta" to head off and contain the masses. The generals saw this as the best way to save bourgeois property and thus the bourgeoisie's plan was to allow Rajoelina to become the President as a supposed representative of the demands of the masses. Thus the imposition of Rajoelina as the President, was in the form of a supposedly above-class representative (a Bonapart), appearing to act against both the masses and the bourgeoisie, while in reality biding time for the capitalist class to once again impose its will.

On Friday March 13, Rajoelina along with the generals and the officials of the Transitional Authority occupied the presidential palace. To give some semblance of legality to Rajoelina's investiture as president of Madagascar they gave Ravalomanana four hours to resign. Ravalomanana finally resigned on Monday 16 so that on that day the power vacuum was finally filled by Rajoelina.

The working class and poor peasants who fought with such heroism and spontaneity, attacking the police, dividing the army and toppling Ravalomanana, found that suddenly they faced the question of who would take the power and rule Madagascar. Since there was no revolutionary leadership with a program to fight for power, the generals stepped in and appointed Rajoelina, leading the pro-French fraction of the bourgeoisie to fill the power vacuum. Thus the bourgeoisie started to contest the "dual power" of the masses mobilised on the streets and backed by the ordinary soldiers. It is likely that under these conditions, bourgeois rule may be restored. This once again demonstrated the lesson of the February 1917 Russian revolution, that in the absence of a revolutionary Bolshevik party with sufficient support and a programme for the working class to take power, the revolution ends up in the hands of the very forces who will hold it back.



The workers, poor peasants and soldiers began a revolution with their “dual power”

But the revolution has already begun: the government of "national salvation" of Rajoelina is weak, the regime and all its institutions are destroyed, and most importantly, because bourgeois discipline in the armed forces had broken down; the army was divided by the insurgent masses who gave courage to the soldiers to rise up against the caste of officers and to move with their weapons onto the side of the exploited.

The masses are still in the street; rebel soldiers sent tanks to the capital to counter any possible attack by the mercenaries of the presidential guard, and in the streets, squares, including the churches, can be seen carrying their weapons defending the workers and poor peasants. The soldiers were ordered to clarify things very well for the media that they do not take orders from Ravalomanana or the military, not even Rajoelina.

The revolution has begun and Madagascar and has already gone beyond the heroic workers and peasants of Bolivia 2003-2005, and the revolutionary struggle of the working class and students in Greece in December 2008: it has split the ranks of the army from the officers and the workers and poor peasants from the bourgeois state to create a dual power situation. The evidence is the masses of armed soldiers who mutinied and have control of the main military base and the entire arsenal of the country.

There are two powers now in Madagascar; one of the weak regime of Rajoelina, supported by a fraction of the national bourgeoisie, by a military leadership that neither controls the soldiers or the main arsenal; the union bureaucracy, which was overthrown by the insurgent masses, and the leading government officials recognised by the majority of the imperialist powers and governments of various countries of Africa. The other power is that of the workers, peasants and armed soldiers, which is the only power recognised by the broad exploited masses.

This dual power situation can only last a short period of time: sooner or later one must impose itself on the other. Either the working class, peasants and soldiers will centralize its national bodies of power and form a national workers and peasants militia to organize and mount a successful insurrection (in which a government of workers, poor peasants and soldiers rule, that is the dictatorship of the proletariat) or, imperialism and the bourgeoisie, deceiving and dividing the masses through class collaboration and the terror of fascism will smash the revolution with fire and drown it in blood. But in the absence of a revolutionary working class party, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not possible. This does not mean the automatic restoration of capitalist 'order'.

This will not be resolved in a single act, but over a period of time. We are at the beginning of a great revolution in which the masses have won a "brilliant victory" in the words of Trotsky referring to Russia in February 1917, the German revolution of 1918-1919, the Hungarian revolution of 1919 and the Spanish in 1931. Today, the masses feel victorious as they are armed in the



streets, cities, villages, and the countryside. It's the bourgeoisie that is terrified of losing everything, its status, power and property. But as Trotsky said in 1936, of all those brilliant victories: "... it was only in Russia that the proletariat took full power in their hands, expropriated their exploiters and, therefore, knew how to create and maintain a workers' state. In all other cases, the proletariat, despite his victory, was stopped, by its leadership, midway. The result was that the power in its hands flowed from left to right, ending up as the spoils of fascism. In a number of other countries, the power fell to a military dictatorship." (Wither France?)

The February 1917 revolution in Russia was the fruit of years of patient work of the Bolshevik party. This work helped to not only lay the basis for the February 1917 revolution but also for the October 1917 Russian revolution, when the workers took power and were able to hold on to it. By the very absence of a revolutionary working class party as part of the Fourth International, also weighs down on the current prospects of the revolution in Madagascar. This does not make the struggle of the Madagascan working class any less heroic. It stands as a shining example of the readiness of the world proletariat to confront and overthrow capitalist relations on a world scale.

The struggle for land, bread and for national independence against the brutal imperialist plunder

The beginning of this revolution in Madagascar is not an isolated storm in a clear sky. It is, first, part of the general revolutionary uprising that shook the French colonies from Guadeloupe, Martinique and Guyana in Latin America, the island of Reunion, a few miles from the coast of Madagascar, and Polynesia. Thus, while the Malagasy working class, peasants and soldiers began their revolution, on the island of Reunion the exploited workers had been on a general strike since March 5, for the same demands as their brothers and sisters of the West Indies. But unlike in Guadeloupe and Martinique, as of Monday 11 March, the masses threw out their leaders, and leaving behind the "peaceful protest", took to the streets, French style.

Moreover, Madagascar has become a shining example in the colonial and semi-colonial world, of Africa in particular, of mass resistance to the global crisis and the fierce inter-imperialist disputes of control of resources, land, markets, cheap labor, etc., which have imposed unprecedented levels of exploitation of these nations.

70% of the population lives below the poverty line on less than one euro (about R11 or just less than 1 US dollar) per day. The workers are super exploited in the chrome and other mineral mines owned by imperialist corporations, particularly Japanese, also in the maquiladoras located in the so-called "free trade zones" and the services linked to tourism. [Maquiladoras are companies that operate in 'free-trade' zones, where there are no minimum wages or conditions, where generally workers can be instantly dismissed; there is often child labour and no unions operate there- these are zones of super-exploitation, similar to what the DA in South Africa is proposing as a means of 'job creation'] Much of the population live in the countryside, on



small plots without title deeds, achieved thanks to the anti-colonial struggle and the expulsion of the French landowners, but can only plant subsistence crops. Thus, of around 33 million hectares of arable land, only about 3 million are exploited.

Madagascar, since it ceased to be a French colony, has been ruled by France as a semi-colony. In 2002 Ravalomanana became president winning elections against the former president who was a direct agent of French imperialism. Ravalomanana, a wealthy businessman, who owns a chain of supermarkets and large stores (looted and burned throughout the country by the rebels since January 2009) created free trade zones for mainly German maquiladora companies, and signed contracts for the exploitation of mines by non-French imperialist corporations. He also leased 1,300,000 hectares (equal to half of Belgium) for 99 years to a South Korean company for growing palm oil and corn for biofuel exports to South Korea. In return the consortium has made false promises to "invest 6000 million dollars" and "to create 70,000 jobs" etc.

French imperialism, the former colonial power, was livid with anger that their competitors were stealing part of their business. So, France backed Rajoelina and his fraction of the bourgeoisie with Development Aid and financed the purchase of two islands, Nosy Hara and Mitsa, to develop for business and luxury tourism. Thus, the bourgeoisie was divided into two fractions, one around Ravalomanana, client of the US, Germany and Japanese imperialism, and the other around Rajoelina in the pay of French imperialism. This split in the bourgeoisie saw both fractions competing to exploit the masses. After the masses overthrew Ravalomanana, Rajoelina, with the backing of French imperialism, was able to divert the masses justifiable hatred towards imperialism, by declaring himself President to fill the power vacuum.

