


Class Struggle 81 Nov 08/Jan 09

Victory to Palestine!



"Make Them Pay!" **Bolivian bureaucrats**
Free Rex Wotton! **Congo killing for profits**
Revolution in Greece **Key is no Keynesian**
Obama's Black Face **Thugs beat Trotskyists**

Brief Stuff

Global New Deal?

APEC held in Peru in November resolved to advance the Doha WTO round as if this free trade agreement can help overcome the current crisis. Rubbish. Free Trade is not even an ideal we should seriously entertain. It cannot work in the global capitalist economy and in times of crisis such as now it is even more remote.

The reality is that the world market is dominated by transnationals, not national states, which are in fact "owned" by the transnationals. These states implement policies that serve the interests of the TNCs (banks and industrial corporates). There is no conspiracy, its called looking after 'business'. Or as the conservative General Eisenhower once called it, the "military industrial complex". There are shuttle limos running top personnel between business, state and military.

The biggest TNCs are those of the biggest imperialist countries, the US, EU (a bloc of imperialist nations) and Japan. The BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) are already big battlegrounds where the rival imperialist MNCs fight for more control. While potentially rich nations, they are not in the same league. These countries are being plundered by imperialism. Gold production in South Africa is dominated by the huge MNC Anglo-American. China is an emerging market and far from restricting foreign investment is rapidly opening up gold production to FDI.

Nor does state ownership escape the clutches of imperialism. The biggest copper producer in the world is the state owned CODELCO in Chile. But it is still controlled by US banks and Japanese and US MNCs which can easily dominate without private ownership as the case of nationalised Iraqi oil controlled by the big oil (and China) proves.

Doha is all about the US extracting more concessions from poorer countries to buy up their resources in exchange for more access to the US (or EU or Japanese) markets for their commodities. But when those 'foreign' commodity producers are increasingly US, EU or Japanese owned, who is trading with whom? The price of commodities has almost nothing to do with traditional trade barriers and almost everything to do with how much leverage big multinationals have in dictating the prices of commodities they produce in other countries to export to themselves.

The so-called multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO promote the interests of the dominant MNCs forcing the less developed countries (LDCs) into debt and buying up their assets. Bilateral "FTAs" are just deals done between LDCs and the imperialist powers to rip out the resources and labor of the LDCs. "FTAs" in this sense means "forced trade agreements".

The current crisis in the US is not the result of the wrong state policy allowing the banks to run out of control. It arises out of an excess of US capital, despite export of capital overseas to buy up the assets of other countries. This excess was invested in speculative assets such as housing. The state deregulated banking at the behest of the banks because if they did not speculate in assets like housing, their excess capital would have rapidly lost its value. The current bailout socialises the losses of the biggest banks allowing them to consolidate and concentrate their power and wealth at the expense of weaker banks, the taxpayers and ultimately, as always, workers.

Trade barriers arise when states acting on behalf of their respective monopoly banks and corporates restrict trade. States and cartels like OPEC can manipulate prices by regulating or restricting supply. Russia can do this with its gas. OPEC does it with oil. Even little Bolivia does it in a small way by taxing the multinational oil and gas companies.

But the fact is that as the biggest US banks will come out of this crisis much stronger and backed by the US state and the US dollar as ongoing reserve currency, so we have to expect that US imperialism will be able to drive harder bargains with its rivals and subordinates.

This is why this crisis cannot be resolved in favor of the masses of people by any of the rescue operations or reforms proposed at bosses' forums like the G20 and APEC.

He will be trying to offer the big banks free access to NZ resources, low taxes, no

Resource Manage Act barriers, access to the state pension fund, guaranteeing the wholesale funds of Aussie branch banks in NZ so that the big US banks will lend to them, signing the US up to a P4-7 free trade deal that makes big concessions for US 'financial services', junking ETS and carbon taxes, locking up dissidents in private jails etc. to make NZ a safe haven for US investment and open up the country to total US corporate ownership.

All of these measures are designed to make the weaker nations and the masses of the world pay for the crisis with job losses, wage cuts, inflation, backed by state repression. Key is part of the problem not the solution. We need to oppose all the MACTIONAL (National plus ACT plus Maori Party) policies designed to transfer wealth upwards to the MNCs. This means fighting for immediate actions to provide decent jobs, boost wages, and defend our unions and political rights. We need to oppose bosses' bank bailouts that come out of our wages and savings. Tax cuts for the poor and tax hikes for the rich.

Today in many parts of the world, the left is around the slogan "We will not pay for their crisis". This is naturally a defensive slogan but it is a good place to start in building a counter-offensive to the bosses' offensive!

When new Prime Minister John Key sucks up to George Bush at APEC what he is really doing is saying, how can the capitalists in NZ share in this bonanza at the expense of the poor.

Clueless in Caracas

Stuart Monckton (of the Australian Green Left) said recently ..on Marxmail (referring to the recent local body elections in Venezuela where the Chavistas won 17 but lost the 3 of the most populous contests to the opposition):

"There is no point expecting a PSUV (United Socialist Party of Venezuela) that is weighed down with such contradictions, that has advanced despite such contradictions, to achieve what "might" have been achieved if there was a mass party that had already resolved such contradictions, had won those battles, had thrown out the powerful bureaucrats, had defeated them politically, had consistently pro-worker, pro- poor revolutionary candidates that could build on the record of similar caliber mayors and governors etc. If only this was the case!"

This ignores the warnings of revolutionaries that the PSUV was a popular front party that would betray the workers to the so-called "endogenous right" - i.e. the bourgeoisie - inside the party.

Monckton goes on: "Which makes it pretty clear I think that "defeating politically" the endogenous right is necessary. How that is going to occur, I don't know exactly, although we can sketch out some of the types of battles that have occurred and are likely to occur and the general framework for the struggle to advance."

So the Green Left as usual is clueless in the face of the right in the popular front except to use the word 'popular' in relation to power!

Monckton continues: "I think the most important question is popular power and the advancing the mass movement - and this is precisely what the endogenous right attempt to hold back, to prevent genuinely drawing in the mass of people into activity, into participating in the process and governing their own lives. Because, through such a process, the still too dispersed, disorganisation, uneven consciousness of the mass of poor and workers could be overcome, and a force that is a threat to the endogenous right's positions and privileges could be constructed."

Well this is precisely the purpose of subordinating the independent organizations of workers to the popular front party where they have to follow their rightwing leaders - to disorganize, divide and demoralize them. Anyone with any knowledge of the history of popular fronts would have been forearmed against this treachery.

"If that is all that is required of me to say, well I said it but I thought it was obvious." But that is not ALL that a supposed revolutionary must say. He should say: "sorry, we were warned, it happened, and now we are clueless. Maybe we should go back and look at that history of the popular front". No way. Instead he stumbles in the dark: "How these battles will play out, what the tactical way forward is for the movement in all its complexities, I don't pretend to know although I certainly try and follow this and draw conclusions and learn lessons. There is a lot that can be said about

these battles, where they come from, their significance, how they have developed and the general framework for what needs to be resolved etc."

This is what happens when you abandon the revolutionary program and traditions of the Fourth International in its healthy period for a petty bourgeois reformist Chavista position that disarms workers in the face of the bourgeoisie. You can only offer generalities and warm hopes of future 'popular power', and evade the situation by retreating into excuses that workers lacked consciousness (no thanks to you!) and that the situation is to 'complicated'.

