

STRUGGLE

A MARXIST APPROACH TO AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

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Time For Mass Movements to Seize the Initiative

The reactionary drive by the Brash gang, although not formerly in office is now dominating elite politics in Aotearoa. This situation reflects a growing crisis for the ruling class and three advantageous conditions for the Communist Party to initiate mass mobilizations against the reactionary state.

First, the crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system of the foreign capital, their compradors and the settler capitalist class is driving down the living standards of the broad masses of the people of Aotearoa. The people are seeking change and are increasingly dissatisfied with the plentitudes of this or that capitalist party.

Second, the socio-economic crisis is generating the political crisis of the ruling system. The contradictions among the reactionaries are sharpening and are weakening the ruling system as a whole. The reactionary small settler capitalists have allied with resource-exploiters and financial capital in a broad front against the Clark regime's 'third way' comprador alliance with big foreign industrialists.

The reactionary front around the Brash gang is seeking populist mobilization among small business and the lower middle class fearing Maori ascendancy and the renewed confidence of the trade union movement. Their

US backers want a vigorous offensive to drive down wages and cheapen the costs of their plunder of Aotearoa's remaining resources for international markets, their profits languishing amidst the mounting world economic recession. To this end the Brash gang is stooping to unparalleled depths of lies, bribery, distortions and outlandish bravado.

The Clark regime too seeks lower wages and associated costs, 'increased competitiveness', on the behest of US capital, but pursues this in a different way. They wish to avoid a frontal confrontation with the broad masses, which ultimately proved unsuccessful in the 1980s and 90s, and they also want to co-opt highly skilled and scientific workers into patriotic sacrifice for national 'innovative growth'. But there are clear limits to the Clark regime's 'third way'; as with the foreshore dispute, the treaty settlements, demands for increased union rights, the basic conditions for capitalist profitability will be ruthlessly defended.

Third, under the shadow of the 'war on terror' the Clark regime has signed up to repression of civil liberties and is competing with Brash to be the 'best friend' of the US and its militarist agenda.

This situation is leaving all capitalist parties increasingly discredited, with popular support

for either major faction largely based on opposition to the other, and a general disillusionment with the promise of capitalism.

SEIZE THE INITIATIVE AND MOBILIZE THE MASSES

The intensifying crisis for the ruling classes is ripe for possibilities for mobilizing the masses. Beyond any so-called choice between the 'lesser evil', mass mobilization by Maori and organized labour is proving its effectiveness.

The Communist Party must take advantage of the weakness of the enemy to build its mass base through mobilization around concrete gains. Every reactionary outburst from the Brash gang is a mobilizing point for greater self-determination and greater attention to the situation and needs of the oppressed. Every bumbled response by the Clark regime under pressure is grounds for greater accountability, democracy, civil liberty and right to self-organization.

In this situation mass mobilization can profitably utilise the tactics of guerilla struggle. Unite widely to defeat the most isolated extreme reactionary, concentrate efforts and use surprise. When the enemy attacks, evade and look for weaknesses to strike at its flank.
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Economic Crisis Ahead - Reflecting Imperialist Control

News abounds that mortgage holders face the prospect of increasing interest rates ahead, as the Reserve Bank tries to rein in a boom in consumer-spending based on increasing house prices and divorced from any increases in productivity. As the New Zealand economy becomes increasingly exposed to forces outside the control of successive governments, the Reserve Bank is being proved impotent. It needs to reduce what is quickly becoming a crippling current account deficit (likely to lead to rapid capital flight in the expectation of a rapidly depreciating currency). The problem is that the sole mechanism for controlling spiraling house prices (and inflation that has now permanently moved outside the 'band' of 1-3% Reserve Bank governor Alan Bollard is required to keep it within) is to increase interest rates. Increasing interest rates will worsen the Current Account deficit as foreigners take advantage of the highest real interest rates in the world - until the upcoming crash that is.

Major comprador forces within successive Labour and National governments since 1984 have cravenly surrendered New Zealand national sovereignty to foreign control as the settler capitalists prostitute themselves in exchange for crumbs from the imperialists' table. The ascendancy of imperialist control of the New Zealand economy by the US and its Australian agents, can only be followed by political ascendancy of the direct agents of imperialism and the reduction of the independent settler capitalist state to a semi-colonial state. Already New Zealand is locked into a series of unequal 'free trade' treaties such as CER, the WTO, GATS and TRIPS, which cement its status as an exporter of cheap primary products and an importer of US technology and services.

DEPENDENT SETTLER CAPITALISM

Capitalist accumulation developed in Aotearoa on the basis of high ground rents from land violently seized from the Maori. Local settler capitalists accumulated capital in alliance with British banking capital which invested in mechanised processing, infrastructure development, and a transport network tied to delivering New Zealand agricultural produce to the British market. While the settler capitalists were dependent on British capitalism, autonomous capitalist accumulation was possible, and a growing proportion of the economy fell into settler capitalist hands.

For much of the post-WW2 period New Zealand capitalism has been dominated by domestic and foreign, particularly US, monopoly capitalists. Foreign monopoly capital commanded a number of strategic industries such as oil, chemicals, car assembly, aluminium, banking, shipping, and insurance. Local managers and board members

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When it retreats, it can be pursued relentlessly.

While the reactionary populists provide the most compelling targets at times, the prolonged stay in power of the increasingly discredited and isolated Clark regime presents certain advantages for the democratic mass movement. The regime will continue to aggravate the moribund character of the ruling system and will be increasingly beset by corruption, fraud and human rights violations.

The revolutionary movement builds itself by seizing the initiative mobilizing the masses. Revolutionary forces must hasten the process of arousing mobilizing and organizing the broad masses of the people to launch ever bigger protests against all manifestations of this rotten regime.

We must build the united front against the

of these foreign firms, particularly the finance sector, acted as agents of foreign capital. Domestic monopoly capital controlled agriculture, forestry and fishing, most manufacturing, retailing, wholesaling, domestic transport, electricity generation and telecommunications. But domestic monopoly capital was dependent on foreign capital.

The characteristics of this dependency are:

The reliance of big domestic manufacturing capitalists on foreign loan capital and technology, minority foreign shareholdings and inter-linking directorships.

The dependence of the big farming capitalists and other primary producers on foreign markets, finance, insurance and shipping.

The weakness of basic industries meant that any exports were import-dependent. An increase in predominantly primary product exports, requires increased imports of manu-

ruling regime at local and national levels. We must win over tactical allies. We must exacerbate contradictions among reactionary factions and within the ruling clique. We must form alliances that would lead to more favorable conditions for the revolutionary movement and advance the interests of the broad masses of the people

As the people of Aotearoa increasingly mobilize, the Communist Party conducts propaganda to make them aware that fundamental changes in society will only be achieved with the complete victory of the socialist peoples revolution that will overthrow the entire reactionary and puppet state and system and establish a genuine revolutionary government and system. All throughout this process, the people must continuously wield the weapon of militant struggle. They must broadly and actively immerse themselves in economic, political and social issues.

factured goods such as fertiliser and machinery.

New Zealand capitalists face constant balance of payments problems. With export earnings being outstripped by import payments and payments to foreign capital for loans and investments, there is continual demand for other currencies. This weakens demand for NZ dollars and thus adds pressure for ongoing currency devaluations, overseas borrowing or further foreign investment.

RECOLONIALISM

Amidst mounting world and local

economic crisis in the early 1980s the foreign and comprador capitalists, particularly in the financial sector, seized the initiative and organised an extensive liberalisation programme. Big domestic manufacturing, retailing, financial and farming capitalists supported this initiative because they saw an opportunity to reduce their costs; cut inflation, wages, taxes and government charges; as well as because of their comprador associations with foreign capital.

The liberalisation of the New Zealand economy dramatically strengthened the position of foreign capital, initially foreign financial and services

capital, and later US finance capital. Big domestic financial and retailing capital was eliminated and manufacturing capital severely weakened. Foreign investment has increased rapidly, from \$725 million in 1989 to a peak of \$4.7 billion in 1994. This has since fallen back to \$2 billion in 1997 but the total has risen to \$51 billion and New Zealand capitalists now pay out \$11 billion a year in profit repatriation and debt repayments to the foreign owners of these investments. This is the major contributor to New Zealand's balance of payments deficit of nearly 9% of GDP, reinforcing the local capitalists' dependence on US imperialism

Fastfood Giant Challenged to Super-size Workers Pay

A world first happened in the heart of Auckland city on November 22, as workers at multi-national giant Starbucks went on strike.

The legal wild-cat strike is a public awareness raising event and the first action in the Unite workers union "SuperSizeMyPay.Com" campaign. It is the first strike ever to happen at a Starbucks outlet, anywhere in the world.

Unite spokesperson Simon Oosterman says the strike is just one way Unite is raising public awareness of the working conditions of those employed in the fast-food sector and other low paid and minimum wage jobs.

"The minimum wage is now the most important determining factor for low paid workers. Raising the minimum wage to \$12 NOW, removing youth rates, giving secure hours and other minimum entitlements would be the first step towards reclaiming what entitlements workers have lost and alleviating poverty and inequality," said Mr Oosterman.

These claims all feature in the Communist Party of Aotearoa's minimum platform raised throughout the recent general election.

The community-wide campaign is being launched around the fast-food industry to win a contract based on these demands as a first step to winning them for all low-paid New Zealanders.

Internationally Starbucks has low union

representation, with only 300 union members out of 80,000 workers globally.

One third of these union members are in New Zealand.

Starbucks workers start on \$10 an hour, only fifty cents above the New Zealand minimum wage. Workers hours are not guaranteed and can, and have been, cut from 40 to 20 hours. In Australia, Starbucks workers earn almost \$5 more per hour than their New Zealand workmates.

Unite has 2000 members in the fast-food industry.

There was even more to the story as it developed through the day. Unite members from stores across Auckland walked off the job today to join the strike.

What began as a small protest by workers from one store became a city-wide strike when Starbucks workers heard that managers would be brought in to cover the shifts of the striking K'Rd workers.