This anger towards imperialism was fuelled in part by the displacement of peasant families and the expropriation of 1.3 million hectares leased to Daewoo Logistics. The announcement of the lease and the first attempts to evict the peasants brought about a mass revolt to defend their land rights. The mayor of a village who was ordered by Ravalomanana to evict the peasants off the land for Daewoo, refused to do so, saying that he "would be lynched by the peasants."

This uprising of the rural poor, together with the struggle of the working class and the exploited of the cities against slavery and poverty wages of the transnationals in the maquiladoras was against the starvation caused by imperialist super-exploitation. The riots in January and early February, condemned by the sell-out union leaders, were the justifiable response of starving workers and poor farmers to feed their children. In the face of their poverty the owner of the supermarkets Ravalomanana, and the imperialist businessmen and rich parasites from France, the US, Germany and Japan were living it up in the luxury tourist resorts.

Drawing the lessons from the Paris Commune of 1871 and other revolutions



When the workers took Paris in 1871, taking over factories and smashing the state by setting up their own organs of self-rule, they made crucial errors. One of them was to stop short of expropriating the banks.

In Madagascar, not only did the working class not take over the banks, but they did not take over the mines and other bigger factories. Setting up workers' control in the mines and the maquiladoras would have laid the basis for overturning capitalist relations in Madagascar. The taking over of the banks would have given the working class the necessary leverage to entrench workers' control and begin to set the basis for co-operation and further advancing the ending of capitalist relations.

These omissions made it easier for imperialism to take steps to regain control. The absence of these steps cannot be blamed on the Madagascan working class, who had no revolutionary party to guide and lead their struggle. The role of the party as well as the need of a revolutionary international, is demonstrated by the revolutionary uprising of the Madagascan masses, who on their own initiative, rose to challenge the might of imperialism.

No support in the government of Rajoelina agent of French imperialism!

The Malagasy bourgeoisie has as its main objective to make sure that the regime of Rajoelina resolves the dual power situation by disarming and repressing the masses. First it has concentrated all power into the hands of the Presidential office and the generals. It has dissolved parliament and has announced new elections within two years. Second, it deceives the masses with false promises. It promises to halt the lease of land to Daewoo, to regulate the transnationals, lower food prices etc. Meanwhile during this period of Presidential/military rule the Malagasy bourgeoisie will bargain with all the imperialist powers including France to retain a better share of the wealth produced by the exploited Malagasys.

But events are still up in the air. The power vacuum has been filled but the split in the bourgeoisie has not been mended. Daewoo and the US imperialism have not given up. They are condemning Rajoelina's "coup" and promoting a pro-Ravalomanana demonstration on March 24 in Antananarivo "in defense of democracy", that is to say a "democratic front." Hypocrites, talking about democracy for which they paid Ravalomanana in Malagasy currency, which came with accessories such as a state of siege, police killings of more than 100 workers, and a real coup against a popular uprising!

Rajoelina seems to be adopting the role of a "Bolivarian" Bonapart in which he wants to break the unity of the workers and peasants and soldiers to strangle the revolution and subordinate it to the fraction of the national bourgeoisie supported by French imperialism. But before he can do that he must disarm the masses on the streets. And to do that he has to break the soldier rebellion and get them to obey orders to repress the people. He must convince the workers and poor peasants to return their seized weapons to the police and accept the "authority" of these same murderers that they yesterday hung from the trees.



The masses, armed and victorious, feel strong. The bourgeoisie, are weak and scared, and afraid that the crisis will expose the lies and demagoguery of Rajoelina, leaving the masses strong enough to finish the revolution they have started. But if they do not take the power the Bonapartist regime will arise to tie the hands of the masses and paralyze their will, while behind the scenes the forces of the counterrevolution, the military officers, or fascist bands, or both, gather strength to smash the revolution. We must not forget the tragic lesson of Bolivia!

¡For a National Council of Delegates workers, poor peasants and soldiers at the Soanierana Base held by rebels! ¡Set up and centralize the national workers and peasants militia!

Any program that claims to be for revolution in Madagascar today must begin by calling for workers, peasants and soldiers not to give the slightest support to the government Rajoelina, nor fall into the trap of "democratic front" backed by the US, Ravalomanana and other killers of workers and exploited. It must call for the insurgents to continue their offensive and revolutionary struggles, set up workers' and soldiers committees and to occupy the lands, mines, factories and banks! If they stop they will not get bread for their children from the supermarkets! The same with the soldiers. Do not surrender or give up your weapon to Rajoelina's generals! Do not stop; complete the military insurrection to defeat the officers!

If you stop disbanding the police, they will rearm and kill you! Let's not stop: create popular courts of the workers, peasants and soldiers to try and punish Ravalomanana, his presidential guard of mercenaries and those who killed the more than 100 worker and peasant martyrs during the fighting. If Rajoelina uses force against the masses, he and his generals should be tried too. No time to lose! Every minute that the uprising is stopped the bourgeoisie gains strength!

The armed insurrection brought the workers close to winning bread, land, decent wages and the end of the imperialist rule of Madagascar. Therefore, that armed power must be expanded and concentrated into a powerful militia. Every factory, every business, every industry, every village and every quarter, must choose one delegate for each hundred workers or part thereof, poor peasants and soldiers, to meet at the Soanierana Base and create a National Congress of workers, peasants and soldiers together with a national militia!

That National Congress of delegates of the exploited masses will take into its own hands the authority to impose solutions to problems facing the masses and unite all the exploited in the oppressed nation, led by the workers, and make the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie pay for their crisis!

But for the revolutionary crisis to be resolved in favour of the proletariat, the healthy forces of the Fourth International need to establish a section in Madagascar, a revolutionary working class party there. In the heat of the October 1917 insurrection, when the masses were moving towards taking power, this is what Trotsky wrote in the History of the Russian Revolution:



... 'the soviets by themselves do not settle the question. They may serve different goals according to the programme and leadership. The soviets receive their programme from the party. Whereas the soviets in revolutionary conditions- and apart from revolution they are impossible- comprise the whole class with the exception of its altogether backward, inert or demoralized strata, the revolutionary party represents the brain of the class. The problem of conquering power can be solved only by a definite combination of party with soviets- or with other mass organizations more or less equivalent to soviets.'

The example of Lesotho shows that when imperialist assets are threatened (such as the World Bank sponsored dam), troops from the Southern Africa (possibly South Africa and Botswana again), would be sent to put down the working class uprising. The revolution in Madagascar is interconnected with the working class in Southern Africa taking power against their own pro-imperialist regimes. The strategic value of Madagascar to imperialism means that any combination of French or US imperialism may invade against a successful working class uprising. Thus on a broader scale, the revolution of Madagascar is interconnected with the revolution in the imperialist centres. Thus not only is a revolutionary working class party needed but it needs to be part of a revolutionary International [we would say that this has to be the rebuilt/refounded Fourth International].

- Workers, poor peasants and soldiers take up arms to win bread!
- Imperialist out! Get out Daewoo Korea-Pacific U.S! Get out French Development Aid!
- Expropriate without payment all US, French, Japanese and German transnationals under workers' control!
- Expropriate, without compensation, all the banks, mines, factories in the Free Trade Zones, tourism and all other imperialist interests! Place them under workers' control!
- Repudiate the external debt and all political, economic and military treaties with imperialism!
- Impose capital controls and a monopoly on foreign trade!
- Expropriate all commercial farms and place them under workers' control! Nationalise the land with cheap loans to poor family farmers who wish to work their land!
- Collective farms on uncultivated lands under workers control to provide food for the people of Madagascar!
- Expropriate without compensation under workers control all capitalist supermarkets and food outlets!