That has not stopped the Green Left from slobbering all over Chavez PSUV for years, disarming workers against the so-called "endogenous right". This is the bourgeoisie inside the PSUV who openly declare themselves as businessmen for Chavez! And why not, as Chavez tries to keep Venezuela together by uniting all the classes! So the Green Left looks forward to [bourgeois] socialism!

We say the PSUV is a popular front party that subordinates workers to the bourgeoisie. Break with the bourgeoisie!

The Waterfront Fizzer

The strike action on the Auckland waterfront in December was a fizzer. Not because it wasn't a good response to the belligerence of the employer, but because it didn't really go anywhere. The employer came up with a last minute offer after the union insisted on an 8 hour stopwork rather than the two brief stopworks offered by the employer. But this was a defensive strike that didn't really assert the power of the union. This is not surprising since the strength of the union has been eroded over many decades to the point where the workforce is a shadow of its former self



and much of the work is casualised. The way forward for MUNZ is to return to class struggle unionism to stop the rot!

Protracted negotiations over wages in the last few years are not solving the problem. A series of short strikes in 2007 didn't come up with any real resolution. The focus of the union should be lifted to fight against

the casualisation and job losses on the waterfront. The union was correct to insist on a proper stopwork which led to the 24 hour stoppage on the 2/3 of December. But where is the long term strategy to challenge the cost-cutting management running the Ports on behalf of the publicly owned Auckland Regional Council? MUNZ states that its main fight for 2009 will be against casualisation. Good, but this means some radical thinking is needed which includes more sustained industrial action.

Regular stopworks are needed to plan and build industrial action in support of more long term demands to reverse the trend towards job loss and casualisation in the ports. The union has the power to shut down the wharfs and force the bosses into making decent offers to keep permanent jobs. The 24 hours stopwork forced the employers to divert one ship and hold up two ships. Loading and unloading of trucks for 24 hours ceased. This shows what the power of the union is capable of.

We hear another port is getting rid of 15 permanent workers, and the union officials have shown no leadership to oppose these redundancies. We expect that the work will have to be picked up by casual workers with the lack of job security and lower wages that that entails. (Although in Air New Zealand the current tactic of the bosses is to pay casuals better than permanent staff - we think this is the bosses' ploy to divide the workforce, and undermine class unity).

We say - unite to fight casualisation by demanding that all workers are put on permanent contracts. Fight against redundancy by reducing the hours of work without loss of pay until there is full employment for all. Share the work until all watersiders are permanent

so the bosses can't use casuals to erode wages and conditions.

Build community solidarity, with 10,000 workers picketing in front of the gates to close down the port! Form a strike committee that goes out to all major workplaces to recruit for the picket line! Open the books of the waterfront bosses! Auckland Regional Council still owns the ports of Auckland, however runs it on a profit basis. We call for building Workers Councils elected by and accountable to the local union membership to control the running of the ports.

The current port runs with many capitalist firms competing with one another supplying the workers to move freight: from rail and trucking to the loading and unload of shipping. The many capitalists making use of our labour to screw their profits out of us compete to divide and rule the workforce. The Waterfront union itself is tied into this system as a 50% shareholder in one Auckland Stevedore company, so that they are also employers concerned to get profits from their workers i.e. company directors and capitalists.

A Workers Council could take control of the ports of Auckland, with no compensation to all those little capitalists running Stevedore companies inside the gates of the Ports of Auckland. A workers council could control the whole place, without the capitalist profit motive, but instead for the purpose of maximizing the benefits to the workers! That is the practical basis of socialism.

Read *Class Struggle* leaflet published in 2007 on the waterfront:
<http://www.geocities.com/communistworker/cs75.html>

Fightback

“We won't pay for their crisis!”

As we had predicted and warned against in our election stand "Two Ticks for Labour" (see Class Struggle 80) a National victory would see workers facing a double barreled shotgun. The new National led government has taken office with a blitzkrieg of anti-worker legislation. It had campaigned on a program of a turbocharged 100 days legislative program, but kicked it off with a surprise shock treatment of parliament sitting under urgency for 3 weeks to pass a number of bills before Xmas. Bills were rushed through the House with no select committees and no wider consultation - all the hallmarks of the Rogernomics of the 1980s when the Labour government imposed a neo-liberal program on workers with extreme haste to take the labour movement by surprise before it could mount an effective campaign to stop it.

This time round there are not yet any major bills to privatise state assets, as most have been sold in the 80s and 90s. This will happen further down the line when Kiwibank and the three electricity SOEs are lined up for sale.

Right now the government is pushing a number of ideological flagship issues which bring the market to the fore against the 'nanny state'. These are the 'dogwhistle' bills providing instant gratification for their supporters: tax cuts for the rich; small employers given the right fire workers within 90 days; cuts to employers subsidies to Kiwisaver; tightening up of bail for violent prisoners to pacify middle class migrant shopkeepers; national standards testing for children from age 6 to pacify

anxious middle class parents concerned that their sons and daughters will get jobs in the capitalist dogfight; much bigger fines for parents whose children truant from school etc - a sort of abuser pays principle to blame working class parents and make middle class parents feel morally superior.

The overall impact is to solve the crisis of capitalism in NZ at the expense of workers by cutting wages and other costs and to boost profits. The tax cuts for the rich are paid for by tax increases for those earning under \$40,000; cuts to government subsidies to Kiwisaver; wages will be cut by the loss of workplace rights under the fire at will Act; solo-parents will be forced back to work earlier; mounting job losses will

also force down wages. Social spending cuts will follow standardised testing as high performing rich schools are rewarded and low performing poor schools punished. Fining working class parents for truanting kids demonises and punishes the parents rather than boosting wages and securing jobs and work rights. Doubling the subsidy to private schools will reduce the cost of education for middle class parents and increase it for families that use poor state schools.

Our analysis of the causes of the crisis its impact on NZ (see *Class Struggle 80*) explains the reasons why both National and Labour governments must solve the crisis at the expense of workers. The cause is falling profit rates and the solution is restoring profit rates. This does not mean however that National and Labour will choose the same methods. (see Keynesian vs Keynesian economics below). Labour would restore profit rates by adopting Keynesian reflationary policies that create jobs and raise incomes of workers. This would have the effect of boosting consumption and create the need for productive investment to supply the market which would restore the profit rate.

National's approach is to cuts taxes to the rich (and hence the need to cut social spending), cut wages and jobs and boost profits directly to encourage investment. However, as Keynes understood clearly, there is no guarantee that cutting taxes to business and boosting profits in the short run will bring about the necessary investment in production to restore sustained economic growth. Without a strategy of increasing demand more profits will be hoarded or invested in takeovers, mergers or Honolulu condos.

This is exactly what is already happening in the US and Britain where bailouts and cheap credit to overcome the 'credit crunch' has not brought about banks lending to industry to increase investment in production. The decision of Band of America to cut off credit to the Chicago factory (Republic Doors and Windows) meant no redundancy to workers when the factory closed. A workers' 'sit in' forced the payment of redundancy but no job protection. The big 3 auto bailout is conditional on workers getting a 20% wage cut! This is typical of the Section 11 bankruptcy of many US corporates in recent years. In other words, unless wage and other costs are drastically cut, bosses will refuse to invest because they will not get a sufficient profit. It's called 'supply side' economics meaning that if the costs of production are not cut to the bone, no boss will invest.