More than 30 workers spontaneously walked out from 10 different Auckland Starbucks stores to join KFC, Pizza Hut and McDonalds employees, and around 150 other supporters outside the K'Rd store.

"Starbucks workers continued their solidarity despite being threatened with being sacked for abandonment of shift if they did not return after one hour," said

Oosterman.

Daniel Gross, co-founder of the Starbucks workers union in New York, said the strike was an important step towards changing working conditions for those in the fast-food sector all over the world.

"The Kiwi Starbucks workers are making a stand for baristas around the world. We get paid what amounts to a poverty wage and there are no guaranteed hours. Starbucks have record turnovers every year, but none of that money makes it into the workers pockets," said Mr Gross.

"This is a signal that minimum wage workers from around the world are fed up with living on the poverty line".

Mr Oosterman said that multinational companies are taking advantage of people in vulnerable situations.

"Our campaign isn't just about fair pay at work, it's about social justice. Poverty-wages are increasing the gap between rich and poor and increasing other social inequalities. The majority of low paid and minimum wage workers are women, Maori, pacific islanders, disabled, youth, students and new migrants," he said.

Working Farmers Being Squeezed By Big Business

According to Northland Farmers Federation Dairy farmers' co-operative ethos is being squeezed by recent appointments to the Fonterra board who are committed to corporatising added-value products and instituting milk price differentials across the supplier base.

They note that the elections for the board of the Meat and Wool New Zealand in March were dominated by large operations, including Landcorp. A weighted voting system meant voting was based on stock numbers rather than the number of farmers. Farmer requests for a breakdown of any difference between individual votes and the weighted result has been turned down. 'If the information showed that an unsuccessful candidate received the votes of more individual farmers than the successful candidate, this might give rise to inappropriate questioning of that director's mandate' responded the MWNZ. Well, of course, farmer advocates have been shut out by those backed by large corporations and the government appointees, each acting in the interests of comprador capital. What the Board doesn't want exposed is the futility of the average farmer's vote.

While Fonterra's profits dipped for the 2004-2005 year this made no impact on the pay packets of the company's executives. Chief executive Andrew Ferrier's went to over \$2.5 million, at least five other executives each went to over \$1 million and more than 1100 Fonterra employees were each paid more than \$100,000.

PROGRAMME FOR WORKING FARMERS

Within the farming industry there are many issues requiring attention if the interests of working farmers are to be protected. A major issue is the farmer's access to finance. In recent years, with the decline in commodity prices and pressure on incomes, many farmers have been confronted with demands from their bank with the prospect of foreclosure imminent for many farmers.

Politicians and some within the industry are opening up the dairy industry to foreign investment, if not outright purchase of its production enterprise. This is leading dairy farmers to becoming suppliers without a say in their industry. It is from this background that a working farmer has developed the following programme:

A PRIMARY TRUST BANK

The goal is to establish a Primary Trust Bank. The money to set up the Primary Trust Bank would come from the meat and wool board levies accumulating to \$150-\$154 million. The current balance of the monies would be used for leasing existing bank buildings and for lending money to farmers who face foreclosure on property. The lending rate would be 3 percent on principal and 6 percent on overdrafts. For the record, the Meat Board's turnover is five billion dollars and the Dairy Board's is seven-eight billion. The Primary Trust Bank would not lend in the commercial sector or for the purchase of farms by private individuals not living in New Zealand. The Primary Trust Bank would be able to operate a cheque account for farming and small businesses related to farming and the rural sector. It

would be able to extend agencies to the rural sector where lending as required would not be on a table mortgage basis, including all farm machinery and stock.

CHARTER OF PRIMARY TRUST BANKING

1. No forced sales.
2. A one-year freeze on all interest payments for those farmers with a net income less than the minimum living wage as determined by farmers' committees.
3. Mortgage interest payments and principals to be restructured and adjusted to to the average income of the farm over the last three years where the income is below the minimum wage; the family needs and interests to come before payments to banks and finance companies.
4. Where interest charges have been increased during the term of the mortgage such increased interest paid shall be credited to the farmer's account to reduce debt.
5. Farmers have the option to sell their farm to the state agency. Farmers could lease back the farm at an annual rent not more than three percent of the government valuation. The term of the lease would be for the period of 33 years or less. The state agency would pay the leaseholder for improvements when the farmer ceases the lease. When the farmer ceases the lease, the aim is to free the farmer of the debt burden and enable them to concentrate on production and be assured of payment for improvements on retirement.

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Can Zimbabwe Become Africa's Cuba?

Excerpted from a longer piece by Mukoma Ngugi

INTRODUCTION: THE THREE ZIMBABWES

A few weeks after I returned from Zimbabwe, I was invited by Allen Ruff of Madison's WORT for a radio interview on my first book, an Africa Awareness Rally that I was helping organize, and my trip to Zimbabwe. In spite of it being made abundantly clear several times by Ruff that I am a Kenyan, one caller hoped "that it was safe for me to speak". She was under the impression that Mugabe has secret agents in Madison, Wisconsin who are willing to assassinate a Kenyan national for speaking about Zimbabwe or at the very least monitoring the radio waves and would face the music if I was ever back in Zimbabwe. She was worried for my ability to speak freely thousands of miles from Zimbabwe. Most of the other callers asked questions that were along this vein and the other things that I had talked about such as the need for thinking about Africa not as a humanitarian case but as a continent whose resources are plundered were overshadowed by Zimbabwe.

I begin this article by giving the above seemingly inconsequential details to hint at a discrepancy between a Zimbabwe that is not doing too well, has its own share of fatal and even tragic flaws and the Zimbabwe of the Western imagination of pure murder and mayhem arbitrated by black skin. There is the Zimbabwe of land redistribution, Look East, petrol queues, Operation Clean Up, the Congo War, of ZANU-PF, the MDC, Third Way etc. Depending on race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, ideology etc, this Zimbabwe

will have different meanings. This is the Zimbabwe with its own sets of contradictions that I would like to term the Zimbabwe on the Ground.

Then the Zimbabwe of the Western imagination, equally multi-layered and rife with contradictions. Within it we find the racist view of the machete armed African hacking away at civilization again, a historical guilt over slavery and colonialism, a paternalism that excuses unjust practices under cultural relativism, a fear of black liberation and a naturalized Western dominance over Africa as point of reference and source of comfort. This view cannot and does not desire to distinguish between a white dead body in the streets of Somalia, Iraq or Zimbabwe. No matter its point in this scale, it remains a Western imagination that sees the world through both a racialized and nationalist lens.

But as if that is not enough, there is another Zimbabwe with its own sets of facts and myths. This is the Zimbabwe that carries the hopes and frustrations of Africa - Zimbabwe the symbol or more aptly the metaphor. This is the Zimbabwe that symbolizes for the African that the dreams of independence have not been fulfilled, can be fulfilled or can never be fulfilled. This is the Zimbabwe that African leaders will not condemn for fear of calling attention to betrayed dreams within their own national borders. This is the Zimbabwe that those in the Diaspora who are black nationalists, progressives and radicals applaud or condemn for fulfilling liberation, betraying liberation or not doing enough to see a true liberation through. But the one constant of the Zimbabwe of Africa, Diaspora and Friends is that Zimbabwe, and therefore Africa must not be returned to the round tables of another Berlin Conference.

LAND REDISTRIBUTION, POLITICS OF RACE AND THE ZIMBABWE OF WESTERN IMAGINATION

I would like to suggest that to get to the Zimbabwe on the ground and that of Africa and Diaspora, we have to first go through the Zimbabwe of the Western imagination for it is only then that we can genuinely have a dialogue over what is happening in Zimbabwe and the role Africa and Diaspora, the international community, and political activists can play. It is only then that we can be left with the a Zimbabwe that is not distorted by a view that from the very beginning delegitimizes Africa's search for a democracy that talks back to colonial legacies and a democracy that seeks content.

In Zimbabwe, during the land seizures ten white farmers were killed. By contrast in South Africa, where even after the fall of apartheid whites still own 80% of arable lands, over 1,500 white farmers have been killed since 1994 according to the BBC. The South African government blames criminal elements but given this high number, it is hard not to imagine that the murders are tied to the history of apartheid. While the acts are certainly criminal, the numbers are too high not to suggest that a history of apartheid and a lack of redress have colluded. In Zimbabwe government policy created the conditions in which ten white farmers were killed. In South Africa lack of government policy has led to the conditions in which 1,500 whites farmers have been killed. It is in a sense part of the same movement.

But in Zimbabwe, the infinitely much smaller number of white farmer deaths has created uproar whereas the South African murders are not common knowledge; international media does not report

them and Western politicians have turned their gaze elsewhere. A petition aptly titled "Help Save South African Farmers" gathered 495 signatures. It is safe to speculate that had the petition been for the Zimbabwean farmer, the signatures gathered would have been in the thousands if not millions. While acknowledging that there is no evidence that suggests the A.N.C. government has sanctioned white farmer murders, it is still worthwhile to look at the reason why there is

such a discrepancy in how the two situations have been received in the West.

The reason why the West has latched on to 10 white murders in Zimbabwe and has skirted over South African 1,500 murders is complex - there is an intersection of racial mythology, natural rights and entitlement, colonial history and legacies, politics of reparation and redistribution and ideology of private property. In South Africa, the contradiction of a

country with a black leadership that protects a large body of white interests (who became apartheid's upper-class because they are white) and a growing black elite (whose role in the words of Kwame Ture is to give individual success the illusion of collective success) have yet to come home to roost. True there are murmurs to be found in the COSATU led strikes and the growing radicalization of those calling for land reform in South Africa but they have as yet to rise to an extent where they force the A.N.C. into taking radical measures that end neo-apartheid.