- For Popular Committees to control prices and supply local councils of workers, peasants and soldiers!
- Jobs for all at decent wages. No more slavery! Maquilas Out!
- Sliding scale of wages and hours of work, on a living wage pegged to the real cost of family cost of living!
- Expropriation without payment under workers' control of any plant that closes or sacks workers!

A National Congress can raise these demands but only a Workers Government backed by a workers' militia (the armed working class and poor peasants) can impose them. Because in Madagascar, as in all semi-colonial countries, it will not be the national bourgeoisie who are the junior partners of the imperialist powers, but only the working class that has no interests in defending imperialism or capitalist property that will end the imperialist yoke and win land, bread, work and wages, health and housing for the exploited. Only a government of armed workers, peasants and soldiers, with the revolutionary party at its head, can smash the bourgeois state, break with imperialism and expropriate the expropriators.

The revolution in Madagascar shows the way for the other French colonies and France itself!

The beginning of the Madagascar revolution is a new blow to French imperialism. Already shaken by the revolutionary uprisings of the colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique where general strikes and factory occupations raised the spectre of revolution and inspired the metropolitan French proletariat to open up a pre-revolutionary situation. Sarkozy and his 5th Republic imperialist regime has contained the revolution in the Antilles but, the fire is still alive on the island of Reunion, where the masses, looking to the onset of the Malagasy Revolution, threw out their leaders and continued with an indefinite strike.

The Revolution in Madagascar shows the way for the other French colonies and semi-colonies to win national Independence and land, bread, work and living wages!

- **Long live the general strike and the street fighting of the masses of Reunion!**
- **French imperialism and occupation troops out of Reunion, the Seychelles and Mauritius Islands!**

The armed power of the Malagasy workers, poor peasants and soldiers, raises the program for the common struggle of all the French colonies and semi-colonies against French imperialism. At the same time it raises the program for the French proletariat to extend its struggles from the barricades and factories for jobs and wages in France to take up the fight against "their" own bourgeoisie for the victory of the anti-imperialist struggles, the immediate



and unconditional release of political prisoners, and the immediate removal of imperialist troops from the colonies. If the massive strike actions in France condemned Sarkozy's crony Rajoelina and raised the demand for workers to power in Madagascar it would unite the workers and peasants of the colonies with those of the imperialist heartland and create the conditions for successful socialist revolutions in the colonies and semi-colonies. The greatest solidarity of the French working class would have been for them to intensify the fight to defeat their own imperialist regime.

The international character of the revolution in Madagascar

The revolution in Madagascar, takes to a higher level the heroic struggles of the working class in Zimbabwe, and reopens for the first time since the period of defeats following the strangling of the South African revolution in 1994 by the popular front government of the ANC, the South African Communist Party and the union bureaucracy of COSATU. This huge betrayal of Stalinism and the Popular Front was a setback for the masses of the oppressed and exploited of the whole continent.

This defeat led to another pathway for imperialism to extend its plunder of the 600 million masses in Africa using the legitimacy of the Mandela mask. Hundreds of thousands of the working class in Africa have continued to flee from imperialist-sponsored war and starvation, in desperate attempts to get to the imperialist centres of Europe. Tens of thousands of black workers and peasants died in the struggle to reach Europe and those who survived became a caste of slave workers, super-exploited in the imperialist countries, and then when the imperialist crisis hit, deported en masse. In the most recent period of growth, imperialism has increased its investment in Africa to exploit for example the rich oil reserves in Nigeria, diamond mines as in Sierra Leone and the minerals in the Congo. Imperialism has seized the best land for cash crop commodity production, while destroying local food production. As the crisis worsens, the scramble for Africa intensifies as the various imperialist powers compete to plunder its enormous natural wealth.

But as Marx and Engels said over 150 years ago, the bourgeoisie produces its own "gravediggers", the proletariat. The flow of capital into Africa in recent years has expanded and strengthened the working class. So, today, as capitalists try to solve their crisis by attacking the workers, Africa is not only a site for fierce inter-imperialist rivalry, but a site for mass working class uprisings that has begun to resist these attacks on their jobs, living standards and their lives. The vanguard of this black proletariat in Africa is in the North, where the Arab masses revolted from Morocco to Egypt in defence of the Palestinians, opening the road to the socialist revolution and a Federation of Socialist Soviet Republics of North Africa.

This vanguard has now been joined by the insurgent peasants and workers of Madagascar and Zimbabwe, widening the struggle towards a united socialist Africa by opening the front for a Federation of Socialist Republics in Central and Southern Africa.



In general, the struggles of the working class across Africa, has leapt to a qualitatively higher level than in the previous century. Today, the prospects of building revolutionary working class parties across Africa, as part of a revolutionary International, is so much greater. The smashing of the world Stalinist apparatus as well as the greater proletarianisation across Africa, provides the basis for the future Soviet Africa. In the same breathe the question of the world Socialist revolution is posed due to the interconnection and dependence of imperialism on super-exploitation in Africa.

As we said above these revolutionary uprisings in the colonies and semi-colonies of France and other imperialist countries must become adopted by the working classes in the imperialist heartlands. The path to Socialism lies in the revolutionary unity of the proletariat in the imperialist centres with the immigrant workers- a unity in the struggle to defeat their own imperialist. In France, Britain and the US, the millions of oppressed migrant workers treated like slaves and unity with them becomes the vital link to combat the treachery of the labor aristocracy and bureaucracy, in fusing the revolutions in the colonies, semi-colonies with that of the imperialist heartlands. Such international revolutionary unity can also reverse the counter-revolution that has restored capitalism to the former workers states and re-open the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat in these countries. Thus the revolution in Madagascar poses again the question of power, not only in that country, not only in Africa, but of the world revolution.

Once again Trotsky writing in 1932 on the role of Black workers in revolution has been vindicated: "... the Black workers, by virtue of their whole position, do not and cannot strive to degrade anybody, oppress anybody, or deprive anybody of his rights. They do not seek privileges and cannot rise to the top except on the road of the international revolution. We can and must find a way to the consciousness of Black workers, the Chinese workers, the Indian workers, and all the oppressed in the human ocean of the colored races to whom belongs the decisive word in the development of mankind". (Closer to the Proletarians of the "Colored" Races! Leon Trotsky, 1932).

The greater proletarianization of Africa, China and India raises immediately the prospect of unity of the world working class on scale never before attained, in the fight to defeat imperialism-capitalism.

The revolution in Madagascar demonstrates that the vanguard of the international proletariat must declare war on the labor bureaucracy who are the agents of capital inside the working class. Only by defeating these traitors can the working class solve the crisis of revolutionary leadership, on which, as it says in the Transitional Program of 1938, rests the fate of humanity.

For a new Trotskyist world revolutionary Party founded on the Fourth International program of 1938!

The revolution in Madagascar proves once again that workers, poor peasants and soldiers in Madagascar must solve the leadership crisis of the revolutionary proletariat. Based on its spontaneous insurrection the workers



could only go so far: to overthrow Ravalomanana, to weaken the bourgeois state by splitting the army, and to create a situation of dual power. But to succeed in going all the way to a proletarian revolution they need a revolutionary leadership. And just as the revolution in Madagascar is not “national” but has an international character and content, the only leadership that is capable of taking the revolution to victory is an international revolutionary leadership.

Each insurrection and semi-insurrection that has taken place, in Greece, in the West Indies and other French colonies, in France itself where the workers are standing up to fight, poses the question of who shall rule. Standing in the road of the revolutionary proletariat are the parties of the labor aristocracy and bureaucracy which are social patriotic and social imperialist. The Malagasy revolution which now poses the question of power and the urgent need to politically arm the masses to overthrow the bourgeois state, has become an acid test which separates out the reformists, and the centrists – disguised as ‘Trotskyists’ – from the revolutionary internationalists.