That's why it is workers who always pay for the bosses' crisis. A crisis means that the bosses aren't getting enough profits from the workers. The only way

to solve this in their interests is to cut labour costs and taxes. This means closing down factories and lots of jobs lost to move the factories where labour costs and raw materials are cheaper. Carter Holt has closed down its laminates factories. Fisher and Paykel has already shifted some of its production overseas. A number of woolen and carpet mills have closed down. The tourism industry is losing jobs fast. The fall in dairy prices will spread through the economy. The crisis has the effect of cutting jobs and wages.

There is a race to the bottom to restructure and cut costs driving rivals into bankruptcy which are then bought up cheaply by asset strippers like Brierleys.

Bosses also want to pay lower taxes. This means big cuts in social spending on welfare, forcing DPBs back to work earlier. Raising the barriers to benefits and getting people off them faster cuts welfare costs. Cutting back on public sector employment is the special

interests of ACT boss Rodney Hide. Cutting spending on public health and education and channeling more funds to the private sector means that the rich get most of their taxes back.

Then as wage costs come down and the demand for commodities increases, new investment takes place to take advantage of lower wages and lower taxes. That is John Key's mission for his ruling class - to make the workers pay for a restructuring of industry and a return to profitability on the back of low wages and poor conditions and tax cuts for the rich.

- **But we won't pay for their crisis. Just as in Greece, Italy, Latin America and in the Middle East where the masses are rising up against the war we won't pay for their crisis!**
- **Resist factory closures and sackings with occupations and demands of nationalization under workers control!**
- **Fight for shorter working hours without loss of pay!**
- **Oppose the cuts to the public sector and all cuts to social services!**
- **Tax the rich and tax capital gains! Unite the union movement in a fightback against the bosses' offensive!**
- **For rank and file control of the unions! Build local workers councils to plan for socialization of production, distribution and exchange!**
- **For a Workers and working Farmers' government!**

See our Plan for Socialism in *Class Struggle 80*



Gaza

Stop the Zionist genocidal attack on Gaza!**Arms, Medicine and Food for the Palestinian masses!****For International Workers Strike Action to defeat the Zionist regime!**

For more than one week the Israeli Zionist state has bombed and strafed the Gaza strip causing the worst massacre of the Palestinian people since 1948 in their heroic struggle to liberate their nation from the Zionist occupation. There are more than 500 dead and 3000 injured most of them non-combatants including women and children.

The Gaza strip is the biggest open air concentration camp in the world. 1.5 million people are crammed into an area of 360 square km. Surrounded by walls and the sea it is a modern version of the Warsaw ghetto under the Nazi occupation of Poland in the Second World War!

For nearly two years, the Zionist state with the support of U.S. imperialism backed by the other imperialist powers, and its local jailers Fatah, have imposed a total blockade on the Gaza strip isolating it from the rest of the West Bank of historic Palestine and cutting off gas, electricity and water, as well as food, medicines, etc.

There is little work in Gaza and 90% the population is unemployed. Malnutrition and chronic anemia are rife. For example, most babies born in the last two years and who survived do not grow normally their mothers and lack food and essential nutrients during the first years of life. 50% of the population are young people under the age of 15 years -that is the generation born since the Oslo Accords in 1993 -and the only thing they know is hunger, and no future but slavery and apartheid.

This slow and cruel genocide is supported and maintained by all the imperialist powers that make up the den of thieves the UN. It does nothing to stop the bombing or the ground invasion that is now underway that will provoke an even greater slaughter upon the resisting masses in Gaza.

The new "Republicrat" US President-elect Obama has remained silent so far, tacitly supporting the massacre in Gaza just as he fails to stop the massacres in Afghanistan and Iraq. How could it be otherwise? Obama himself had promised during his election campaign, when he visited the Zionist state of "Israel" and endorsed its occupation of Palestine, to support this "gendarme" of US imperialism in the region.



Obama is the new black face of US imperialism leading US imperialism to defend its world hegemony against its rivals and fighting more wars to download the costs of its crisis onto the backs of the workers

Obama replaces the discredited Bush and offers the "Carrot for the stick". Obama's "carrots" are new deals to contain the revolutions in the "hotspots" of the world. A new deal between Morales and fascist bourgeoisie in Bolivia; the new deal between Uribe and Chavez to betray the FARC in Colombia; or the new deal with Sarkozy and the Latin American bourgeoisie to restore capitalism in Cuba; or a new deal with the Iranian ayatollahs and the bourgeoisie against Sunni resistance in Iraq.

These "carrots" follow the "sticks" such the military adventures such as the Turkish attack on the Kurds in Northern Iraq; the media luna fascist gangs attacks on peasants in Bolivia; the attack by Uribe against the FARC in Ecuador; and Saakashvili's attack on South Ossetia. But in all cases the "carrots" mask the continuous use of the "Republicrat" military actions to mark out the territory and sphere of interests of US imperialism in the face of intensifying inter-imperialist rivalry and the attempt to impose the cost of the capitalist crisis onto the world's workers and poor peasants.

This is why Obama supports the massacre in Gaza. It is part of the overall US imperialist strategy in the Middle East and Central Asia. Obama has already announced that the US troops will begin withdrawing from Iraq in 2009, and that there will be a build-up of US troops in Afghanistan. The attack on Gaza is part of

that plan. Its purpose is to crush the Palestinian resistance, just as the pact with the Iranians and the Turks is to crush the resistance in Iraq. This is to allow the US to withdraw its troops from the Middle East in the hope of avoiding a generalised uprising of the masses.

This is the true role of the Zionist state as the US "gendarme" in the Middle East. Thus, this new slaughter of the Palestinian people is one vital part of a counter-revolutionary plan of the US to extend its sphere of interest into Central Asia over the former Soviet republics including Russia itself, at the expense of its key rivals France and Germany.

Far from bringing an era of "peace" and "democracy" the 'Republicrat' President-elect Obama will act to advance the interests of US imperialism in competition with the other imperialist powers in the EU and Japan, to increase the exploitation and oppression of the peoples to solve the crisis of the bankrupt capitalist world economy and make us pay for the cost of bailing out the banks and the monopolies with unemployment, wage cuts, poverty, starvation and new wars.

Meanwhile, the Zionist state of Israel, by killing hundreds of Palestinians tries to prove to the US that it has overcome its humiliating defeat in the South of Lebanon in 2006, and can earn its money as the "hard cop" of US imperialism in the Middle East. But the Zionist cop also serves the interests of the other imperialist powers. France and Germany have troops in Afghanistan. France and Italy have troops in southern Lebanon under the guise of UN peacekeepers. Japan is dependent for its oil on the Middle East. All the imperialists need to smash the Palestinian resistance, whose heroic liberation struggle is the key to the development of the resistance in all the Middle East.