Zimbabwe on the other hand has violated the myth that naturalizes racial hierarchy. Blacks are not supposed to kick out whites from their farms and their homes. They are a mass of faceless laborers who each morning file to the factories and the farms looking for work. This black mass is not supposed to do tribal chants at the same gates wielding machetes, making fun of whites and showing such audacity by "forgetting their place". They are not supposed to raise their hand and strike the white man in his home and essentially treat him and his family the same way he has for years treated the black man and his family. (As always, women remain a conversation between men. In the rapes and counter-rapes - the actors are men in a masculine affair). It seems to me therefore that Zimbabwe's original sin is indicating to a world full of blacks and whites that there is nothing inviolable in the myth. More than threaten the whites in their very own homes, in Zimbabwe white natural right to vast land and property is being threatened as a matter of governmental policy.

ZIMBABWE ON THE GROUND

Operation Clean Up

With the above in mind, we can now turn our attention to the Zimbabwe on the ground. Without a doubt, even amongst ZANU-PF supporters that I spoke to, there was a general agreement that Operation Clean-Up was problematic at best and tragic at worst.

The official government line was in its election, it had pledged to clean up the city and that it while it targeted illegal structures it also targeted the black market. But if this is the case it would have been more prudent and first build the required number of houses as a way of protecting innocent citizens. No matter the reasons for the clean-up one thing is clear: it was a costly move in terms of legitimacy and I think history will eventually judge it as heavy handed if not all



together without justification.

Outside the possible reasons that either wanted to exonerate or blame the government, what was alarming to me was the ease with which the government destroyed places people called home. In an Africa where our collective memory includes constantly being up-rooted and forced into Bantustans such careless action recalls this painful history. It recalls forced colonial migration and dispersal. By forcefully moving an African people, collective memory and the legacies of colonialism make it such that only an injustice can come out of it.

But with the above said, there are still questions to be asked of our response to the house demolitions in Zimbabwe. In a world where we have become used to turning our backs on the dead and the dying, why were Zimbabwe's actions greeted with a response that bordered on the hysterical? Are Zimbabwe's actions any worse than let's say Nigeria's? The Vanguard writes that: More than 1 million people have been forcibly evicted in Nigeria since 2000. In April 2005 some 3,000 residents were forcibly evicted from their houses in the Makoko area of Lagos, on the basis of a court order, issued in 2000, granting ownership of the land to a private family. Houses, churches, and medical clinics were demolished as part of the forced evictions and the officials involved kicked and beat residents, including five young children.

Even though forced removal and dispersal in one place do not justify them in another place, the question remains why our attention solely remains focused on Zimbabwe.

Operation Stay Well

In my two weeks in Zimbabwe I went to several of the sites where houses had been demolished and to some of the by-then empty holding camps where people were herded together before being shipped to other destinations. Luckily they were moved from the holding camps before the unsanitary conditions bred diseases like cholera and my understanding of it was that it was purely a matter of luck that no such outbreaks occurred.

The government has embarked on an ambitious project dubbed Operation Stay Well for those it rendered homeless. Construction had begun at multiple sites I visited around Harare and Bulawayo and some units were close to completion by Mid-August. But there has been very little international media coverage of the reconstruction. In fact, had I not been an

eyewitness to the houses being built, spoken with architects and workers in about five of the sites that I visited, living outside of Zimbabwe I would not be aware of such efforts. It seems to me that there is such a concerted effort by the international media to completely vilify Zimbabwe, that even an acceptable journalistic standard like weighing the reconstruction on its merits and demerits are not being met.

ZIMBABWE AND CONTRADICTIONS

Some of the farms that I visited were so huge and demanded such a large labor force that in addition to a school, some of them had a dispensary, a small shopping center and a bar - all for the black workers courtesy of the owner. It is this fact that shocked me the most. That one could have a farm so large and indenture so many people that a primary school, a dispensary and a small shopping center become a matter of course. The farm owners in essence are running their own economy with one goal in mind - profit. First the farm is far away from any town so that for the black family whatever lacks in store literally lacks in their lives. The store mediates between them and their needs and how much it will cost to meet them. The store is eager to give credit to the black workers to keep them ensnared in a vicious cycle of credit and debt. Each month's paycheck goes to clearing the debt accumulated at the store which means that the worker had to borrow more in order to survive till the next pay check. The dispensary patched up injured farmers just well enough to see them working the following day. The primary school ensures that the black child learns just enough maths to count chickens coming home to roost and enough English to take instruction from the owner. In short, it is slavery.

One of the redistributed farms that I visited was about an hour's drive from Harare. This farm, or rather region, was formerly named Avoca after the owner. The part of it that I visited has been renamed Mazikhana Farm which translates to ladies/women's farm. It was redistributed to a woman. Mrs. Mutumbwa, the owner, in a tone that carried pride and accomplishment, said that she "worked for an international NGO for seventeen years and could not even afford a car" but "Now I can". She pointed to her old BMW. She has children who are studying abroad and has been able to visit them, something that was unthinkable a few years ago. The farm has yielded tangible benefits and she can point to them. But there are also intangible benefits. Able

to feed and clothe her family - she has the pride that comes with controlling and deciding her life. Her choices at the very least are not hampered by deprivation.

There are questions to be asked however. For example, Mrs. Mutumbwa "inherited" her workers from Mr. Avoca: but is the point not to eradicate land classes and instead have a more egalitarian society? For the workers themselves, does it matter whether the boss is black or white if they are still living in poverty? And more than any other, the latter question is more pertinent for in some ways the process of land redistribution might mean more to new black farmers and less to underpaid black farm and industrial workers. And overall, land redistribution should become a symbol and metaphor of what is possible with other sectors of the economy. Land redistribution should be pointing to what is possible for all of society.

And there are other ways in which Zimbabwe remains a country mired in neo-colonial contradictions. In spite of how it might seem, a quick glance at who really controls the Zimbabwean economy will reveal this: its economy, much like the rest of Africa, remains dependent on the West. The dependence on foreign currency and the need for IMF and the World Bank loans (in spite of the rhetoric on both sides) attest to this. I visited some of the rich neighborhoods and the opulence on display was as bad as I have seen it in Kenya or in the United States. One massive house, right in a suburb in Harare, resembles a yacht. I was shown another mansion owned by a man who on making it rich bought the mansion where his mother used to work for the whites as a maid. He had it demolished and built another in place for her. And others who imported marble, competed in buying expensive cars, taking expensive holidays etc. This aspect of Zimbabwe recalled Fanon's caricature who on taking over the master's house can only imitate and who in the end serves as the gate-keeper for Western interests.

WHICH WAY OUT: ZANU-PF OR THE MDC

If ZANU PF has been hurt by the state of the economy and US led sanctions, so has the MDC. The sanctions were called for by the MDC.

By MDC calling for sanctions without first assessing where it stands in relation to Zimbabweans and their history of struggle while at the same time having only the support of the urban segment of the population who unlike in Apartheid

South Africa have something to lose, the opposite of what it intended has happened. The MDC Party is understood as having created the conditions that are taking food away from the table of the urban worker and have put the middle class in a precarious situation. As a result, the MDC Party position has weakened to such an extent that it has been unable to take advantage of the government's tragic follies like Operation Clean-Up - an opportunity that any other party would have seized. The sanctions then have buoyed ZANU-PF while proving to be divisive for the MDC Party. In short calling for sanctions was a mistake.

The MDC Party is also plagued by image problems because of its close ties to



white farmers and the Bush and Blair governments. "We want regime change in Zimbabwe. But we want regime change through the ballot, not the bullet," Morgan Tsvangirai is quoted as saying to a European crowd. The language of regime change is borrowed from Blair and Bush.

ZANU-PF, PRE-EMPTIVE SANCTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION

If globalization has done anything, it has further blurred the lines between boundaries of strong and the weak nations and the weaker nations are all the more vulnerable. If we think of globalization as the next stage of an imperialism that begins with slavery, if we think of

globalization as once and for all stamping the world America's backyard, it follows that US public opinion weighs more than Zimbabwe's public opinion. What the United States under Bush realized is that as long as US Citizens agreed or did not interfere with its foreign policy, international opinion could not be an overriding factor. After all who really controls the money that keeps the United Nations afloat? Who really controls the World Bank, literally a bank that turns millions of dollars in profit each year and is therefore in tune with its Western sponsors? Therefore, through international funding organizations and implied threat of direct military or economic action, Bush can ignore world opinion. After all, what can they really do to stop him? Pre-emptive war or economic action is the end result of an empire that is no longer self-effacing, that no longer has illusions about what it must do in order to fulfill an imperial destiny.

Traditionally sanctions were called upon by the majority voices of the oppressed; now they have become a weapon of the strong against the weak. South Africa during the anti-apartheid struggle appealed to the US citizenry and eventually forced Reagan, who preferred strategic engagement which is to say to do nothing but continue profitable relationships, to declare sanctions. But because the US citizenry views Mugabe through the eyes of the media and Bush, Zimbabwe through economic pressure can be stopped or contained from infecting other poor nations with the disease of redistribution. In this instance, Zimbabwe sanctions, like the war on Iraq, are preemptive. At the moment ZANU-PF forcefully took farms from white farmers, undermined the basis of private property and naturalized white property rights, whatever actions it took thereafter were going to be in opposition to the ideology of Bush. Redistribute democratically or redistribute autocratically, Bush and by extension the West was going to declare Zimbabwe a rogue state.

But instead of realizing the amount of opposition it was going to face and factor in Western public opinion as part of a necessary defense from Bush and co., and therefore justify its actions rightly or wrongly, ZANU-PF came out swinging. Anyone who raised a concern, legitimate or illegitimate was dismissed off-hand. Long before the West had laid its siege, ZANU-PF by turning its back on international public opinion had began its own siege. ZANU-PF has lost so much support amongst people in the West that the sanctions have hardly raised a murmur.

Perhaps the Look East Philosophy will at least buoy the Zimbabwean economy though this will depend on whether the Chinese are going to invest in Zimbabwe as friends or as venture capitalists. But as things stand the Chinese presence can be felt in Harare. Some of the public buses are Chinese are as the planes that fly to Victoria Falls. And the term, Look East has become part of the everyday language. It is not clear how deeply the Chinese are willing to get involved in Zimbabwe but at whatever level, as far as I could tell, they are in for the long haul.