Already the Bolshevik fraction of the international working class is entering the fight to expose and defeat the reformists and centrists traitors. It seeks to intervene in the revolutionary events in Greece, Guadeloupe, general strikes in France, the uprisings of the Maghreb, the Palestinian struggle, and now the revolution in Madagascar. As the proletariat enters into combat the reformists and centrist strain to contain the new layers of fighters and subordinate them to the Popular Front of many colors. Against these counter-revolutionaries the healthy forces of international Trotskyism are fighting to unite around the banner of the Fourth International and the program of its Founding Congress of 1938.

To refound a Trotskyist international it is necessary for the healthy forces of Trotskyism to regroup in an international conference that does not make verbal boasts about “socialism” and “revolution”, but proves in practice that it can defeat the counter-revolutionary leadership in the critical revolutionary struggles, and build a new revolutionary international that the international working class deserves to lead it to victory and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Fourth International was founded in 1938 to fulfill the task that is stated clearly in its program: “Our task: the abolition of capitalist domination. Our goal: socialism. Our method: the proletarian revolution.” We must reunite the revolutionary internationalists around the world are committed to completing the task, method, and goal of the Fourth International set for us by Comrade Trotsky in 1938.

WIVL 5 June 2009- based on article by FLT of 24 March 2009.



Assessment of the SA elections on 22 April 2009

Before looking at the actual elections it is important to look at the underlying forces and developments, internationally and locally.

The rise to power of a popular front government in 1994 in South Africa, reflected a number of factors:

1. The masses had been in uprising against structural adjustment programmes in the East bloc countries but leadership was usurped by pro-capitalist forces. The international Stalinist apparatus was shattered;
2. A sharp conflict existed between the working class and the imperialist-backed bourgeoisie in South Africa- the working class had been in uprising since 1985 and refused to be ruled in the old way, ie through slave capitalist relations;
3. The stagnation of the world capitalist economy and thus the inability of imperialism-capitalism to meet all the demands of the aspirant black middle class, let alone the demands of the working class;
4. In 1994 the masses were prepared to give the Stalinists (SACP) and nationalists (ANC) a chance to continue the struggle to meet their demands. The form of the Popular Front was thus through the rule of the multiclass ANC (with workers, middle class and capitalists), with the support of the SACP and Cosatu leadership. Although the international Stalinist apparatus was shattered, Stalinism was alive and well in South Africa. It was the SACP's sunset clauses that paved the way for the masses to accept a negotiated settlement which left the repressive apparatus of the old regime intact. The period up to 1994 was also one in which imperialism poured millions of Rands into the UDF to divert the struggle from open conflict with capital to one of parliamentary transfer of power. This could only happen after the political defeat of the left within Cosatu by Stalinism through expulsions, splits (eg CCAWUSA split), etc. At the same time the independent mass movement was neutralised through dependency on donor funding. Donor funding always came with conditions and helped to shape and limit the forces of resistance to the state. The Cosatu leaders through a series of drafts, watered down the demands of the working class until the final document of the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) was adopted.

The dumping by the ANC government of the RDP by 1996 and the adoption of the GEAR (structural adjustment programme) was a reflection of the world economic crisis of 1996-1997. Imperialism shifted its crisis onto the working class in the neo-colonial and East bloc countries. While locally the resistance against the plans of the imperialists were headed off through the creation of Popular Fronts (the MMD in Zambia and the MDC in Zimbabwe), in South Africa the existing Popular Front (the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance) kept control (through limiting the General strikes against Gear, through more



expulsions of the left from Cosatu, etc). At the same time on an international scale the World Social Forum was created by imperialism as a means to divert struggles of the working class away from direct confrontation with capital. (Pacifist actions against monopolies were promoted and not working class action against the capitalist system itself). Once again the spontaneous uprising of the masses was channelled into social movements that were funded and thus dependent on imperialism (directly and indirectly). When workers' started to challenge the shift to export-orientated production- in other words the greater conversion of the economy into a market for goods from the imperialist centres, the Cosatu leaders formed alliances with the bosses to get rid of such workers. Such was the case in 2000 when the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance supported the mass dismissal of 1386 workers at VWSA after the workforce went on strike against undermining of gains of workers by agreements between bosses and trade union leaders.

On the farms, after the ANC government accepted the WTO (World Trade Organization) rules, hand in hand with the dollarization of the economy (food prices were linked to the Chicago commodities exchange prices, irrespective of the local cost of production- by 2006 the sale of food commodities thus became one of the mechanisms that imperialism uses to super-exploit the masses, it became a means of extraction of profits the world over), over 1 million farmworkers lost their jobs and 25 000 of the 50 000 commercial farms went out of business- Imperialist monopolies like Monsanto and Parmalat gained ground on control of local food production. In the same period internationally, the imperialist banks and monopolies extended their control to 80% of the world's arable land.

The building of capitalist infrastructure accelerated only when construction and house prices were inflated more than 10 times their actual value. Suddenly, under the name of Akgisa (Accelerated and shared growth), over R700 Billion was found for building capitalist infrastructure (this is 35 times the annual housing budget). In other words, the building of capitalist infrastructure is also a mechanism for extracting profits from the working class. Funds can quickly be found to rescue the profits of the bosses while the working class dies of cold in shacks, dies of hunger while the supermarket shelves are full.

The capitalist ANC government places profits of the imperialists and banks above the needs of the masses for housing and jobs. The speculative housing bubble has burst for the imperialist banks (the banks artificially drove up house prices so high that millions are now defaulting on payments- their profits are now starting to fall). The capitalist world economy has been stagnating for a long time. There are no new areas for growth- the only option for the capitalists is to place the burden more on the shoulders of the working class- to take back from the gains that have been won up to now. The rivalry between imperialists, as shown by the over 4 million dead in the war in the DRC, is set to intensify.



The April 2009 elections- the ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance government prepares to crackdown on the working class

It is for the reasons listed above that the newly elected ANC government is in crisis. They will not be able to provide houses for all, or even jobs for all. In fact it will be forced to attack the masses more and more.

The non-implementation of the OSD (Occupation Specific Dispensation), ie the wage sector-specific increases, is part of the structural adjustment programme of imperialism. The imperialist masters have instructed the ANC government to cut social expenses so as to free more funds for imperialist profits. The pre-condition dictated by the IMF (International Monetary Fund) to the regimes in Pakistan and Zimbabwe, to cut on social expenditure, shows that they will expect the same of the ANC government.

Out of the 27 million people eligible to vote only 24 million registered. Only 18 million people voted. In other words 1/3 of the electorate, 9 million people, did not vote. Of the 18 million who voted, 11 million cast their ballot for the ANC. This means 40% of the electorate supported the ANC.

The election could be seen not so much as the success of the ANC as the failure of the revolutionary left to put forward an alternative to the masses, on any significant scale. The pressure of the masses forced the ANC to pose as left. In the context of the pro-capitalist role that the ANC will now play, means that the scene is set for sharp conflict between the working class and the capitalists, while the ANC stands to be rapidly exposed.

COPE was a rightward break from the ANC that the masses rejected. The rejection by the masses of COPE reflects a rejection of the GEAR policies that the ANC under Mbeki championed. The imperialists welcomed the existence of COPE as this rightward split creates more room for pro-capitalist policies to be promoted. The imperialists are only loyal to whoever can deliver the working class and always back several horses in case their current favourite loses favour with the working class.

Except for the Western Cape, the DA failed to attract any significant working class support.

The ANC has prepared for the role it must play: Firstly, they have co-opted the SACP and Cosatu leadership directly into the Cabinet. This is a desperate attempt to gain time for the capitalists, at a time when the impatience of the masses at high food prices, low wages, homelessness and unemployment, is running thin. The SACP and Cosatu leadership hopes to use this substantial presence in cabinet to persuade workers to accept mass retrenchments, low wages and high prices, while a few 'clever' leaders try to work something out for the working class.