All the imperialist powers need to download the costs of their crisis onto their own working classes. All need more wars to allow them to get cheap raw materials and labor and drive down labor costs at home. All need to destroy the productive forces including the "destructive" forces of armaments to increase their profits. The arms monopolists such as Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Westinghouse, General Electric, Airbus and General Dynamics and the big banks that own them, like Citigroup, Morgan Chase and Barclays, need to make big superprofits from war to rescue themselves from bankruptcy in the current crisis.

Fatah and the other Middle East bourgeoisies are accomplices in the genocidal occupation of Palestine by the Zionist state of Israel

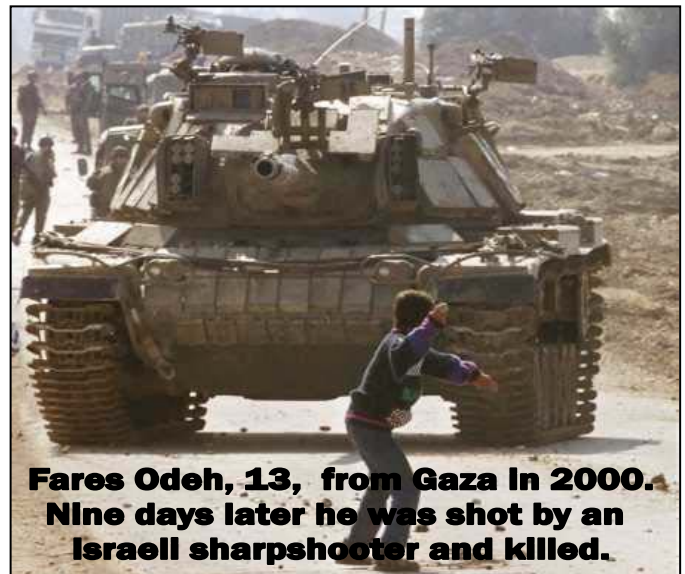
The heroic struggle of the Palestine peoples over decades against the Zionist occupation have been suppressed with the complicity of the Palestinian bourgeoisie. The second intifada was crushed by mid-2002 by the tanks of Sharon and Bush, and the "roadmap" agreed by the United States, Russia and the UN giving the "Palestinian Authority" - led by Fatah - the role of administering and policing the Bantustan

concentration camps in the West Bank and the ghetto of Gaza.

These camps served to supply a reserve army of cheap labor to the Israel factories and businesses. In Gaza, in January 2008, a heroic uprising toppled the wall at Rafah to break the siege and get access to vital food and medicines. At the same time the Palestinians opened up the possibility of uniting their struggle with their class brothers and sisters in Egypt. To put a stop to this Mubarak sent his army to help Hamas to rebuild the wall. This failure to unite the fight at this time proved to the Zionists that they could risk planning for an all out destruction of the resistance in Gaza a year later.

It is the result of the collaboration of Fatah and Hamas with Israel as junior partners in the rule of imperialism that has allowed the Zionists to launch their bombings and to carry out the threat of a ground war that will repeat the massacre such as Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon in 1982. Fatah has become a direct collaborator of the Zionist state paid to manage the concentration camps. They are jailers and slaveholders of their own people!

Again in 2006, with the humiliating defeat of the Zionist army by the masses in the south of Lebanon, could have been used to stop the plan for the Bantustans on the West Bank and the ghetto in Gaza. But the leaders of Hezbollah turned their backs on this struggle and made a deal with the pro-imperialist Siniora to share the profits of the reconstruction of Lebanon. They agreed to the occupation of imperialist UN troops to protect the border of Israel and allowed the Zionist state to prepare for its slaughter in Gaza.



Fares Odeh, 13, from Gaza In 2000. Nine days later he was shot by an Israeli sharpshooter and killed.

Thus, Fatah and Hezbollah are the accomplices of Israel in dividing and weakening the most advanced sections of the Palestinian masses in the face of the plan to destroy all resistance to the Zionist occupation.

Under these conditions the truce that Hamas made with the Zionist occupying troops could not but end up as a new massacre of the Palestinians. But it is not only Fatah, Hezbollah and Hamas that collaborate with the Zionist state. All the national bourgeoisies of the Middle East whether they collaborate with Anglo-US, French, German or Japanese imperialism, are responsible for

the oppression of the Palestinian people. They are today the accomplices of the new Obama-Bush genocidal attack by the Zionist state on Gaza.

Mubarak in Egypt was the first to recognize the State of Israel and tightly controls the southern and western borders of Gaza Strip, locking the Palestinian people in the ghetto and preventing them from joining forces with exploited and oppressed Egyptian workers! In Jordan the bourgeoisie and the monarchy rule over the Palestinians on the East bank of the Jordan where in 1970 King Hussein suppressed an uprising of the Palestinians in their refugee camps on what is called "black September".

For the defeat of the murderous Zionist army!

For the victory of the Palestinian working class resistance!

The proletariat cannot allow this counterrevolutionary plan to succeed. It is necessary to defeat the invading Zionist army. Either the Zionist army is defeated and with it the plans of the imperialists led by Bush/Obama, or the Palestinian resistance will be smashed, not only in Gaza, but in the West Bank, and the Zionist state will feel empowered to take control of southern Lebanon. This is what the imperialist powers and the Zionist state of Israel are planning: to make the working class of the whole Middle East as well as the heroic resistance Iraq and Afghanistan suffer a terrible defeat.

Since Hamas won the elections in February 2006 in Gaza, it has made truces in the hope of doing a deal with Israel to get funds to administer Gaza as a ghetto in the same way that Fatah is paid to administer the West Bank. This strategy of military threat to win political advantages proves that Hamas has taken over the role of Fatah after the Palestinian people in Gaza rose up in 2006 to throw it out with its police and spies, openly collaborating with Israel. The endless martyrdom of the Palestinian people proves that submission of the working class to their "own" bourgeois always ends in tragedy.

The national bourgeois factions that control the Palestinian people and the masses of the Middle East can never lead the Palestinian people to national liberation. The national revolution threatens their class interests as the junior business partners of various imperialist powers. Therefore the national revolution can only succeed when it is led by the independent working class organizations which cannot be bribed by the occupying Zionist state.

Such a victory is necessary since workers will never be able to live, eat and work without the military defeat of the Zionist-fascist state which

bombs and murders to maintain its occupation of historic Palestine.

- **Enough! The martyred Palestinian people of Gaza cannot remain isolated!**
- **We must kick out the UN troops from the south of Lebanon to unite the Palestinian people with the victorious masses of southern Lebanon!**
- **Disarm the Fatah police that collaborate with Israel to jail their own people! Distribute these weapons to the masses of the West Bank, Gaza and southern Lebanon! A gun for every fighter!**
- **We have to organize the millions of Palestinian exiles in Jordan!**
- **For an Assembly of Palestinian workers and peasants delegates with the authority to call for the arming of the people and the destruction of the Zionist state of Israel!**

The most powerful weapon to stop the planned slaughter is the uprising of the Palestinian masses to break down the walls of Gaza, and to destroy the walls of the West Bank and unite with the working class of Egypt to launch a joint struggle for bread, land and national independence!

For a revolutionary uprising of the Palestinian and Arab masses of Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and the entire region to defeat imperialism and its gendarme Zionist Israel!