If we agree that land redistribution is a necessary component of democracy as a result of the stark inequalities that exist in countries like Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe, perhaps our job is to make sure that Zimbabwe thrives and that the process of land-redistribution benefits those who were dispossessed by colonialism and neocolonialism. In this sense, perhaps Zimbabwe recalls Cuba - it remains, rightly or wrongly, a symbol of the search for a democracy with content, a democracy that contains within it equality, universal health care, land and wealth redistribution - that basically contains within it the seed that human societies can be arranged in such a way that the elite do not thrive at the expense of a poor majority.

In my view, there needs to be a dialogue about Zimbabwe between those of us who in spite of the various positions taken on Zimbabwe remain unequivocally opposed to the imperialist and racial instincts that are informing both Bush and Blair and are committed to a society where economic and political arrangements work for the majority and in which historical injustices are addressed. In short those of us who are committed to a democracy with content need to dialogue over Zimbabwe. In matters where meaning is contested depending on one's situation, and where millions of lives depend on whose meaning wins, dialogue should never be closed. This does not mean that one abandons his or her point of view. Rather it means viewing our different ideologies as starting points. If Zimbabwe is not to be returned to the Berlin Conference, and Bush and Blair are steadily pushing world opinion in a direction where this can be done under the guise of democracy, we simply must return to our progressive tables and reopen the dialogue.

The Meaning of Dialectics

I
Have you ever tried to hop on a car while it was still moving? How different was it from entering a car that was stationary? Would you have been able to get into the moving car if you were blindfolded? Would you have been able to do it if you were not only blindfolded but didn't know in which direction it was moving or even how fast it was moving?

Why all these silly questions? Obviously, we all agree on the answers, and anyone in his right mind would make sure to know how fast and in which direction a car is moving before trying to climb aboard. Well, what about society? Society is like a vehicle that every one of us tries to climb aboard to find a job, a home, various social relationships, goods to satisfy our needs and fancies—in short, a whole way of life. And who can doubt that society is changing. In fact, no century has experienced as much social change as ours, and no period has experienced faster change than the period since World War II. But just how fast is it changing, and, more important, in what direction? Have you studied what our democratic capitalist society is changing into, or are you like the blindfolded person trying to get onto a moving vehicle, not knowing either the speed or direction in which it is traveling?

How, then, does one study the infinitely complex organism that is modern society as it evolves and changes over time? Marxism enters the picture the systematic effort to provide such an analysis. Focusing on how goods get produced, exchanged, and distributed in the capitalist era, it accounts for the structure as well as the dynamics of the entire social system, including both its origins and likely future. We also learn how the few who benefit most from capitalism use a mixture of force and guile to order the lives and thinking of the great majority who would benefit most from a radical change. Finally, Marxism also lays out a method (dialectics) and a practice (class struggle) for updating this study and helping to bring about the most desirable outcome. No one who is about to climb aboard the moving vehicle that is our rapidly changing society can afford to proceed without it.

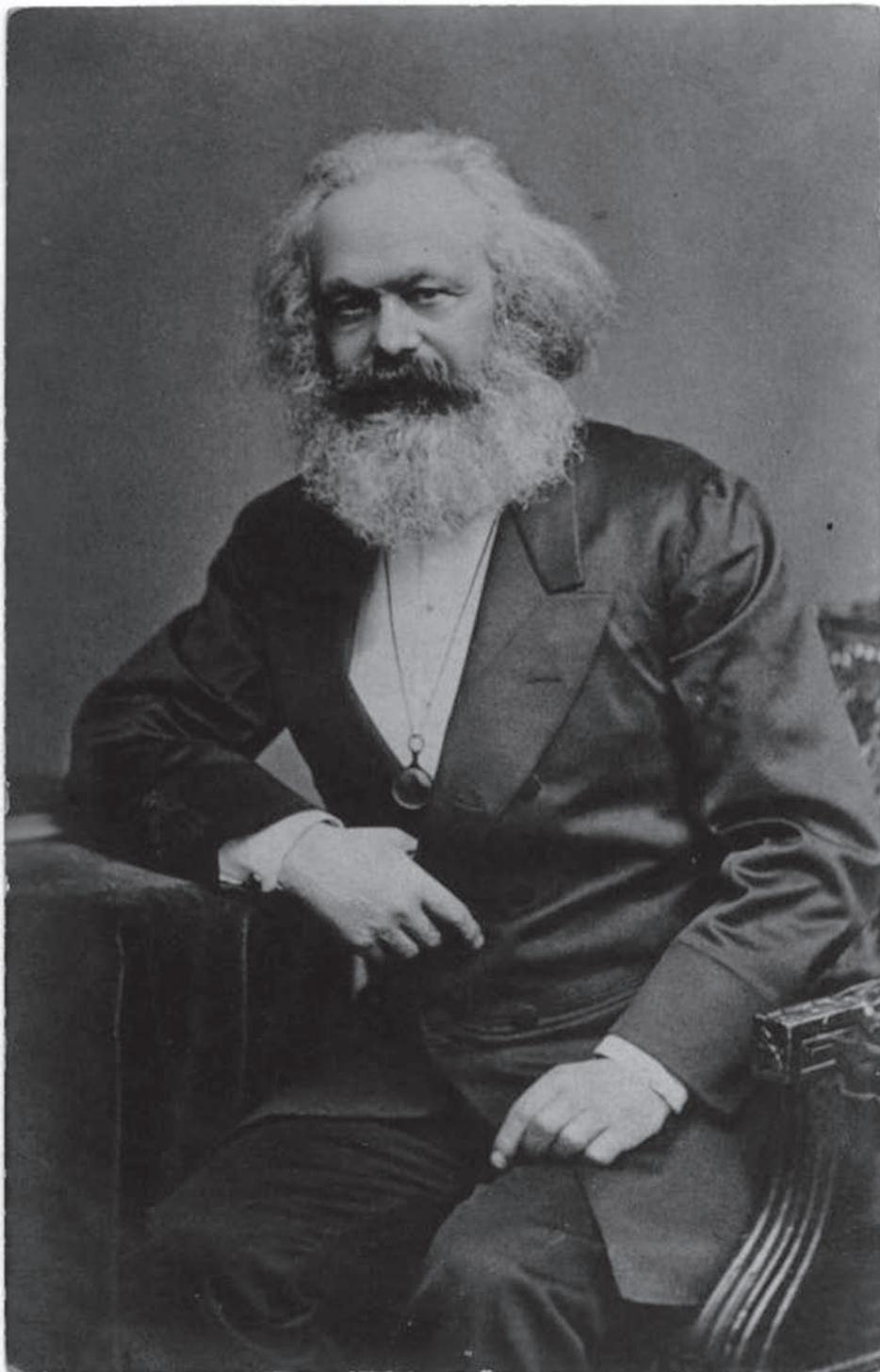
II
What we understand about the world is determined by what the world is, who we are, and how we conduct our study. As regards this last, in our day the prob-

lems involved in grasping reality have been compounded by an approach that privileges whatever makes things appear static and independent of one another over their more dynamic and systemic qualities. Copernicus could have been speaking about the modern academy instead of the astronomers of his day when he said,

'The existing breakdown of knowledge into mutually indifferent and often hostile academic disciplines, each with its

own range of problematics and methods, has replaced the harmonious enlightenment we had been promised with a raucous cacophony of discordant sounds.'

In the confusion, the age-old link between knowledge and action has been severed, so that scholars can deny all responsibility for their wares while taking pride in knowing more and more about less and less. By turning to Marxist dialectics we can criticise this state of affairs and devel-



oping an integrated body of knowledge.

Contrary to populist belief, dialectics is not a rock-ribbed triad of thesis-antithesis-synthesis that serves as an all-purpose explanation; nor does it provide a formula that enables us to prove or predict anything; nor is it the motor force of history. The dialectic, as such, explains nothing, proves nothing, predicts nothing and causes nothing to happen. Rather, dialectics is a way of thinking that brings into focus the full range of changes and interactions that occur in the world. As part of this, it includes how to organize a reality viewed in this manner for purposes of study and how to present the results of what one finds to others, most of whom do not think dialectically.

The main problem to which dialectics is addressed is set out clearly in Marx's retelling of the Roman myth of Cacus (Marx, 1971, 536-37). Half man, half demon, Cacus lived in a cave and came out only at night to steal oxen. Wishing to mislead his pursuers, Cacus forced the oxen to walk backward into his den so that their footprints made it appear that they had gone out from there. The next morning, when people came looking for their oxen, all they found were footprints. Based on the evidence of these footprints, they concluded that, starting from the cave, their oxen had gone into the middle of a field and disappeared.

The problem here arises from the fact that reality is more than appearances, and that focusing exclusively on appearances, on the evidence that strikes us immediately and directly, can be extremely misleading. According to Marx, rather than the exception, this is how most people in our society understand the world. Basing themselves on what they see, hear, and bump into they arrive at conclusions that are in many cases the exact opposite of the truth. Most of the distortions associated with bourgeois ideology are of this kind.

To understand the real meaning of the footprints, the owners of the oxen had to find out what happened the night before and what was going on in the cave that lay just over their horizon. In a similar way, understanding anything in our everyday experience requires that we know something about how it arose and developed and how it fits into the larger context or system of which it is a part. Dialectics is an attempt to resolve this difficulty by expanding our notion of anything to include, as aspects of what it is, both the process by which it has become that and the broader interactive context in which

it is found. Only then does the study of anything involve one immediately with the study of its history and encompassing system.

Dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the common sense notion of a 'thing' (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notions of 'process' (which contains its history and possible futures) and 'relation' (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations). Nothing that didn't already exist has been added here. Rather, it is a matter of where and how one draws boundaries and establishes units (the dialectical term is 'abstracts') in which to think about the world. The assumption is that while the qualities we perceive with our five senses actually exist as parts of nature, the conceptual distinctions that tell us where one thing ends and the next one begins both in space and across time are social and mental constructs. However great the influence of what the world is on how we draw these boundaries, it is ultimately we who draw the boundaries, and people coming from different cultures and from different philosophical traditions can and do draw them differently.