Secondly, imperialism has a direct line in cabinet through the presence of Trevor *'the crisis will not hit SA'* Manuel. Thus the working class can expect the ANC to again be the arch defenders of the profits of the international banks.

Thirdly, the appointment of Anwar Dramat, to head the new so-called Priority Crimes Unit, takes the working relations between the SA state and the US intelligence forces to a higher level. Dramat was involved in the infiltration and smashing of Pagad (a spontaneous, although problematic, movement among a section of the working class and lower middle class on the Cape Flats, against rampant gangsterism). It was after the smashing of Pagad that the drug 'tik' became widespread on the Cape Flats. The state knows where the drug merchants are but spent considerably less resources on taking them down- many of the drug merchants still operate openly and often the police work hand in glove with them. Dramat knows how to smash any organized resistance of the working class and how to protect the big gangsters, the monopoly capitalists. We can thus an increase in monitoring of the working class- in fact the appointment of Dramat shows that if necessary, the state, on behalf of the imperialists are prepared to launch pre-emptive actions should they deem it necessary.

Fourthly, even through the elections virtually wiped out the 'parliamentary left', the ANC has taken steps to artificially keep them alive (sharing portfolio committees with them)- the ANC needs their assistance in helping keep up the illusion that parliament actually represents the masses, whereas it is in reality an idle-chatterhouse – behind the scenes, big capital, JP Morgan Chase and others still pull the strings. The 'parliamentary left' may also be needed in times of cracking down on the masses.

Fifthly, the appointment of Connie Mulder to a Deputy Minister of agriculture, shows that the ANC is committed to keep in place the reactionary layer of Afrikaner farmers, who acted in the service of the imperialists in the past, and who will still be allowed to do so. Farmworkers cannot expect their brutal exploitative conditions to improve at all. These super-exploitative relations on the farms are a cornerstone of how imperialism continues to extract massive profits from the working class. The appointment by the ANC government, also, of DA leaders to ambassadorial posts shows that all parliamentary parties serve imperialism and the ANC knows how to continue to look after their interests.

On the role of the 'left'

A loose coalition of the Khanya college group, the labour left collective and Rustenberg Bolsheviks tried to initiate a movement for a spoilt ballot; this was roundly rejected by their base in the Social movements as well as the broader working class. This was supposedly to test the ground for further launching of a reformist labour party in the local government elections in 2 years time. They may still attempt to lay the groundwork for such a step. Imperialist funding agencies were prepared to spend huge sums of money on a 'spoilt ballot' initiative but despite this, the masses rejected this. The lesson that can be drawn from this is that the working class, in the absence of a credible



working class party, uses, at this moment, its vote as a means to place demands on the ANC. There is not yet a mass working class party at whose door the masses can lay their complaints. The masses' impatience is starting to wear thin and its support could only be gained through the help of the SACP and Cosatu leadership posing 'left'. It is in the heat of the sharpening class struggle that the future revolutionary working class party will grow.

The Socialist Green Coalition, formed from the old Operation Khanyisa Movement (initiated by the Socialist Group, that for years had the entrism position into the ANC) and a radical bourgeois environmental group, also did not raise enough funds for the election deposit. It ran a campaign only on the exclusion due to a high election deposit and did not take up any other struggles of the working class. That they did not attract any form of support shows that the masses have largely seen through parties that get together just during election times.

The rejection by the masses of the fake 'trotskyist left' shows that the class struggle has intensified to the level that the space for reformist parties has narrowed considerably. The climate of an all-out assault by the imperialists on the working class raises the prospect of revolution and puts it on the agenda of the masses. Immediately after the election there were spontaneous burning of barricades in the townships in the western cape, where the demand for houses were placed on the ANC (even though the province had been won by the DA).

On the prospect of 'another Zimbabwe'

When the situation was pre-revolutionary in Zimbabwe in May 2008, the imperialists instigated fascistic bands to disperse the 1 million Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa; now the rising revolutionary tide brings the prospect that similar fascistic attacks may again be used, this time to help disrupt the masses in revolt. Already the lower middle class elements linked to the ANC are giving ultimatums to Somali shopkeepers to vacate the townships in the western cape; more Somali traders have been killed. Are we seeing another tide sweeping the country to divert the masses from fighting the real enemy, the capitalists-imperialists? A few days ago, 300-400 ANC veterans marched in military uniform to the DA leader just because she dared to insult Zuma, the president. This was an indirect threat to anyone in the working class that anyone who dares challenge Zuma will be dealt with by force, if necessary. Again, signs of sharpening class conflict.

On the intervention of the WIVL

Bourgeois elections are times when all classes are involved in politics in a heightened level. The clashes between the COPE, ANC and DA helped to raise class consciousness to an extent. WIVL's participation in the election period also helped to heighten this class consciousness.

In 1994 it was sufficient to have signatures in order to get onto the ballot. The rapid change to requirement of huge sums of money to get onto the ballot is a reflection of the collapse of democratic gains – this is also a reflection of the adoption of the GEAR policy (the structural adjustment programme of the IMF



and World Bank) in 1996 – this in turn was a function of the deepening crisis of capitalism and its decay. The continued trend of capitalist decay and increased violent suppression of the working class that goes along with it, means that imperialism is less able to tolerate democratic aspirations of the masses, such as allowing a real left alternative to gain ground even in bourgeois elections. Such is the sharpening exposure of the true capitalist nature of the ANC, that even a small electoral presence of a revolutionary working class representation in parliament, could so heighten the class consciousness, that imperialism's representatives set the electoral requirements so high as to exclude organizations such as the WIVL. By way of contrast, in New Zealand, where there is relative capitalist stability, the only requirement to take part in elections is to have 500 paid up members who are on the voters' roll. We can thus expect that in future local government or general elections that similar financial and other obstacles will be placed in the way of the working class.

Here is a brief review of the WIVL's participation in the elections, even though we were excluded on financial grounds:

1. We were able to assist to organise on a national and international scale a significant working class protest against the genocidal attacks on Gaza; this meant that we did not fall into electoralism;
2. The heightened political awareness meant that we did make inroads into the working class in a number of provinces
3. The election campaign offered an opportunity to politically work together with the FLT and this campaign was one of the factors that has helped the process develop to a stage where the 2 organizations are going to merge. This has marked a new stage of revolutionaries working together to rebuild/refound the fourth international;
4. we were able to identify areas of theoretical weaknesses among our members and have set an accelerated education programme in place to help overcome this.



Raw sewage in Kliptown (birthplace of the Freedom Charter) in 2008.



The struggle to free the Kliptown 5

The housing struggles in Kliptown, Soweto, reflect the true meaning of the Freedom Charter, namely that a section of the black capitalist will benefit out of the democratisation of the country. In the words of Nelson Mandela when commenting on the so-called nationalisation clause from this Charter, from the June 1955 edition of the Liberator magazine:

'The breaking up and democratisation of these monopolies will open up fresh fields for the development of a prosperous Non-European bourgeois class. For the first time in the history of the country the Non-European bourgeoisie will have the opportunity to own in their own name and right mills and factories, and trade and private enterprise will boom and flourish as never before.'

What is important further, is that this development of a black capitalist class, is at the expense of the demands and rights of the working class. What follows from this is that the new black managers, the ANC in government, then adopt all the repressive measures of a capitalist regime, which indeed they are. The monopolies remain largely untouched and the black capitalist class are thus junior partners of imperialism. The ANC are incapable of even fighting for the demands of all the black middle class, let alone that of the working class. Yet, the Cosatu and SACP leaders all call for a resounding electoral victory for this capitalist ANC.

