

## A Marxist-Leninist of extraordinary calibre



circa 1950

Ray Nunes

1994

## Workers' Party of New Zealand Chairman

**It is with deepest sadness that we advise people of the death of Ray Nunes, Chairman of the Workers' Party of New Zealand, on 1 July 1999, aged 82.**

It is no exaggeration to say that Comrade Nunes devoted all his life and all his energy to the cause of the working class. Ray became a communist in the early part of World War II, joining the Communist Party of New Zealand of which he remained a member for nearly 40 years. For over 20 years he was on the CPNZ's leading committees and was active in theoretical and practical work. During this time he gained enormous experience of the class struggle of the workers and oppressed for socialism, both in New Zealand and at an international level.

He resigned from the Communist Party in January, 1980, when that Party became blind followers of Enver Hoxha of Albania. Ray had witnessed the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe with the advent of Khrushchev at the head of a new bourgeoisie. Ray studied and absorbed Mao's brilliant analysis of that restoration. When, after Mao's death, capitalism was restored in China, Ray set out to determine the cause of the loss of socialism there. He knew that to do this properly a mastery of the Marxist method of applying materialist dialectics was essential. This was no easy task and took time, but only after he achieved it did he set out to form a political party, the Workers Party of New Zealand, which was formed in 1991.

Ray's contribution to the Workers' Party was enormous. His knowledge and experience was great and his loss will be felt deeply. He was a theoretician and practical worker. Right up until the moment of his death he was active with Party work. He edited the Workers' Party monthly journal *The Spark*, and wrote extensively for it. He wrote numerous pamphlets on important subjects with a local and international content. He wrote important ideological articles and in a number of areas further developed the science of Marxism-Leninism. He conducted study

courses in pro-Mao, Marxism-Leninism, and people who attended were always struck by his tremendous knowledge, his humour and vibrancy. Several times a week he could be seen on the streets of Auckland and at workers' meetings selling *The Spark* with boundless enthusiasm and energy.

That is how he approached all aspects of his life, political and personal. Although politics was foremost in his life and consumed most of his time, he was loved by a large extended family. His other passions included music, science and the arts.

He found great satisfaction in the development of the Workers' Party of New Zealand and the renewal of the world communist movement. He saw the development of people's war for New Democracy in the third world, being led by genuine communist parties, as evidence of that renewal.

He was under no illusions that rebuilding the communist movement would be easy or simple but was able to see 'the long view'. He had the utmost faith in the working class and the inevitability of its victory against the class enemy.

Although we have lost a great comrade his contribution to the working class movement will have a lasting impact. As we continue in his footsteps we carry the banner so dear to Ray, that of working class internationalism.

A memorial service was held in Auckland at 1pm on Wednesday, 7 July, 1999 at Freemans Bay Community Centre, Freemans Bay.

For the Workers' Party of New Zealand

Daphna Whitmore