Faced with the new Zionist state genocidal attack, we stand unconditionally in the same trench of the Palestinian people and their organizations such as Hamas and other militias resisting the Zionist invaders. Enough with impotent words and the "Intifada" based on the isolation and lack of arms of the people.

But while we fight alongside Hamas against the Israeli state we do not give any political support to the

bourgeois leadership of Hamas. We say that the liberation of the Palestinian people from the Zionist occupation can only come from a united struggle of the masses of all the Middle East. It is the same revolutionary struggle that today is divided by the walls that separate the Palestinians of occupied Palestine from their class brothers and sisters in the Lebanon and Jordan and all over the Middle East. That is the first wall to be broken down, that which subjugates these workers to their respective national bourgeoisies.

The heroism of the Palestinian revolution 2000-2001 stands as an example for the world to see! But the victory of the Palestinian cause, to destroy the Zionist state and to complete the struggle for national liberation, is not only the task of the oppressed Palestinian people.

- Only a revolutionary upheaval of the exploited masses of the Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Syria and all the Middle East can lead to the heroic victory of the Palestinian people!
- For Palestine! Weapons, food and medicine to Gaza!
- One working class, one anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle throughout the Middle East!
- Down with the walls of shame and oppression built by imperialism, the Zionist state and the national bourgeoisies: that is the way to unite the whole proletariat of the region!

To win the Palestinian masses need their international working class allies!

Strike against all those imperialist TNCs and banks that profit from the Zionist occupation of Palestine!
Into the streets to support our Palestinian brothers and sisters!

Workers and the exploited of the world we must stand in defense of the martyred people of Palestine. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are mobilizing for their brothers and sisters in Gaza -in the West Bank, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan. At the heart of Europe are Palestinian migrant workers, Arabs and African workers who are working in Spain, France, England, Denmark, Italy, Turkey, etc. These migrant workers are oppressed by vicious laws that can deport them or put them in jail.

While the Palestinian people continue being massacred and their nation remains occupied, while the imperialist forces continue occupying and killing in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must transform the rallying cry of the youth workers of the French Cités of 2005: "Every night we make Paris a Baghdad" into our combat flag to unite the exploited and oppressed all over Europe!

The heroic youth and worker rebels of Greece who have responded to the bankruptcy of the global capitalist imperialist economy and the brutal attack of the exploiters, with a magnificent revolt that threatens to re-open the road to revolution in Europe after 30 years, are showing the way for workers all over the world to stand up and fight back.

In the States United, the dockworkers of the Local 10 of the ILWU in Oakland have shown how to take

strike action against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and have two comrades facing jail as a result. They have the authority to lead the US working class to break with the Bush/Obama "Republicrat" regime and the bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO, and strike in support of their class brothers and sisters under attack by genocidal Zionist State of Israel.

In Europe, Africa, Asia, USA, Latin America we



need to take to the streets with demonstrations, strikes, boycotts and working class action to stop the genocidal attack of Bush/Obama and the Zionist state of Israel!

- The working class must ban all shipments of arms, materiel and ammunition to the genocidal Zionist state and guarantee shipments of weapons, ammunition, medicines and food to the Palestinian people!
- From Athens to Madrid, from Moscow to London, from Beijing to Islamabad, from Johannesburg to Damascus, from New York to Santiago and from Alaska to the Tierra del Fuego, the workers and exploited of the world must stand united with the working class and oppressed people of Palestine!
- For a Workers and Farmers government of a Multi-racial, Secular and Democratic Palestine!
- For a Federation of Socialist Republics of the Middle East!

International Secretariat or Coordination and Action (SCAI) of the Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (FLT)
Internationalist Workers Party (POI - CI, Chile)
Communist Workers Group (CWG, New Zealand),
Internationalist Workers League (LOI - CI, Argentina)
Internationalist Trotskyist League (LTI, Peru),
Internationalist Trotskyist League (LTI, Bolivia)
Trotskyist Fraction (FT, Brazil).

Translated and Edited by CWG

Australia

Free Lex Wotton!

On October 2008 Palm Island community activist Lex Wotton was found guilty in Townsville, Queensland on a charge of "rioting with destruction" following the death in police cells of Mulrunji Doomadgee. Aboriginal activist Sam Watson has called Wotton's conviction "classic Alabama-style justice from the mid-50s...by an all-white court - a white judge, white lawyers, a white jury."

The 'riot' Wotton was accused of instigating was an entirely justified response to vicious oppression of Palm Island Aboriginals by the Queensland Police. The rebels' actions in burning down a police station, courthouse and officers' residence are vindicated by subsequent events. Far from being convicted of Mulrunji Doomadgee's murder - he died, according to the Coroner's report of a liver 'cleaved in two' while in police custody without charge - and despite Senior Sergeant Chris Hurley's own acknowledgement in Court of responsibility, Hurley has not only been acquitted of assault and manslaughter charges, but promoted to the rank of Commissioner.

The framing and scapegoating of Wotton has transparently been due to his outspoken justification of the 'riot' and call for police to be removed from the island. His acquiescence in the destruction of State property did not extend to advocating revenge against police personnel- he is reported to have been influential in preventing this from occurring. In the context of the island's history of independence activism the persecution of Lex Wotton must be viewed as a continuation of colonialist attempts to reassert domination and control.

Anticipating a sentence of 10 to 20 years' imprisonment, Wotton's family is reported to have expressed relief at the seven year sentence delivered on November 7 calculated to salvage Australia's international image as an 'apologetic' nation by seeing him paroled after 19 months, despite what his counsel has described as 'unrelenting efforts' by the Queensland police, Director of Public Prosecutions and Attorney General to "get him" Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma has however described the jailing as a sad day for all Indigenous people, and along with anti-neocolonialists worldwide we consider it an outrage.

On November Auckland supporters of Lex Wotton responded to a call for an International Day of Solidarity by demonstrating at the Australian Consulate. Mysteriously absent were activists for Tino Rangatiratanga. Considering the militant pickets at Court hearings for the Urewera 14, this can hardly have

been due to fear of police intimidation. Did the solidarity call fail to reach them, or were they preoccupied with electoral politics?

Below is the transcript of a statement from Australia's *Communist Left*, which we fully endorse.

We supplement its brief but illuminating summary of Palm Island social history with the following excerpts from Wikipedia:

"By the early 1920s Palm Island had become the largest of the Government Aboriginal settlements. Administrators found its location attractive as Aboriginal people could be isolated, but Palm Island quickly gained a reputation amongst Aborigines as a



They were removed from across Queensland as punishment; being "disruptive", falling pregnant to a white man or being born with " " were included in infringements which could lead to the penalty of being sent to Palm Island. New arrivals came after being sentenced by a court, or released from prison, or were sent by administrators of other missions wishing to weed

out their more ill-mannered or disruptive Aboriginals. These removals to the Palm Island Mission continued until the late 1960s...

On arrival, children were separated from their parents and then segregated by gender. Aborigines were forbidden to speak their language and from going into "white" zones. Every day activity was highly controlled by administrators including nightly curfews and the vetting of mail."

"In the 1930s a local doctor highlighted on the island, and demanded that the Government triple rations for the islanders and that children be provided with , but the request was denied... All Islanders were required to work 30 hours each week, and up until the 1960s no wages were paid for this work. Seven families were banished from the Palm Island in 1957 for taking part in a organised to protest against the working conditions imposed by the Queensland Government under the reserve system."