The national organiser of the WIVL, Thabo Modisane and 4 other activists having been found guilty on the 10th March 2008 on a charge of public violence . The charges relate to a protest by the community in Kliptown, under the banner of the Anti-Privatization Forum, on 3 Sept 2007 when they took to the streets to demand houses. On the 14th August 2007 the community had handed over a memorandum calling for their local councillor to be recalled and for adequate housing for all. In the town where the Freedom Charter was adopted on 26 June 1955, Kliptown, thousands still live in shacks despite the document promising houses for all. To date, one and half years later, the memorandum has not been responded to.

On the 18th April last year (2008), there were confirmed cases of cholera in Kliptown. One of the first people to contract it was Kelebogile Malefane, who died on the 12th June 2008 of this preventable disease.

The response of the ANC government to years of protest by the Kliptown community for houses? They built a R200 million white elephant, called Freedom Charter Square. Part of the square is a 4 star Holiday Inn, which cost R23 million to build. This hotel remains mostly more than half-empty while 30m from its doors lies a sprawling squatter camp where raw sewage flows in the streets.

The magistrate in this case repeatedly postponed the case more than 20 times to give the police more time to find 'evidence' against the 5 accused.



On Friday 13th march 2008, the 5 face the prospect of being jailed for the crime of being leaders of the resistance to capitalist non-delivery to the working class. The case is being held at the Protea North magistrate's court in Soweto. Public violence carries a possible sentence of 5 years in prison.

It should be the capitalist parliamentary parties who should be on trial for the crime of keeping the working class without homes and of being the agents of profits for monopoly capital.

We call for a national and international campaign against the victimization of these working class activists. We are calling for mass protests at the court on Friday 13 March 2008 as part of a further general mobilization of the working class. The finding of the court exposes the true nature of the coming April elections, namely that it is a contest between the bourgeois parties as to who will be the new manager to serve the capitalist masters. Not a single one of them can commit to building decent houses for all the working class; thus it follows that every single one of them would support the arrest and jailing of activists who find themselves at the leadership of the working class. A vote for any of the parliamentary parties is a vote for more cholera, more homelessness, more starvation, more arrests of activists.

The capitalist monopolies made over R700 Billion in profits last year. Yet the ANC-SACP-Cosatu Popular Front bails out these same capitalists with hundreds of billions of Rands (Eskom electricity scam of new power stations. the 2010 stadia, etc). The capitalists continue to retrench hundreds of thousands of workers; no-one is bailing out the over 20 million starving; who will bail out the Kliptown 5? It is only united working class action, nationally and internationally can stop the imperialist attacks. The deeper their crisis, the more they will adopt harsher measures against working class fighters.

Forward to decent houses for all! Organise or starve!

[All 5 comrades were given suspended sentences of 2 years while one, had to pay their R3000 fine before being released] 11.04.09

Message of solidarity from the FLT

Comrades and friends of WIVL,

We have received your letter dated on March 10th, where you tell us about the charge "of public violence" against 5 activists who belong the Anti-Privatization Forum.

Of course, in representation of the Secretariat of International Coordination and Action –SCAI- of FLT , we take in our hands the solidarity already sent by comrade Dave Brown of CWG and we call on you to launch together a true international campaign to prevent the South African worker and popular fighters from being put in prison.



Besides, we also take as ours the demands: Forward to decent houses for all! Organise or starve! Since these are slogans and demands of the entire international working class.

As you may see in the Argentine LOI-CI paper we sent you, with an international campaign, we helped to free the worker oil fighters of Las Heras (southern Argentina) from prison after three years of rotting in the jails of the bourgeois regime of Argentina.

Comrades, your call and campaign has been already sent to all the groups of FLT and International groups with whom we have a relationship with the aim of starting fast a campaign of pronouncements of all the world worker organizations.

We should not expect less than that. In the secret CIA jails the combatants of the Afghan and Iraqi resistance are rotting in there. Meanwhile the Guantanamo prisoners are kept in jail and thousands of Palestine fighters are kept like hostages in the prisons of the murderous Zionist State of Israel. Two Afro-American workers, leaders of Oakland dock workers have already been prosecuted for leading the struggle against the imperialist war within the heart of United States.

From FLT, we affirm that the prosecution and conviction of 5 worker fighters of South Africa is part of the repression against the anti-imperialist and popular workers in the whole world side by side with the brutal attack launched against the working class' labor conquests at worldwide level by the imperialist bourgeois front in bankruptcy whose crisis is shifted on to the backs of the masses with starvation, misery, unemployment, high cost of living and as it couldn't have been any other way, with repression and counterrevolutionary wars.

In advance, comrades, we are with you in your struggle. We'll publish your letter to be known by all the worker organizations where our groups fight along side the exploits in Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, New Zealand and Central America.

Only an International campaign of the World working class can overturn the charges against the 5 South African activists and free from the jails the Iraqi and Palestine resistance, the worker fighters against the war in USA and the more than 4000 prosecuted immigrants separated from their children who are in prison under the yoke of the imperialist US regime.

Release from the jails of the Zionist state the thousand of Palestine prisoners and non-prosecution and unconditional freedom to the 5 worker fighters of South Africa who face the cynicism and cowardice of building 4 stars hotels which cost 2.3 million dollars next to slave workers who live in shacks in the slave Africa!

For a single International campaign of the worker organizations to liberate from the jails all fighters who confront the capitalist barbarism, its repression and its counterrevolutionary wars!



Freedom for the prisoners of the combative Oakland dock workers who fight in USA against the imperialist war of extermination and genocide launched by the butcher Bush over Iraqi nation!

Long live the South African working class! Long live the Afro-American workers who confronted the imperialist counterrevolutionary Wars!
Freedom to the prisoners of the Iraqi and Afghan and Palestine resistance!
Freedom to the more of 4000 Hispano-American immigrants who are in Obama's jails separated from their families!
As WIVL of South Africa says: Organise or starve! For the internationalist unity of the world working class!

Carlos Munzer, Laura Sánchez y Martín F. for the Secretariat of International Coordination and Action (SCAI) of the Fracción Leninista Trotskista (Leninist Trotskyist Fraction)

**COMPOSED OF
INTERNATIONALIST WORKERS LEAGUE (LOI-CI) –WORKERS
DEMOCRACY OF ARGENTINA
INTERNATIONALIST TROTSKYIST LEAGUE (LTI) OF BOLIVIA
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS PARTY (POI-CI) OF CHILE
TROTSKYIST FRACTION (ft) OF BRAZIL
COMMUNIST WORKERS GROUP (CWG) NEW ZEALAND
FLT SECTION (PERU)**

A number of other messages of support were received from exiled Iraqis in Argentina; Palestinian Youth in Argentina; Islamic Organization in Argentina; Workers of the Brukman factory (occupied and taken over by workers); from workers delegates from Garrahan and Frances hospitals in Argentina; from the centre of Philosophy studies at the University of Buenos Aires; the Qilmes Textile co-operative; from the Picketeros movement of the 29th May; from the Voice of the Laborantes; from the Left Convergence; from the left Socialists and from the Miners Trade Union of Huanuni, Bolivia. [During the struggles in 2008, the Huanuni miners took a decision that all the leadership of the Central Obrera Boliviana should be replaced].



**POR UNA CAMPAÑA INTERNACIONAL DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES OBRERAS
DE BOLIVIA Y DEL MUNDO**

**PARA LIBERAR A LOS LUCHADORES OBREROS Y POPULARES DE SUDÁFRICA, IRAK, OCKLAND
ENCARCELADOS POR ESTE SISTEMA CAPITALISTA PUTREFACTO Y SUS GOBIERNOS ANTI OBREROS**

El 10 de marzo del presente año, un dirigente trotskista de Sudáfrica y 4 activistas obreros fueron tomados presos acusados por "violencia pública" por defender en el 2007 el derecho a los obreros a tener viviendas.