III

Besides a way of viewing the world, Marx's dialectical method includes how he studied it, how he organized what he found, and how he presented these findings to his chosen audience. But how does one inquire into a world that has been abstracted into mutually dependent processes? Where does one start and what does one look for? Unlike non-dialectical research, where one starts with some small part and through establishing its connections to other such parts tries to reconstruct the larger whole, dialectical research begins with the whole, the system, or as much of it as one understands, and then proceeds to an examination of the part to see where it fits and how it functions, leading eventually to a fuller understanding of the whole from which one has begun. Capitalism serves Marx as his jumping-off point for an examination of anything that takes place within it. As a beginning, capitalism is already contained, in principle, within the interacting processes he sets out to investigate as the sum total of their necessary conditions and results.

The investigation itself seeks to concretize what is going on in capitalism, to trace the means and forms through which it works and has developed, and to project where it seems to be tending. As a general rule, the interactions that constitute

any problem in its present state are examined before studying their progress over time. The order of inquiry, in other words, is system before history, so that history is never the development of one or two isolated elements with its suggestion, explicit or implicit, that change results from causes located inside that particular sphere (histories of religion, or of culture or even of economics alone are decidedly undialectical). In Marx's study of any specific event or institutional form, these two types of inquiry are always interwoven. The fuller understanding of capitalism that is the major result of such a study is now ready to serve as a richer and, therefore, more useful starting point for the next series of investigations.

IV

Given an approach that proceeds from the whole to the part, from the system inward, dialectical research is primarily directed to finding and tracing four kinds of relations: identity/difference, interpenetration of opposites, quantity/quality and contradiction. Rooted in his dialectical conception of reality, these relations enable Marx to attain his double aim of discovering how something works or happened while simultaneously developing his understanding of the system in which such things could work or happen in just this way.

In what Marx calls the common sense approach, also found in formal logic, things are either the same/identical or different, not both. For bourgeois logicians, comparisons generally stop after taking note of the way(s) any two entities are either identical or different, but for Marx this is only the first step. Unlike the political economists, for example, who stop after describing the obvious differences between profit, rent and interest, Marx goes on to bring out their identity as forms of surplus-value (that is, wealth created by workers that is not returned to them in the form of wages). As relations, they all have this quality, this aspect that touches upon their origins, in common. The interest Marx takes in delineating the special features of production and of the working class without neglecting all they have in common with other economic processes and other classes respectively are good examples of his approaching identity and difference from the side of identity. The relations that stand in for things in Marx's dialectical conception of reality are sufficiently large and complex to possess qualities that—when compared to the qualities of other similarly constituted relations—appear to be identical and others that appear to be different. In investigating what these are and, especially, in

paying extra attention to whichever half of this pairing is currently most neglected, Marx and Marxists can arrive at detailed descriptions of specific phenomena without getting lost in one-sidedness.

While the relation of identity/difference treats the various qualities that are examined with its help as given, the interpretation of opposites is based on the recognition that to a very large degree how anything appears and functions is due to its surrounding conditions. These conditioning factors apply to both objects and the persons perceiving them. As regards the former, for example, it is only because a machine is owned by capitalists that it is used to exploit workers. In the hands of a consumer or of a self-employed operator, that is, conditioned by another set of factors, operating under different imperatives, it would not function in this way. As regards the latter, when someone conditioned as a capitalist looks at a machine, he sees a commodity he has bought on the market, perhaps even the price he has paid for it, and something that is going to make him a profit. When someone conditioned as a worker, on the other hand, looks at the same machine he only sees an instrument that will determine his movements in the production process.

The perspectival element—recognizing that things appear very different depending on who is looking at them—plays a very important role in dialectical thought. This doesn't mean that the truths that emerge from viewing reality from different vantage points are of equal value. Involved as they are in the work of transforming nature, workers enjoy a privileged position from which to view and make sense out of the developmental character of the system, and with his interest in the evolution of capitalism this is the vantage point that Marx most often adopts for himself.

The notion of the interpenetration of opposites helps Marx to understand that nothing—no event, institution, person or process—is simply and solely what it seems to be at a particular place and time, that is situated within a certain set of conditions. Viewed in another way, or by other people or viewing them under drastically changed conditions may produce not only a different but the exact opposite conclusion or effect. Hence, the interpenetration of opposites.

What is called quantity/quality is a relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process. Every process contains moments of before and after, encompassing both build-

up and what that leads to. Initially, movement within any process takes the form of quantitative change. One or more of its aspects—each process being also a relation composed of aspects—increases or decreases in size or number. Then, at a certain point—which is different for each process studied—a qualitative transformation takes place, indicated by a change in its appearance and/or function. It has become something else while, in terms of its main constituting relationships, remaining essentially the same. This qualitative change is often, though not always, marked by the introduction of a new concept to designate what the process has become.

Only when money reaches a certain amount, Marx says, does it become capital, that is, can it function to buy labor-power and produce value. Likewise, the cooperation of many people becomes a new productive power that is not only more but qualitatively different than the sum of individual powers that compose it. Looking for quantity/quality change is Marx's way of bringing into single focus the before and after aspects in a development that most non-dialectical approaches treat separately and even causally. It is a way of uniting in thought the past and probable future of any ongoing process at the expense (temporary expense) of its relations in the broader system. And it is a way of sensitizing oneself to the inevitability of change, both quantitative and qualitative, even before research has helped us to discover what it is.

Of the four major relations Marx investigated in his effort to make dialectical sense out of capitalist reality, contradiction is undoubtedly the most important. According to Marx, 'in capitalism everything seems and in fact is contradictory'. He also believes it is the 'contradictory socially determined features of its elements' that is 'the predominant characteristic of the capitalist mode of production'. Contradiction is understood here as the incompatible development of different elements within the same relation, which is to say between elements that are also dependent on one another. What is remarked as differences are based, as we saw, on certain conditions, and these conditions are constantly changing. Hence, differences are changing; and given how each difference serves as part of the appearance and/or functioning of others, grasped as relations, how one changes affects all. Consequently, their paths of development do not only intersect in mutually supportive ways, but are constantly blocking, undermining, otherwise interfering with and in due course trans-

forming one another. Contradiction offers the optimal means for bringing such change and interaction as regards both present and future into a single focus. The future finds its way into this focus as the likely and possible outcomes of the interaction of these opposing tendencies in the present, as their real potential. It is contradiction more than any other notion that enables Marx to avoid stasis and one-sidedness in thinking about the organic and historical movements of the capitalist mode of production, about how they affect each other and develop together from their origins in feudalism to whatever lies just over our horizon.

The common sense notion of contradiction is that it applies to ideas about things and not to things themselves, that it is a logical relation between propositions ('If I claim "X", I can't at the same time claim "not X"'), and not a real relation existing in the world. This common sense view, as we saw, is based on a conception of reality divided into separate and independent parts—a body moves when another body bumps into it. Whereas non-dialectical thinkers are involved in a nonstop search for the 'outside agitator', for something or someone that comes from outside the problem under examination and is the cause for whatever occurs, dialectical thinkers attribute the main responsibility for all change to the inner contradictions of the system or systems in which it occurs. Capitalism's fate, in other words, is sealed by its own problems, problems that are internal manifestations of what it is and how it works, and are often parts of the very achievements of capitalism, worsening as these achievements grow and spread. Capitalism's extraordinary success in increasing production, for example, stands in contradiction to the decreasing ability of the workers to consume these goods. Given capitalist relations of distribution, they can buy ever smaller portions of what they themselves produce (it is the proportion of such goods and not the actual amount that determines the character of the contradiction), leading to periodic crises of overproduction/underconsumption. For Marx, contradiction belongs to things in their quality as processes within an organic and developing system. It arises from within, from the very character of these processes (it is 'innate in their subject matter'), and is an expression of the state of the system.

A lot of effort of bourgeois ideology goes into denying, hiding, or otherwise distorting contradictions. Bad faith and class interest politics, however, account for only a small part of these practices. For non-di-

alectical thinkers, operating out of a common sense view, real contradictions can only be understood only as differences, paradox, opposition, strain, tension, disequilibrium, dislocation, imbalance, or, if accompanied by open strife, conflict. But without the dialectical notion of contradiction, they seldom see and can never adequately grasp the way processes actually interpenetrate, and can never gauge the forces unleashed as their mutual dependence evolves from their distant origins to the present and beyond. For Marx, on the other hand, tracing how capitalist contradictions unfold is also a way of discovering the main causes of coming disruptions and coming conflict.

On the basis of what he uncovers in his study of identity/difference, the interpenetration of opposites, quantity/quality, and contradiction—a study that starts with the whole and proceeds inward to the part, and which conceives of all parts as processes in relations of mutual dependence—Marx reconstructed the working of capitalist society. Organizing reality in this way, he was able to capture both the organic and historical movements of capitalism in their specific interconnections. The still unfinished results of this reconstruction are the particular laws and theories we know as Marxism.

V

Marx does not deduce the workings of capitalism from the meanings of words or from the requirements of his theories, but like any good social scientist he does research to discover what is the case. And in his research he made use of the entire range of materials and resources that were available in his time. As is well known, most of his dialectic was taken over

from Hegel, who filled in and systematized a way of thinking and an approach to studying reality that goes all the way back to the Greeks. Elements of dialectics can also be found in other social science methods, such as structural functionalism, systems theory, and ethnomethodology, where it constitutes most of what is of value in these approaches.

What stands out about Marx's dialectical method is the systematic manner in which he works it out and uses it for the study of capitalist society (including—because the dialectic requires it—its origins and probable future), the united theory of knowledge (set out in the still incomplete theories of Marxism) to which it leads, the sustained critique of non-dialectical approaches (suggested in our remarks on ideology throughout) that it makes possible, and—perhaps most striking of all—its emphasis on the necessary connection posed by dialectics itself between knowledge and action.