Statement by Communist Left of Australia

There has been a long list of Black people who have been found dead in Australian police cells. There have been so many that in 1987, the government was forced to call a Royal Commission. At the opening of this commission Communist Left issued a leaflet warning that this Commission will offer at best rhetoric or at worst cover for police brutality. We were dead right. The Commission studiously avoided any police responsibility explaining the deaths in terms of issues such as alcohol and cultural alienation. No police officer has been arrested in connection to black deaths before or after the Commission until Mulrunji Doomadgee's death on Palm Island seventy kilometers from Townsville North Queensland. It may be true that some of the deaths may have been suicides linked to cultural alienation. We believe that most were murder or manslaughter (by excessive force used in interrogation). The death of Mulrunji Doomadgee was certainly no instance of suicide or cultural alienation. Doomadgee died in custody on Palm Island 2004. He was previously a healthy man. In custody he received broken ribs and died of a torn liver. You can't do this to yourself. The only people present at the lockup where this happened were the two police officers involved. The coroner called it manslaughter.

Sergeant Hurley was charged with manslaughter. He was the first copper charged in relation to a black death in custody. He was acquitted. The court of law is a bosses' court and a racist court. The law is different for cops than it is for working people, poor people or black people. The cop was acquitted. There was justified anger from the Palm Islanders who burned down the police station and the court house. We think that this action was exactly what the coppers deserved. No one should die in a police cell. We think rebellion is totally justified. Capitalist society has only offered the Palm Islanders, unemployment, alcoholism, poverty and oppression and they are entitled to rebel against that. They have our wholehearted support.

Of course the cops did not take this lying down. They pressured the Beattie government with the threat of strike action. There has been consistent harassment of the community by armed police. The first four Palm Islanders arrested were acquitted. They arrested community worker Lex Wotton who was charged with "riot causing destruction of buildings" and "found guilty". He faces a long sentence. Lex was arrested at gun point. Guns were pointed at the heads of family

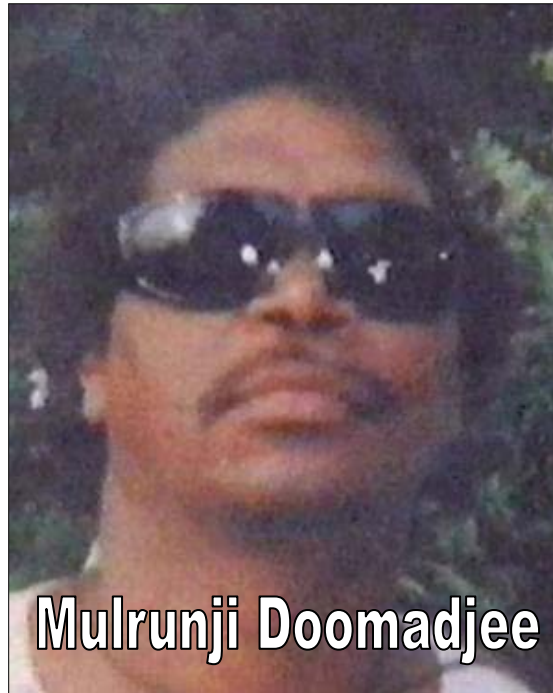
members. Nothing exposes the racist nature of the Australian state more than this. The coppers who kill get off. Sergeant Hurley not only got off. He received massive compensation and looks forward to a comfortable future. Black people who destroy property face a life behind bars.

Fortunately Lex Wotton has not been left to stand alone. Black and left wing organisations have stood up in solidarity. His court case in Brisbane was picketed by Black organisations and supporters. Contingents came from Palm Island, Townsville and Sydney. There have been rallies in Sydney and Melbourne. There has been some union support. The Sydney branch of the Maritime Union of Australia sponsored the Sydney contingent providing transport for supporters to Brisbane. In Melbourne the solidarity group has gained considerable support from unions including the local branch of Amalgamated Metal Workers Union. All this is a start, but in no way is it sufficient. A consistent workers solidarity movement must be built. There are differences within Black solidarity groups concerning the importance of union solidarity.

The Mambura tribe lived on Palm Island before the British invasion and occupation of Australia. The Palm Island community was changed when the government decided it would be a penal colony for Black prisoners. Seventeen hundred were moved to the island. This has weakened the tribal culture which is not as strong as amongst Koori and Murri communities. Historically and today they have shown a high level of consciousness

Two significant strike actions have taken place. In 1957 they struck against an attempt by the authorities who wanted to reduce wages. In 1974 they struck against an attempt to incorporate their community into the city of Townsville. They were at the forefront of the campaign against the racist Queensland Act which was an apartheid act and influenced apartheid legislation in South Africa. Under the Act, Murris (Queensland Aborigines) were forced to work for miserably low wages and could only leave their reserve with permission of the governor. This Act was repealed in 1984.

Wotton and the Palm Island fighters deserve to be honoured as proletarian heroes fighting the racist Queensland state. They deserve solidarity from proletarians not just from throughout Australia but internationally. A campaign is being built throughout Australia with overseas support including New Zealand. Union action is urgent to Free Lex Wotton!



Aotearoa

Key is no Keynesian

"We are all Keynesians now" goes the saying. But there is a difference between bailing out banks and creating jobs. The first is just bosses using taxes to subsidise their profits. The second is creating jobs and incomes to increase demand and restore growth. In NZ the Workers Party propagates this confusion because it suits them to claim that National and Labour are essentially no different and that social democracy is dead. The Workers Party position equates John Key's use of the state to subsidise capitalists' profits directly with Michael Cullen's use of the state to subsidise workers wages directly in order to subsidise profits indirectly. While ultimately both serve the ruling class, the way they do this is not a matter of indifference to the working class.

Keynes claim to fame

Keynes claim to fame was to substitute for the failure of bosses to invest in production (when their profits were falling) state spending on consumption that would see increased demand create supply and encourage bosses to invest in production. Public employment and paying wages was the main point of public works, though building state houses, roads, railways and other amenities were regarded as public goods for public benefit.

So state investment in public works from a Keynesian standpoint is a way of indirectly creating value by employing wage labour to stimulate demand and hence boost capitalist investment. Labourite social democrats turned Keynesian state intervention into a doctrine of reforming capitalism by smoothing out the business cycle and preventing the crisis of falling profits and the resulting depressions endemic to capitalism.

Of course public works on infrastructure was and is welcomed by the bosses because it is a public subsidy to their profits in the form of cheap roads, rail, bridges, ports, schools, hospitals etc all of which lowered the value of labour power (cheapened wages). For example public schools and hospitals maintained the skills and health of workers for exploitation more cheaply than private schools and hospitals. Public roads or rail shortened distances and travel time and therefore required less labour power to transport goods to market than clapped out private roads and railways.

Keys claim to infamy

From a Keysian standpoint however, infrastructure is not seen as a by-product of creating jobs and creating demand to encourage investment. Investment is encouraged directly by cutting wages and cutting taxes to bosses. This means cutting state spending not increasing it. This is supply side economics. Profits are restored by cutting costs of the supply of inputs, not increasing demand for outputs.