La condena y el procesamiento a tres luchadores obreros de Sudáfrica es parte de la represión a los luchadores obreros y antiimperialistas en todo el mundo que acompaña, como la sombra al cuerpo, al brutal ataque lanzado contra las conquistas de la clase obrera a nivel mundial por el frente burgués imperialista en bancarota, cuya crisis es arrojada a las masas con hambre, miseria, desocupación, carestía de la vida y, como no podía ser de otra manera, con represión y guerras contrarrevolucionarias.

En las cárceles secretas de la CIA se pudren los combatientes de la resistencia afgana e irakí. Mientras siguen detenidos los presos de Guantánamo y miles de luchadores palestinos se encuentran de rehenes en las cárceles del estado sionista asesino de Israel. Dos obreros afro americanos, dirigentes de los obreros portuarios de Oakland ya han sido procesados por encabezar la lucha contra la guerra imperialista al interior mismo de Estados Unidos.

Sólo una campaña internacional de la clase obrera mundial puede voltear los cargos de los tres activistas sudafricanos y arrancar de las cárceles a la resistencia Palestina e irakí, a los luchadores obreros contra la guerra en Estados Unidos, y a los mas de 4000 inmigrantes procesados, separados de sus hijos y que están en prisión bajo el yugo del régimen imperialista norteamericano.

¡Fuera de las mazmorras del estado sionista los miles de presos palestinos y desprocesamiento y libertad incondicional a los tres luchadores obreros de Sudáfrica que enfrentaron el cinismo y la cobardía de construir hoteles de 4 estrellas, que cuestan 23 millones de dólares, al lado de obreros esclavos que viven en chozas en el África esclavizada!

¡Por una sola campaña internacional de las organizaciones obreras para arrancar de las cárceles a todos los que enfrentan la barbarie capitalista, su represión y sus guerras contrarrevolucionarias!

¡Libertad a los presos de los combativos portuarios de Oakland que, en estados unidos, combatieron contra la guerra imperialista de exterminio y genocidio a la nación irakí del carnicero bush!

¡Viva la clase obrera sudafricana! ¡Vivan los obreros afro americanos que enfrentaron las guerras contrarrevolucionarias imperialistas! ¡Libertad a los presos de la resistencia afgana, irakí y palestina! ¡Libertad a los mas de 4000 inmigrantes hispanoamericanos que se encuentran en las cárceles de Obama, separados de sus familias!

¡Organicémonos o a morir de hambre!

¡Por la unidad internacionalista de la clase obrera mundial!

*Le damos el apoyo moral e incondicional a nuestros compañeros
detenidos por luchar por justas reivindicaciones- por el comité
de Amas de casa de Empresa Minera Huamantla:*

*Elispa Contreras de
Presidenta*



Central Obrera Boliviana

To the comrades of the WIVL (Workers International Vanguard League) and the 4 activists sentenced for their participation in struggle for better housing and living conditions of the people.

Comrades

The workers of the Bolivian affiliates of the COB (Central Obrera Boliviana) hereby present our moral and material support for the cause that you are struggling for and which today has led to the imprisonment of your cadre, who are victims of demagoguery, which is a worse form of fascism and veiled iron fist against whomsoever encourages people to stand up for their rights, a struggle we have been busy with since 1955 when we were formed; such social responsibility as housing is today is being neglected by those representatives and defenders of capitalism- they have only one response and that is to criminalise the struggle of those activists who are reclaiming this right to housing, etc.

We, together with yourselves, have only one way to fight against those who greedily cling to power for the benefit of a few while on the other hand the masses are claiming their rights; we dare not lose hope or abandon our struggle and in the spirit of workers internationalism we most energetically raise our condemnation, our protest against the ANC government of South Africa, who is abandoning the people and imprisoning those who reclaim their basic rights.

Comrades, the way forward of our struggle is clear: for a socialist revolution!

DEATH TO THE DEFENDERS OF CAPITALISM!
VIVA THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKERS!
FOR THE COMPLETE FREEDOM OF THOSE WHO ARE IMPRISONED FOR DEMANDING DECENT SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND BETTER CONDITIONS OF LIVING!
VIVA THE SOUTH AFRICAN WORKING CLASS!
DOWN WITH THE ANC GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA!
VIVA WIVL!

La Paz 22 April 2009



Residents of Alexandra on the march for houses for all



ANC state of the nation address confirms its pro-imperialist role

The state of the nation address by the new President, Zuma, shows that the ANC's pro-imperialist role is set to continue and that the working class will carry the burden of the crisis of profits of the capitalists.

1. Municipal work is privatised on a mass scale by the implementation of the so-called public works programme; instead of employing full-time municipal workers, temporary work is created. Although within weeks these jobs are over, the ANC government (with the full support of Statssa) somehow counts these as 'jobs' created, even misleading the public that 4 million jobs will be created until 2014. This makes a mockery of the supposed commitment to 'sustainable' jobs. The Cosatu leadership are cheerleaders of this type of privatization of municipal work.

2. More sinister, though, is that this provides a cover for the monopolies to continue to retrench (they may be asked to keep workers on for some weeks with a nominal training).

3. The food gang (Pick 'n Pay, Woolsworths, Shoprite, Spar, Tiger Brands, Pioneer, and others) are making billions in profits out of deliberately starving the masses, and to this, the ANC has no plan in place. International prices of wheat, rice and maize have fallen by 40% in recent months but food prices still continue to rise. The FAO (Food and Agricultural organization of the UN) admits that there is enough food but almost 1 billion people are starving purely because they cannot afford the high prices. The capitalists are reported to continue to create an artificial scarcity in food by deliberately planting less this year. The government is more worried about sports achievements than the hunger of the masses.

4. The National Health Insurance is another scam to extend the role of the private health sector into the public sector. This is another scheme to enrich the banks that thrive on control of private health care. In the USA over 34 million people are excluded from health insurance as their income is too low. The onset of the health insurance in the US led to a rise on health costs as the private sector that was tasked with handling major sections of the implementation, simply increased their fees. The Cosatu leaders are once again cheerleaders of this attack by imperialism on our already collapsed health system. The health sector needs to be completely nationalized under workers' control, not further privatised through this health insurance scam.

5. The over R700 Billion for infrastructure will not be for needs of the working class but will act as a cash cow for imperialist companies- nowhere is this massive sum linked to houses for all, or for setting up of a national non-profit food distributor, etc. This money will go to imperialist companies who will build power stations that pollute and in fact capacity that is not needed.

6. Not surprising is the ANC continued commitment for a bantustan for Palestinians (a so-called 2 state solution)- in this the ANC are the direct mouthpiece of imperialism, against the Palestinian masses. The recent study by reformist Levine shows that any '2-state' proposal is not possible.

7. Nowhere does the ANC tackle Anglo American for their role in the war in the DRC- how many people must die before the working class takes



international action against imperialism. [already over 4 million people have died since 1996 in the war in the DRC).

8. The ANC repeats the Millennium goals, which are excuses of imperialist agencies like the UN to provide a cover to postpone meeting the needs of the working class now, while capital makes massive profits. Trillions of dollars are used to bail out the greedy banks but the few billion needed to feed the world, no-one is prepared to part with. 'Let them die' is the message from the capitalists and their agents in government.

9. The ANC is pledging to support agents of imperialism to suppress the masses in Madagascar; where is the Cosatu leadership in supporting the heroic fight of the working class in Madagascar.

We need to unite the working class, both employed and unemployed to continue the fight against capitalism and their system. Clearly a new leadership is needed in Cosatu, who is prepared to fight in a real way, and not just symbolically. Activists are being arrested on false charges of public violence, in the middle of winter the homeless in Delft are left to freeze on the pavement, the working class must get organised, nationally and internationally to fight.

