

On the Life of Comrade Nat Gould

- Statement by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

31 July 1992

It is with the deepest regret that we are announcing the death of Comrade Nat Gould, founder and leader of the New Zealand Red Flag Group, a participating organization of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, who died on 30th March 1992. He was over 80 years old.

Comrade Gould was a communist who devoted his entire life to the cause of revolution in New Zealand and around the world. He took part in the struggles of the Unemployed Workers' Movement in the 1930s, in the worldwide fight to defend the Soviet Union against fascist invasion during World War 2, and he carried on the revolutionary struggle in the difficult years of the Cold War. Later, he was out on the streets against U.S. imperialism's war on Vietnam, and towards the end of his life was active in denouncing the imperialist-backed apartheid regime in South Africa. Everywhere he raised the red flag of Marxism and proletarian revolution, including, most importantly, through his staunch support for Mao Tsetung and the Chinese revolutionaries in their battle against Soviet-led revisionism during the crucial years of the 1960s and in the Cultural Revolution which followed.

Although the immediate efforts to build the New Zealand Red Flag Group were not able to be sustained in the past period, in large part because of the failing health of Comrade Gould, his efforts helped lay the basis for a new generation of revolutionaries to pick up and carry forward his lifelong work. His widow, Comrade Flora Gould, writes in one of her letters that Nat "was unemployed soon after leaving school so was very early involved in working class struggle. He joined the Communist Party New Zealand (CPNZ) in about 1936 and of course was a member until he was expelled on trumped-up charges (but basically because like myself and a handful of others he would not go along with the CP's basic criticism of Mao). After that he did the main work in writing the content for Red Flag, even hopefully writing articles during the last few weeks before he died. He had moved from Wellington to Auckland in 1939 as a member of the staff of the People's Voice (C.P. weekly) and it was during that period he was jailed for a month, I think, for 'subversion' when acting editor.... Of course his main contribution (as mine too) was the struggle against revisionism first in the CPSU... and finally inside the CPNZ." Comrade Flora also reports that over 100 people attended his funeral, at which various speakers recalled his legacy.