Infrastructure investment, however, is a way of directly exploiting labour through contracting out public works to private companies, for example Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). The private sector want partnerships so that their profits can be guaranteed by the state. In many cases infrastructure costs are so massive and so long run that the private sector does not



want to take the risk by themselves. So where possible they want the main investment to be guaranteed by the national debt as a charge on taxpayers (preferably a flat tax that makes workers pay the biggest share) that will also guarantee a private profit flow.

So Keysian economics has nothing to do with the state creating jobs and paying wages to increase demand to encourage profits. It relies on the market to cut wages and taxes to increase profits, but will encourage the contracting out of public works to guarantee private profits.

Some details of the Keysian plans

National wants to cut state spending on wages and state jobs, and state subsidies to workers savings. It also wants to increase state investment, but doesn't want to pay for this investment out of bosses taxes which it proposes to cut further. It will pay for it out of workers savings, Kiwisaver and the Cullen (Superannuation) Fund, to bankroll private PPPs. This is creeping privatization of state assets by using them to subsidise profits. Moreover it wants the PPPs to go through without RMA delays as this reduces the profits from these investments. Private corporations like Fletchers and Infratil will profit from the surplus value they expropriate from their workers.

And to cut private sector labour costs, National has a labour relations policy and ACC reforms lined up. Workers can be hired and fired every 90 days if necessary. Unions can be kept offsite or company unions formed. ACC costs can be cheapened and the health and safety of workers compromised by introducing private competition. Workfare will be introduced as benefits are cut, extra support for unemployed limited to a 16 weeks 'handup', keeping a large reserve army of unemployed competing for jobs and driving down wages. The Maori Party will be contracted to provide PPPs in Maori health, education and development.

We can add here the state guarantees to bank depositors and overseas creditors that both parties have advocated. National very quickly called for deposit guarantees and wholesale guarantees to the banks. Labour preferred that banks borrowed from the Reserve Bank or their Australian parents but was forced by the fact that NZ has no big banks of its own to offer these guarantees. Without them credit would have dried up in NZ. Those who borrow from the banks and taxpayers will ultimately pay these added costs of any future liability for bank collapses. All of these measures are drains on workers past, current and future wages and savings (and taxes such as go into the Cullen fund) into the profits of international banks and corporates. This is the double-barreled shotgun at the head of workers.

Some detail of the Keynesian plan

Contrast these Keynesian low wages and tax cuts for the rich policies, with Labour's Keynesian plan to put unemployed into public works to counter the crisis. Facing the prospect of a worsening crisis Labour was proposing to introduce the basics of a Keynesian deficit spending package to stimulate consumption and hence investment - creating jobs in public works, paying wages, raising the minimum wage, paying for job training etc. Its job rescue plan added to existing benefit entitlements a 13 week benefit for those on WFF losing a second wage to maintain family consumption.

Labour opposed National's low wages and tax cuts for the rich; the labour law reforms designed to weaken the unions; the 90 day bill giving the employer the power the hire and fire at will; Kiwisaver cuts; threatened ACC privatization; and the siphoning off of the Cullen fund into PPPs that would be rushed through a gutted RMA and a deferred ETS designed to maximize the profits of National's ruling class backers.

While Labour's policies fall far short of socialism by any definition, its plan is objectively better in protecting workers jobs and living standards. Labour is no less concerned with maintaining and boosting profits, but without the pain of the business cycle which brings massive deflation and unemployment and huge destruction of value - itself the product of past social labour.

Of course Labour reveals its commitment to boosting bosses profits by not abolishing GST and replacing it with taxes on the rich. It also refuses to nationalize the banks and obeys the demand of finance capitalists that it guarantee their millions with the future taxes of workers.

This is Labour's slow acting poison of rising exploitation, forcing workers to carry the long-run costs of the bosses' crisis on their shoulders.



Make them pay for their crisis!

But insofar as Labour was spending to reflate the economy by increasing the budget deficit, it was not taking this cost out of a cut in workers' real wages and savings. State spending on jobs would increase the government deficit but that would be paid for by future taxes. Like all sovereign debts, whoever pays for this is a matter of class struggle. What proportion is deducted from profits and what proportion deducted from wages is a matter settled by class struggle. National is representing the current desperation of international finance capital to exploit and plunder NZ labour and resources to solve its crisis. Labour was proposing to manage capitalism as a class 'partnership' using the government's credit card, opening up the possibility of workers repudiating the public debt in the future.

The difference between Keynesian and Keynesian economics then is in the opportunity the bosses' crisis offers to workers. Under Keynesian economics, the crisis is being solved at the expense of workers wages and savings now. We are being made to pay for the crisis now, tomorrow and for generations.

Under Labour the crisis would be moderated today by borrowing so that whichever class is the stronger will make the other pay the bill in the future. Thus, Under the Keynesian regime, workers have the opportunity to take advantage of deficit spending and to begin to organise workers' class power to make the bosses pay for their own crisis, repudiating the public debt, cancelling obligations to bail out banks, nationalizing and socializing all banks and corporates and to democratically plan for a socialist society.

Greece

For a Socialist Revolution!

Long live the general revolt of the exploited youth and working class of Greece! Greece leads the working class of Europe and the world against the attacks of the capitalists and is in the vanguard of the fight for the socialist revolution! Down with the repressive government of Caramanlis and the social imperialists of PASOK!

On December 6 the police deliberately assassinated a 15 year old student Alexandros Grigoropoulos who was protesting with a group of friends in the neighbourhood of Exarchia in Athens. This is the working class area where the University of Technology is located and which had been the centre of the struggle against the bloody dictatorship of the Colonels in the 1970s.

The brutal killing aroused the just anger of the young rebels that have been for more than six days mounting huge demonstrations in the streets confronting the murderous police raising the battle cries "state killers", "police killers", "down with Caramanlis". They attacked the key institutions of capitalist property and the bourgeois state: more than 300 banks, luxury hotels and police stations, many of which were set alight and burned down by the protestors.

The centre of Athens, the scene of the biggest struggles, has been almost destroyed. The youth rebels have occupied universities and schools in the capital, the Polytechnic University and the neighborhood of Exarchia where the rebellion began has become an occupied quarter at the centre of rebellion from which it has spread from there to more than 10 other cities in Greece including Thessaloniki, Patras, Trikala and the islands of Crete and Corfu.

On the 17 of December more than six thousand youth rallied at the funeral of Alex, crying "Avenge the killing of Alex, march on Athens, confront the police killers, release the 150 plus political prisoners."

- Long live the rebellion of the young workers of Greece who suffer 23% unemployed, who are lucky to find casual contract jobs, with the poverty wage of 650 Euros, and are

denied access to education by the privatization plans of the bourgeoisie!

- Long live the rebellion of the exploited youth with their barricades and burning of cars and police stations, take up the road of the immigrant worker youth struggle of the French Cités of 2006 that rose up to the cry of "Every night we will turn Paris into Baghdad!"
- Long live the Italian youth, who have risen up on the last months to the cry of "We will not pay for your crisis!" Immediate freedom for all the jailed youth and workers! Dissolve and disarm the Police! For workers courts to judge and punish all those responsible for the killing of Alexandro!



Justice for Alexandros Grigoropoulos!