As regards this last, Marx claims, the dialectic 'is in its essence critical and revolutionary'. It is revolutionary because it helps us to see the present as a moment through which our society is passing, because it forces us to examine where it has come from and where it is heading as part of learning what it is, and because it enables us to grasp that as agents as well as victims, in this process in which everyone and everything are connected, we have to power to affect it. In keeping in front of us the simple truth that everything is changing, the future is posed as a choice in which the only thing that cannot be chosen is what we already have. Efforts to retain the status quo in any area of life never achieve quite that. Fruit kept

in the refrigerator too long goes rotten; so do emotions and people; so do whole societies (where the proper word is 'disintegration'). With dialectics we are made to question what kind of changes are already occurring and what kind of changes are possible. The dialectic is revolutionary, as Bertolt Brecht points out, because it helps us to pose such questions in a manner that makes effective action possible.

The dialectic is critical because it helps us to become critical of what our role has been up to now. In Marxist terms, one doesn't advocate class struggle or choose to participate in it. The class struggle, representing the sum of the contradictions between workers, broadly defined, and capitalists simply is, and in one way or another we are all already involved. On learning about it and where we fit into it, we can now decide to stop acting as we have been (the first decision to take) and what more or else we can do to better serve our own interests. What can be chosen is what side to take in this struggle and how to conduct it. A dialectical grasp of our socially conditioned roles and the equally necessary limits and possibilities that constitute our present provides us with the opportunity for making a conscious and intelligent choice. In this manner does knowledge of necessity usher in the beginnings of real freedom.

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People's Power in Nepal

by Parvati

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While communications about the military successes of the People's War in Nepal have been regularly disseminated, little information has been made available at the international level about the achievements of people's power in the country. This article aims to rectify this situation somewhat by highlighting the emergence of people's power side-by-side with the progressive dissolution of the old monarchical state (ruling since 1769), with particular reference to achievements made in the Central Command area, which includes the main base area, Rolpa.

INTRODUCTION

Since the founding of the Communist Party of Nepal in 1949, the destruction of the old monarchical state and construction of the New Democratic state have been coveted dreams of most of the people of Nepal, where mass-based support for communism has been generally high. From the initiation of the People's War in 1996 up to the present period, around 80 percent of Nepal has come under the control of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), hereafter referred to as the CPN(M), while the old state's presence is now limited to the capital, district headquarters, and highways. The hallmark of the People's War in Nepal is the rapidity with which the old state has crumbled, forcing imperialist countries to designate the old state as a "failed state." Today the king's last saving force, the Royal Nepal Army, is limited to its barracks and occasional forays of destroy and retreat into rural areas. This has been possible due to multiple factors, the first being the ability of the new state in the form of people's committees to be strategically firm and tactically flexible in handling contradictions between the international, national, and local. Second, it has been able to place political initiatives ahead of military offensives. Third, it is undertaking construction work side by side

with destruction of the old state. Fourth, it has addressed oppressed nationality, gender, regional, and caste issues long neglected by the old state. Fifth, it is a home-grown movement creatively using Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to analyze the concrete conditions of Nepal and then translate this analysis as the basis for concrete action. Finally, through its total war strategy, it has been able to undermine the old state centrally using political offensives and locally through military strikes by destroying old rural bastions and filling the vacuum with people's committees. The holistic approach of People's War has made it difficult for imperialist countries to term the Maoist movement in Nepal as "terrorist" war.

THEORETICAL PREMISES

The question of state power is central to the revolution. In a country where Protracted People's War is being waged, the question of developing base areas has a strategic place in terms of supplying manpower, logistics for war, and psychological and ideological well being. With the war entering a strategic offensive stage, the question of consolidating base areas becomes all the more important.

From the very beginning even before the people's war started, the CPN(M) was clear about the nature of the new state. It envisioned a New Democratic state, which would exercise people's dictatorship over feudal and imperialist forces, including expansionist states, while granting democracy to oppressed classes, castes, nationalities, regions, and women. However it was also made clear that this revolution may need to go through various sub-stages, zigzags taking into consideration Nepal's specific geopolitical condition. Thus in Nepal's case, the Party had already envisaged that the New Democratic state in Nepal shall take the form of a class, national, and regional United Front under the leadership of the proletariat. This is because a high percentage of the population in Nepal falls into the oppressed class, with many different nationalities and regional

divisions.

DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE'S POWER

The concept of a New Democratic State took concrete shape only after the initiation of the People's War. The rapidity with which local people's power sprouted in different parts of Nepal can be judged by the way that the People's War by its second year had created a power vacuum in various rural areas, mainly in western Nepal. Different levels of embryonic people's power started filling the power vacuum under the three regional commands in the form of United People's Committees. Initially these areas were defined militarily in the form of main, secondary, and propaganda areas. Within two and a half years there was already discussion of building a base area in the main area of the western region, due to the strong mass base, strong position of the Party, favorable terrain, elimination of social class enemies by the guerrilla squads, and to a certain extent the defeat of local military strength of the reactionary state in that region. Thus a call was given for conversion of main zone to base area and secondary zone to guerilla zone. By the fifth year of the People's War, the Party had advanced the slogan "Consolidate and Expand Base Areas. March Towards the Direction of Forming New Democratic Central Government." The same year the First National Convention of the Revolutionary United Front consisting of the representatives of the CPN(M), the People's Liberation Army (PLA), various class and mass organizations, local People's Committees, and prominent personalities was held (September 2001), which founded the United Revolutionary People's Council, Nepal. With this formation, a dialectical relation emerged with the central United Front, in which the United Revolutionary People's Council intervening politically calling national bandh and chakka jam (strikes and general stoppages) and calling for dialogue, constitutional change, etc. from the old state at the central level, together with

REPORT

exercising People's Power through various people's committees at the local level. This amounted to an all-out attack on the old state. By the seventh year of the People's War (2003), nine national and territorial autonomous regions had been formed throughout the country.

Power, some ward-level people's committees have been brought together to form Model Villages, where generally almost all members of the households are organized under the Party, mass front, or militia, thus making them a revolutionary iron fort for People's War. In these model villages women and

cooperatives functioning in the base areas throughout the country.

DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF PEOPLE'S POWER

One of the first indications of the failure of the old state and emergence of the new state is in the judiciary. The mobile, locally-based people's court soon replaced the old formal court system. So popular was the people's court system that even those who did not readily accept the authority of the new state accepted the service rendered by the new people's court. Today the Public Code of People's Republic of Nepal 2003 is being followed to regularize and systemize the functioning of the legal system throughout the country. By 2005, within the Special Region, one male and one female at the district committee level from each of the eleven districts had been given training, enabling them to function in the mobile people's court. Similarly, an open-jail system is facilitating transformation of convicts into useful citizens. However there is a dearth of red and expert manpower. Although the Party and People's Committees are now relatively free from getting involved in the day-to-day operation of the judiciary system, there are still tendencies to give justice straight from the Party or People's Committees without forming separate judicial commissions. As the base areas expand and consolidate, the organizational network of the judiciary system needs to be further developed. The effective and efficient functioning of the judicial system helps in winning the confidence of the masses in the new state and hence in consolidating it. This also helps in transforming people, which is an important part of Protracted People's War. In addition, in light of the appeal made by the CPN(M) to the United Nations and other international forums for the representation of the people's power (while opposing the so-called representation of the military-fascist old state), the scientific functioning of the judiciary by the local new states will give further legitimization to its claim.

PEOPLE'S SECURITY

One of the main functions of the People's Security in the form of militias is to provide security to the base areas and people's committees at various stages, in short to safeguard the achievements of People's War at people's level. There are part-time and full-time militias who are in essence future PLA recruits. Thus the function of people's security is also to expand the local military recruiting base for the PLA. In fact, all regional and



TERRITORIAL REGIONS AND ZONES IN NEPAL

Under these regions People's Committees are functioning right from the district level to village to ward levels. While many of these committees are nominated, some are elected. The present trend is to continue increasing the elected committees. In order to consolidate, centralize, and unify the work of People's

Dalits have been given special rights of representation in people's committees, women are granted equal right to parental property, and ostracization of Dalits is banned. The schools are run on the new syllabus prepared by the education department of the CPN(M) and students are being taught in their mother tongue. Today a number of communes in various stages of development are functioning together with several agriculture-based

national autonomous regions have been given the right to form their own militia in their respective areas. In big raids they participate as a supporting force for the PLA force. They not only give protection to any central or local program held in their areas but also provide logistical support to them. They give protection to injured PLA members recovering in base areas after each major military strike. They also give basic defensive armed training to the local people. In addition to providing security, they also work as production brigades in public construction work. In their free time they work as organizers too.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The socio-political achievements of the People's War, including people's power, can only be sustained by building a new economic base. In a country like Nepal where the state machinery, production, markets, and community institutions have been subordinated to, distorted, and shaped by the self-development of the global capitalist system over the course of the last two and a half centuries, a process Marx encompassed using the Hegelian term "subsumption" and Mao referred to in terms of "semi-colonial" and "semi-feudal," the aim of the New Democratic revolution is to develop a national capitalist economic system, which is socialist in orientation, under the leadership of a Communist Party. The new state has rightly given emphasis to the agriculture sector so that on that basis industry can re-develop. It is important to note that cottage industry was thriving until the 1920s and was being further dismantled by World Bank dictates in the 1990s.

Regarding finance, commerce, and revenue in base areas, there are many consumer-based cooperative shops, including restaurants run by various mass fronts and people's committees. There have been efforts to regularize private, industrial, and commercial undertakings by bringing them within the taxation regime of the new state.

Following the mobile people's courts, the physical infrastructure work is most sought after. Popular works carried out by various mass fronts, PLA, and people's committees include construction of pedestrian tracks, horse trails, irrigation systems, mill works, new school buildings, child-care centers, and other public buildings. They also include paving village roads and making green roads, providing piped drinking water, digging ponds, stor-

ing rain water, redesigning and remaking burnt down houses, making rest places and martyr gates. In short all these activities are proof of how the new state is able to unleash the talent and energy of the population. Of late, the construction of a 91 kilometer motor road from Dahavan to Chunvang and Thawang in Rolpa District by the people is worth noting. It has enhanced the image of the Maoist Party as a responsible, mature Party good not only at destroying the old state but also at constructing the new state.