Organise or starve



Alexandra residents and supporters from WIVL on the march for housing for all



Residents of Riverpark Alexandra occupy vacant RDP houses on 22 April 2009, the day of the elections

The contrast could not have been more stark: the capitalist parties have spent billions of Rands on an election campaign to fool the masses that their vote is really a means of controlling parliament and a way of achieving their demands. On the other hand there have been 3 general elections where the masses have been repeatedly lied to about houses and jobs that will never happen for millions of the working class.

The masses of Alexandra, next to the bourgeois suburb of Sandton, have once again taken their future into their own hands. They have occupied the RDP houses in River Park yet again with a single demand: DECENT HOUSES FOR ALL!. This time the police have massed in huge numbers and have given the ultimatum to vacate or face the gunfire of the SACP-led security forces. The masses are determined to stay and demand that the housing ministry and the so-called Alexandra Renewal project produce the list of who will receive the houses. The same Alexandra renewal project is under investigation for selling houses which should have been given for free to the shack dwellers. Despite many months of pleading from the community no-one has come forward to say who will get the RDP houses and when the thousands of shackdwellers in Alexandra will ever get a house.

The shackdwellers are tired of dying in silence while the capitalists make their biggest profits ever. The masses say that the fight of the miners in Bolivia, of the auto workers in the US, of the millions of retrenched workers, of the over 4 million people who died in the DRC at the hands of imperialist plunder of minerals for cellphones, is the same fight as theirs. They refuse to allow the capitalists to shift their 'crisis' of falling profits onto the backs of the working class.

The masses in Alexandra will not be voting today and call on the broader working class and supporters to come to River Park to join in the protest for housing for all or to raise the protest in the areas they are.



for comment on the developments: call
Freda Dlamini ph 0743520141



Alexandra residents on the march for houses and jobs for all

On Wed 13th May 2009 at 830am Alexandra residents will march on the Johannesburg High Court, raising their demand for adequate housing and jobs for all. The march starts at Vogas house (corner Pritchard and Mooi streets). Frustrated by years of empty promises by the government for housing and jobs, many residents occupied the RDP houses in River Park, Alexandra. The Alexandra Renewal Project, a product of the ANC's so-called broad based black economic empowerment, has not only failed to provide adequate housing for all in need in Alexandra, they have also been involved in corruption, selling houses to their friends which should have been given for free to backyarders and shackdwellers. The Alexandra Renewal Project is seeking a High court action to evict the residents from the RDP houses in River Park. The Alexandra Residents are on the march to oppose this. While several several community and worker organizations support the march, it is being spearheaded by Vukuzenzele and supported by the Landless People's Movement.

The residents say that the world capitalist crisis is reflected in South Africa, in part by the government not building enough houses for the people, creating an artificial scarcity in housing so that people's desperation ensures that the banks and construction monopolies can make super-profits. Thus the fight of the workers in North and South America against retrenchments and against homelessness, in the entire world against high food prices and low wages, against unemployment is part of the same fight locally for housing and jobs for all. Their fight is part of the same fight of workers locally for a living wage or for an end to retrenchment. The government's commitment to monopoly capital is reflected by their appointment of billionaire capitalist, Tokyo Sexwale to the housing ministry. Mr Sexwale is the head of Mvelaphanda holdings which has substantial shares in construction giant Group 5. He is but one of several paper empowerment billionaires who are owned hand and foot by Anglo American and JP Morgan Chase. To add insult to injury the government has renamed the housing ministry to be that of 'human settlement'- this shows that the government has now openly given up on housing the masses and will do their masters' bidding to resettle the poor in shacks away from the city centres (social control).

The Alexandra residents are calling for Cosatu, Nactu and Fedusa to call urgent extended joint shopsteward council meetings to unite the housing struggles with the fight for a living wage, for lower food prices, for shorter working hours and an end to unemployment.

Forward to houses and jobs for all!
Disband the Alexandra Renewal Project!
Down with 'broad-based' self-enrichment! Expropriate the banks and construction companies and place them under working class control!



Eskom price increases 2009-2010- putting the burden of falling profits of international banks on the working class locally.

That Nersa is once again excluding the millions of the urban and rural poor from hearings shows that they have already taken a decision to increase electricity rates.

South Africa, Africa and much of the neo-colonial world are in the throes of an economic onslaught by international big capital. Eskom is spearheading an attack on the working class in South Africa by 20%+ annual electricity increases, that are only being sought to rescue the profit levels of the giant banks and corporations. Bankrupt banks such as Citibank, Bank of New York, JP Morgan Chase are major shareholders not only in coal mines but also Westinhouse, Areva, Alstom, General Electric-Hitachi, Murray & Roberts, Group 5. These are the very companies who stand to benefit from the proposed Eskom build programme.

With the demothballing process due to complete within a few months the capacity of Eskom would stand at 44 000 Megawatts. With Statssa predicting an increased need of only 100MW per annum (this was before the wave of factory closures), there is simply no evidence of a need to double capacity within 10 years. that a In a climate of speculatively high construction and housing costs, the scam to spend R1,3 trillion on building coal and nuclear power stations that we do not need amounts to only one thing: it is a mechanism to rob the working class in broad daylight- in other words it is an artificial mechanism to increase the rate of exploitation and provides a cover for a trillion rand to be taken out of the country to fill the coffers of JP Morgan Chase, Citibank and other imperialist banks.

Already the homelite client in the squatter camp pays more than 3 times the rate that big industry pays. The working class is subsidizing the electricity of the monopolies. Any increase means that Anglo American still pays the cheapest electricity in the world but the worker and unemployed in the squatter camp is expected to pay more than the residents pay in France, USA and Canada.

A University of Johannesburg researcher has developed the mechanism to produce solar power at 50% of current cost. There is also technology around saline solar cells for energy storage and similar technology that can be used as viable alternatives to coal and nuclear.

What is even more disgusting is the betrayal by the Cosatu leadership who have bought into the notion that there needs to be this massive expenditure for coal power stations. Not only did they and their alliance partners agree last year in their energy summit that phased increases can take place over the next 5 years, but now Cosatu, in their Framework of a response to the International Economic crisis, calls for a once off-energy tax. In this betrayal they are singing the tune of the imperialists and justifying greater exploitation of the working class. What was needed was a general strike in defence of our living standards.



A further contradiction is that the major part of the current R700 Bn for infrastructure is made up of building these power stations that the working class and lower middle class will not use. Under the guise of job creation, the ANC-SACP and COSATU leaders are leading the attack on the working class, privatizing and casualising what should be full-time municipal work, and even setting the framework of the 'jobs' on this get-rich-quick scheme for the international banks. ANC leaders are not only on the boards of the banks but also on the coal and construction companies that stand to benefit from the Eskom scam. These 'loan billionaires' (such as Tokyo Sexwale) will do everything in their power to advance their imperialist paymasters wishes.

We call on the working class to remove this Cosatu leadership immediately and to replace them with leaders who are prepared to fight in defence of the working class. We call for workers to form committees in every workplace and every working class community to launch a campaign to defend the working class' living standards against the attacks of high prices, unemployment and permanent mass homelessness.

Build solar power! End the subsidy to big business! Decrease the rate for residential users! A block tariff should be implemented. Increase the free electricity provision to at least 100 units per person per household per month. Decent Houses for all! Occupy vacant buildings and land! Share the work among all who can work, without loss of pay! No to retrenchments and closures! Sack the bosses! Occupy! Expropriate! Increase all wages by a minimum of 30%, wages to increase when prices do;
Capitalism is the crisis, working class power the solution!

Workers International Vanguard League

Ph 0822020617

Ph 0214476777 fax: 0865486048

workersinternational@gmail.com

website www.workersinternational.org.za



Alexandra residents on the march for houses for all