REVOLUTIONISING CULTURE

Since transformation of people is one of the important aspects of the Protracted People's War, the process of destroying the old feudal culture and replacing it with a new progressive culture has been taking place. In base areas in particular, in place of the old culture, a new culture is emerging of celebrating March 8, the historic People's War Initiation Day, and a week-long Martyr Day. Old practices such as child marriages, polygamy, and polyandry, along with incurring debts for birthday, marriage, and death ceremonies are being slowly replaced by new practices: love-based marriage at adult age (twenty for women and twenty-two for men), monogamous marriage, and simpler birthday, marriage, and death ceremonies. Similarly, liquor consumption has been brought under control, thus relieving women from harassment and poverty. Countrywide, regional, and local-level liquor bandhs (strikes) have helped in discouraging liquor consumption. In base areas limited private consumption of liquor is allowed (as liquor consumption is part of Magar culture) under the proviso that it does not disturb public tranquility. Foreign-made liquor is totally banned in base areas as is the sale of homemade liquor. In urban and district headquarters, there are calls to ban beauty contests, and letters are sent to beauty contestants calling on them to not participate or if they have participated to not accept their titles. Similarly sexual exploitation of women in massage parlors, bars, and restaurants is being discouraged by threats of sabotage. Progressive songs, dances, and dramas are being propagated in place of old idealist feudal songs, dances, and dramas. Superstitious practices are being brought under control. Everywhere community-based projects are encouraged. This is reflected particularly in community-based fodder collection, farming, and husbandry work that are part of the farm co-operative movement. With occasional cleanliness drives launched by various mass fronts including the new state, people are getting conscious of

the importance of maintaining a healthy environment in and around the households.

ACHIEVEMENTS, LIMITATIONS, AND POSSIBILITIES

One can proudly claim that the otherwise small obscure archaic monarchical state of Nepal, which hardly existed in the political map of the world, has today become a focus of attention not only in this region but across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Today officials of the United Nations frequently visit Nepal. All this could be achieved not only through the force of rebellion but because this rebellion has introduced a new system of state, a new value of life which bases itself on science, not religion; on responsibilities, not bondage and debt; on a universal outlook, not on obscure past values; on emancipation of women, Dalits, and oppressed nationalities and regions, not playing upon their vulnerability and oppression. And all these have been made possible by the wretched of the earth, who are otherwise languishing in other parts of the world including the so called developed world. The People's War has indeed unleashed their creativity and energy, making them the new rulers with more responsibilities, precisely because they belong to the majority human productive force, which produces wealth not for individual accumulation but for collective gains, making humans truly social. Within Nepal, the new emerging state has shifted politics from a Kathmandu-centric focus to a rural-centric one. Today the people and interests making up the old state, including parliamentary parties, are forced to address long-neglected issues. The People's War has undermined the old state's feudal base, which still exists in so-called democratic countries. However the challenge today is to build a national capitalist economic base with a socialist orientation under the leadership of a proletarian Party. Lastly, it has sown hope among the working classes of the world that another world is possible and that the end of history won't come, despite the wishful thinking of ruling-class propagandists, as long as people struggle.

The Revolution in France

Reporting provided by A World To Win news service

In 1968 Mao Zedong was reportedly asked what his perspective was on the French Revolution. He responded 'it is too early to tell'. While scholars have fallen over themselves to interpret this as some comment on the long sweep of history, and others have denied that it was ever spoken, what emerges from a detailed analysis was that he was almost certainly discussing the revolution taking place at that moment in France - like the one we have been witnessing over the past two months - it is, of course, too early to tell.

The rulers of France are facing their worst crisis in decades. Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin has invoked a half-century old law that has not been used since France's colonial war in Algeria, allowing local authorities to declare a state of emergency and impose a curfew forbidding anyone to be on the streets at certain hours. The problem, for them, is a revolt by the people France's Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy called not human beings at all but *racaille*, rabble or low-class scum. The once-voiceless youth from the *cités* (housing estates or projects) have put themselves at the centre of events, and forced everyone else to define themselves in relation to them.

Shortly after he took his present job, Sarkozy declared "war without mercy" against the "riffraff" in France's suburbs. He said he would take a Karcher, a high-pressure water hose most famously used to wash dog excrement off sidewalks and streets, to "clean out" the *cités*, home to much of the immigrant population and the lower section of the working class of all nationalities. This was not just talk. He unleashed his police to harass and humiliate youth even more than usual. It is common for young men walking down the street alone at night to be suddenly jumped by a carload of cops for an "identity check" that often means getting thrown on the ground, handcuffed if they open their mouth to protest, and slapped around. In recent weeks, the police have sharply stepped up this persecution. From time to time youths responded by

burning cars at random, something that has become a common act of rebellion in France in recent years.

Their smouldering anger first burst into flames on 27 October in Clichy-sous-Bois, a suburb to the east of Paris formerly considered a quiet town. A group of young teenagers were coming home after an afternoon spent playing football. Later the police claimed that someone had tried to break into a construction site office in a vacant lot that lay in their path, although there are no offices on the lot, or anything of value. A carload of police showed up - the BAC, a special brigade whose job is to brutalise *cité* youth. The kids ran. Three of them tried to escape by climbing over a metre and a half-high wall. Several youth who had been arrested earlier and were being held in other police cars overheard the cops' communications. One cop radioed in a report, saying they had seen some teenagers climbing over the wall into an electrical power substation. "They're in mortal danger," he said. "Well," came the response, "they won't get far." Almost an hour later, the firemen's rescue squad showed up and finally had the current cut off. They found two boys dead, and a third severely hurt.

Small groups of youth burned rubbish bins and cars and threw rocks and bottles at police that night. The next afternoon there was a silent march in solidarity with the families of the two dead youth, Bouna Traore and Zyed Benna. The media described them as 15 and 17 years old, although some local people say both were younger than reported. Bouna, whose family came from Mauritania, was known as a good soccer player. Zyed, of Tunisian origin, was considered a nice kid by older neighbours because he offered to run errands for them. The next night saw more local outbreaks on about the same level as the previous one.

In the following days, Sarkozy helicoptered into a nearby town - local youth say he didn't dare come to Clichy. Striking his most macho pose, he ranted about "hoodlums" and *racaille* in what his critics and supporters alike took as a deliberate provocation. On 31 October,

the police fired a tear gas grenade into a mosque crowded with worshippers celebrating an important night of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month. The effects lingered for the rest of the week. The authorities refused to apologize for anything. The parents of the two dead boys stood firm in the face of government efforts to conciliate them.

Instead of dying out after the weekend, the flames grew higher and spread. Hundreds of cars were burned and scores of people detained every night. A week later, as the fighting died down here, an even bigger clash between youth and police took place in nearby Aulnay-sous-Bois. Small groups of very young teenagers set cars on fire in some 20 towns around Paris, many of them in department 93, east and north of the capital. A police station, an unemployment office, big and little stores, two schools and a bus depot were burned down. By Friday 5 November, 900 cars had been burned in the Paris region; the next night flames consumed 500 cars in the Paris region and nearly 800 more in half a dozen cities across France from north to south.

Some politicians claim to see the hand of Al-Qaeda behind it all, which is a coded way of saying that the proper response to these youth's actions is a bloodbath. But even the charge that it is a consciously Islamic upsurge or that imams are leading it is totally wrong. Muslim leaders in the *cités* have been sending out their followers to try and pour water on the outbreaks since the beginning. Even if they sympathise with the youth against the government, they are against what they consider unruly behaviour. The Union of French Islamic Organisations issued a fatwa (religious ruling) forbidding all Muslims to participate in or contribute to "any action that blindly hits private or public property or could constitute an attack on someone's life."

The French government's attitude toward Islam is two-faced. It attacks the rights of Muslims under the guise of secularism. It banned women wearing a head covering from entering a school - as if depriving observant young Muslim women of an

education is anything but racism and more oppression of women. At the same time, Sarkozy has spent great efforts to pull the imams under the government's wing, so that the government presides over their appointment and financing, and in some ways turn them into an organised arm of the state to be used to control immigrant communities. In Aulnay, a woman remarked, "Every time something like this happens they build a new mosque. That's not what all of us want."

The basic problem with this revolt, as far as the powers that be are concerned, is not who is behind it, but that no one is. No one started it, so there is no one to call it off. The foreign media have exaggerated certain aspects of the fighting. There have been few full-scale pitched battles, and even the hit-and-run actions have left very few police seriously injured. Most youth most of the time seem to be avoiding head-on confrontations they feel they can't win. The reason for the French government's crisis is that whatever Sarkozy thought he was doing, the situation has gotten out of his or anyone else's control. It has turned out to be not proof of the power of the state's steel hand, as Sarkozy may have hoped, but of its limits and of the power of the streets. The state has been unable to stop these disturbances so far. Not only have their efforts failed; they have just fanned the flames, and worse, spread burning oil to every part of the country. Their state itself is not in danger, but the youth are contesting their authority.

This crisis has had contradictory effects on the ruling classes and what in France is called "the political class", those who take turns running the government. It has set them against one another at some moments, and pulled them apart at others. At first Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin tried to distance himself from his Interior Minister, Sarkozy, a political rival whom he criticised for using intemperate language. For the first few days and to some extent afterward, President Jacques Chirac distanced himself from both of them with his silence. Criticism of Sarkozy's language even came from one of Sarkozy's fellow cabinet members, the token Arab junior minister for "Equal Opportunities". One of the several police unions called for Sarkozy to shut up because he was endangering cops. But a week or ten days later, very few establishment figures had anything bad to say about Sarkozy in public - his big mouth had become the least of their worries.

The youth are demanding Sarkozy's resignation. That demand is almost univer-

sally repeated by people from immigrant backgrounds and very widely supported by people of all nationalities in the cités and far more broadly, including a large part of the middle class. Sarkozy is the most open face of repression, a man who styles himself as an "American"-style politician in the sense of a boastfully reactionary bully who doesn't try to hide it. That suits his position as Interior Minister, which is probably why his rivals gave him that office. His job is to represent the hard edge of the state against the people, using force against not only immigrants and their children but also strikers, and imposing repression in general. Maybe at first de Villepin and Chirac were hoping that Sarkozy's arrogance would be his downfall. But no one in the political class could accept a situation in which the racaille drove the country's chief cop from office.



The Socialist Party doesn't dare try to take political advantage of the situation to reverse their own decline, at least right now, even though their rank and file would welcome going after Sarkozy. Their leaders argue that "restoring calm" is a precondition for even talking about anything else and explicitly refused to join the call for his resignation.

The revisionist Communist Party is no less unhappy with the situation. They try to heap all the blame on Sarkozy and the right, as if when they were in power the so-called "left" parliamentary parties didn't take the same stance toward the cité youth (a Socialist education minister called them "savages") - and more importantly, as if during their many years in office these parties didn't help make French society what it is today. In the

last weeks youth have risen up in towns run by Socialist, Communist and right-wing mayors without distinction because which party is in power makes no difference in their lives.

The truth is that France has seen far too many years of "calm" in the face of oppression and the kind of "peace" that comes from the downtrodden accepting their fate. What's so good about quietly accepting the kind of life imposed not only on these youth but on the great majority of people in France? Violence within the ranks of the people seems to be at a low point right now and the spirits of the youth are soaring. Their rebellion is not a "disaster". It is very good. It represents fresh air amid political and social suffocation - something positive amid a pervasive atmosphere of cynicism and just putting-your-head-down-and-try-

ing-to-get-by that has prevailed for far too long since the defeat of the May 1968 rebellion and the betrayal of people's hopes represented by the Socialist-led and revisionist-supported Mitterrand government. These youth want to fight, not vote - and they are going up against the predominant idea that nothing can be changed in a country where the electorate united against the openly fascist candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen a few years ago, only to elect Chirac and get Sarkozy. Whatever mistakes the youth may be making, this rebellion represents the best hope that France has seen in decades for a different kind of society.

The often-heard complaint among mainstream and even many "far left" "political people" that these youth are "apolitical" is one-sided and mainly nonsense, although these youth have not gained

COMMENT

the conscious understanding that would be necessary for them to go further, even in the limited sense of having a clear understanding of the nature of their enemies and seeking allies against them. It is not "apolitical" to reject the only life the system can offer them - it is breaking with the bourgeois definition of what politics are allowed and whether the starting point of politics is, as another article in *Libération* said, the "recognition" that the present system is the only possible one.

and/or crushed, but above all ended - quickly. These youth are struggling to awaken, in a country full of sleepers, and it's about time.

At the heart of the current French revolution is the argument about equality. The bourgeois revolution offered only an incomplete emancipation of the struggling national minorities of France - the current struggle is a rejection of the bourgeois 'one law for all' that has been a foundation of the French system since the late 18th century. A deeper equality

ing of Zyed, the neighbour of one of them. They also described the recent police raids on buildings occupied by recent immigrant squatters and Sarkozy's pledge of mass deportations. These things showed what they are up against, signs that official society sees them all as less than human - in fact, worse than animals because they are considered dangerous. They were all French citizens, but that made little difference. "If they say our communities have to be cleaned out, that means they think we're filth, that we should be gotten rid of," one of them explained bitterly. Another added, "If you have a certain kind of name, most companies won't hire you. And if your address is in department 93 and someplace like Clichy, you'll never even get an interview. The only place most of us can work is in an illegal garment sweatshop in somebody's apartment, and now there's even less of that. Besides, we don't want those jobs." Some of the older among them did have jobs; the younger ones weren't eager to discuss how they got by.



These youth are neither "victims" nor "offenders". They have become makers of history, taking action on a scale that no one else has in a country where the majority feel ground down at best. They have stormed onto the stage of political life that has been forbidden to them. There is a consensus among mainstream political parties and the tolerated opposition that this outbreak should be stifled

requires the rejection of bourgeois equality and the 'one law for all' which we in Aotearoa know resonates so strongly with those who already have power, but is recognised for what it really stands for among those who stand on the opposite side of the fence.

Some of the French youths talked to a *World To Win* journalist about the kill-

"We burn cars, monsieur, because cars are what burn best", hotly retorted a young man who had played a leading role over the last several hours. This seemed to convey what was best about these youth, and their shortcomings. They are determined to rebel against injustice by any means at hand, they feel they have nothing to lose and sometimes they are fearless. But they also need revolutionary science so that they can understand more clearly what they were up against and what would have to be done to bring about radical change. Mao Tsetung said that the most basic truth of Marxism is that it's right to rebel. When these two elements come together, proletarian rebels and a scientific outlook, the future of France, and of the countries like it all over Europe, will look very different.

**Do you want to
contribute to Struggle?**

All submissions welcome.

Send submissions to: PO Box 6724, Wellington.

Rona Bailey, 1914 - 2005

Rona Bailey was a communist and active in the struggle for a better society throughout her life. She played key roles in New Zealand-based movements against racism, in particular the anti-apartheid struggle, for workers' rights, including during the 151 days of the 1951 lockout, she was also involved with progressive theatre and dance and in her twilight years with the New Zealand Trade Union Project.

Rona was born in Whanganui, shortly afterwards her family moved to Gisbourne. She recalls in a letter to her daughter how she first came into contact with the racism of the apartheid state - like so many other New Zealanders through rugby:

Well I suppose it was 1921 when I was seven & the family went to Napier because Dad wanted to see the Maori team play the Springboks. I can't absolutely remember whether he took me or not or whether I just heard so much about it that I felt I was there.

What a bloodbath! The Springboks won 9-8. The SA captain refused to shake the hand of his Maori counterpart and a S. African journalist sent back the following cable to his newspaper 'Bad enough having to play officially designated natives, but the spectacle of thousands of Europeans frantically cheering on a band of coloured men to defeat members of their own race was too much for the Springboks who were frankly disgusted'.

Rona studied at Victoria University and in the United States. In the US she met Paul Robieson and learned of the racism of the American South. On her return to New Zealand she became active in the peace movement and joined the Communist Party (CPNZ). As a young woman she travelled representing the Party and the Peace Council, including to Tito's Yugoslavia then on the cusp of revisionism. Perceptive, as she was throughout her life, she exposed the errors of Yugoslav revisionism on a nationwide speaking tour. She became active in Party front organisations; the Friends of the Soviet Union and China Friendship Society. When Rewi Alley toured New Zealand in 1960 and 1963 he stayed with her and her husband Chip - also a Party member - whilst in Wellington.

Through the Party's years of ideological ferment, first in defeating right opportun-

ism in 1956 and condemning Soviet revisionism in 1963 Rona was a stalwart of Marxism-Leninism. Dramatically, as the Party increasingly showed signs of ultra-leftism in the 1970s she was a leader of the Wellington Branch that was expelled in its entirety in 1971. Her work as a communist continued unabated, forming first the Marxist-Leninist Organisation and



then merging that with an Auckland-Hamilton-based group to form the Workers' Communist League. Rona always worked on the basis on non-sectarianism.

From the middle of the 1980s, with much of the communist movement in Aotearoa increasingly unable to resolve issues of colonialism and gender, and with her own party rejecting much of the critical features of Marxism Rona resigned from the WCL. She continued to call herself a communist, although sometimes only a socialist, but she continued to take issues of class and Marxist theory into her ongoing work in the anti-apartheid, women's and peace movements in which she remained active.

She was a strong supporter of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and mistrusted the ANC. Former HART chairperson John Minto noted that he would have sure 'she would not have been surprised at the neo-liberal economic policies being followed by the ANC and the fact that many - up to 80% in one study - black South Africans are worse off today than they were under the old regime. It's very much a case of the ANC leadership 'stopping the gravy train just long enough to jump on themselves'.

Rona played a critical role in the anti-apartheid movement. In 1981, then aged 67, she was assaulted by police while part of the march up Molesworth St and had to be hospitalised.

Apart from her work as a dance and movement instructor, into which she was always pushing appropriate politics, her main political involvement in the later years was with the Trade Union History Project.

Her marching also continued. She herself recounted the following as part of her memory of last year's Hiko over the raupatu of the seabed and foreshore.

Was drinking soup with Moana Jackson, the main organizer for Whanganui when Tame Iti came up - Moana introduced us, whereupon Tame said I know who you are. I wondered if he would remember as we met and marched in Auckland during the Springbok tour (can't remember when) & also on the Land March here (1975). So we had a good chat and then he said 'I am going to interview you for Maori radio right now, as a long time activist and supporter of our cause.!

One couldn't help but have enormous amount of respect for Rona, there was hardly a struggle she wasn't connected with and those she threw herself into have changed the landscape of New Zealand politics for good, and for ever.

Strive to Unite!

Ka Kohi Te Toe Ka Whai Te Marama Tanga

(through the sharing of knowledge, enlightenment will follow)

Struggle is published quarterly representing the viewpoint of the Organisation for Marxist Unity. Struggle aims to provide a Marxist analysis of class struggle, politics and economy of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The immediate task is to encourage working people and all possible forces to unite in a Patriotic and Democratic United Front led by the working class to remove the stranglehold of foreign monopoly capitalists and their local agents, by establishing a People's Democratic State System. This stage of the advance to Socialism is determined by the objectively exist-

ing class contradictions, classes and laws of social development. The more comprehensive the competition of this stage, the more favourable will be the situation for the further advance to a socialist society.

Struggle emphasises the necessity of studying the history of class struggle in Aotearoa/New Zealand from the stand-point of the revolutionary working class science of Marxism-Leninism, in which the writing of Mao Zedong have made a major contribution. Struggle works for the building of a Communist Party based on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism,

a party that develops its strategy, tactics and methods corresponding to the needs of the situation in Aotearoa/New Zealand by concrete analysis: a party free from doctrinaire Marxism, sectarianism and the influence of social democracy, a party whose members are committed to serving the people.

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