The rebellion of youth which began with barricades, street fights and the burning of police vehicles and led to general strikes which have the potential to erupt into a generalised revolt of the working class and exploited of Greece. The exploited have entered the revolutionary offensive. This

huge generalized uprising by the exploited youth will not die down quietly. On the contrary it is the spark to alight the uprising of the whole working class and oppressed masses. Thus the strike of 23 October was led by the social democratic union bureaucracy allied to the Stalinist KKE (Communist Party of Greece) under pressure from below to put a lid on the workers opposition to the government's plans.

The sectoral strikes and the huge general strike of 23 October, shows that the workers of Greece are determined to fight the coalition government of Caramanlis of the ND and the social democratic PASOK. This

is because the government has no choice but to make the people pay the cost of the world crisis by cutting their living standards. Greece must do this because it is a minor imperialist power, subordinated to the USA and German imperialism, the latter now the dominant imperialist power in Europe. To pay for their solution to their crisis and the more than 28 Billion Euros to bail out the Greek banks, the bourgeois government under Caramanlis have launched ferocious attacks on the working class and the pensioners, with privatizations, cuts in public education and plans to privatize the universities. At the same time the wage basket has been reduced by inflation and more than 20% of the workers and their families now live below the poverty line.

This is the situation that caused the spark of the youth rebellion to light the fire of the working class struggles and the huge general strike of 10 December that paralyzed the country and took to the streets of Athens and many other cities. The strike of the brought out all the forces of the youth against the attacks on the pensions, and demanded 100% increase in the minimum wage. Facing these facts the Social Democratic and Stalinist bureaucracy of the GSEE (General Confederation of Workers) and ADEDY (main public sector union) raised these demands. Despite this, the strike turned into a generalized revolt of the exploited masses that, united with the youth rebellion took to the streets and barricades and breaking with all agreements between the bureaucracy and the regime, called for an unlimited general strike against both the ND and PASOK that had taken turns for decades in exploiting, oppressing and repressing the workers.

With this generalized rebellion, the working class and the exploited of Greece have risen up against the crisis, the attacks of capitalism and all the plans by the bosses and the treacherous workers leaders to divide and rule the workers ranks. We have today in Greece a revolutionary situation, such has not been seen by European imperialism for more than 30 years, when in 1975 the heroic Portuguese revolution erupted.

That is why the major imperialist powers are alarmed: "There is an insurrectionary climate in Athens"; "Greece has no state", editorialized the leading French imperialist daily, *Le Monde*; alarmed

because the workers suburbs of Paris, London, Madrid, Rome, Berlin etc, contain the same unemployed masses, super-exploited migrant workers, disaffected youth, that is, the living in the same miserable conditions that caused the uprising in Greece. 160 years after it was written in the Communist Manifesto, the Greek working masses are writing in the streets - in the letters of struggle, of fire, of strikes, of blood - the same words: "A spectre is haunting Europe: the spectre of Communism."



End the dictatorship of international finance capital; Stop the attack on the world working class and the slide to barbarism...Forward to the socialist revolution!

In our view, the uprising of the proletariat, the exploited youth and masses of Greece, that mobilized 10s of thousands on 10 December to the cry of "State murderer" and "Down with Caramanlis", demonstrates that, facing a bankrupt imperialist capitalist system in crisis, in order to defend the most basic rights and living conditions, it is necessary for the masses to launch a political struggle against the regime to take the power and to put in its place a state of the workers and all exploited people.

This bankrupt capitalist system has exposed itself before the eyes of the masses: the system is rotten and can only survive on the

backs of our slavery. Today, against all the reformist lies about capitalism, Greece affirms the revolutionary Marxist program of the 1V International of 1938 that states clearly that: confronting the bankruptcy and decadence of capitalism, and the advance of barbarism, the only salvation for the exploited is in the workers socialist revolution, and that the struggle for this revolution is the most important and urgent task of the proletariat.

For the working class, the exploited and the oppressed peoples to live, imperialism must die, and this task, on the whole continent, is concentrated in the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe.

In this struggle the proletariat and youth of Greece are building on all previous struggles of their class brothers and sisters of Europe. They join with and advance the spontaneous uprising of the Belgian general strike of workers against their leadership. They join

with also and learn the lessons of the huge spontaneous uprisings of the Italian masses of the 17 October which paralysed the country taking to the streets in the name of the rank and file of the Cobas, against the treacherous leaderships of the GIL who collaborate with the government of the "Tsar" Berlusconi today, and before that Prodi.

Long live the spontaneous uprising of the exploited youth and the "kukulofori" (the "hoodies" who fight on the barricades); Long live the fighting spirit of the proletariat and the Greek masses who show they are more conscious and advanced politically than all the "plans" of the treacherous union bureaucracy and the reformists of all colors!

Meanwhile the PASOK and the union bureaucracy calls for "calm", for Caramanlis' resignation, and for new elections in order to strangle the fight of the masses. The Stalinists of the EEK (CPG) take a position as in Chile where their "Red Police" openly "condemns the use of violence" by workers - as if the bourgeois state

regime is not "violent" when it murders Alex and condemns the youth to a future life of unemployment and forms a security guard armed with batons to contain and suppress the heroic youth mobilizations! So, the cry of the Chilean youth "The 'pacos de rojo' (red cops) are dangerous" is today given new life on the streets and barricades of Greece.

Today, those who have usurped the name of Trotskyism to rescue the "progressive" or "Bolivarian" bourgeoisie; to call for a vote for Chirac "against Le Pen" in France; who say that the victory of Zapatero in the Spanish election of 2004 was an "expression of the class struggle against the war", are doing the opposite, expropriating the name of Trotskyism. All have promoted the politics of class collaboration, bowing down before the bourgeois state, trying to reform bankrupt capitalism, instead of joining the campaign to support the magnificent general uprising of the students and workers of Greece who are opening the road to the socialist revolution in that country.

Today the anarchist movement has capitalized enormously from the radicalization of the exploited youth of Greece. This is no accident. The anarchist movement has maintained a tradition of courageous and intransigent struggle against the bourgeois state, while the renegades of Trotskyism have in the recent decades

transformed themselves into reformists, providing a left cover and support for the bloody imperialist regimes of the European powers.

So, today it is anarchism - that demonstrated its historic bankruptcy in the Spanish revolution in 1936-39 - that is benefitting from this magnificent radicalization of the exploited Greek masses. For this reason we must redouble our fight against those who have usurped Trotskyism and destroyed the 4th International, for an international regroupment, a Zimmerwald and Kienthal of the healthy Trotskyists and revolutionary workers organizations, and open the road to build on the basis of the program and legacy of the 4th International of

1938, a world party of socialist revolution.

Long live the general revolt of the exploited youth, the working class and the Greek masses! Down with the repressive and starvation regime of Caramanlis supported by the social imperialist



Students battle police

PASOK! Forward to the Socialist Revolution!

The task of the moment is the centralization and coordination of the pickets into one national workers and popular militia, the preparation of a general strike to bring down the regime of Caramanlis and the pro-imperialist coalition of ND and PASOK - sustained by the union bureaucracy and the "red police" of the KKE - to open the way to the proletarian revolution that will bring class justice for Alexandros, decent work and a living wage for the working class, free education for all the children, and meet all the most basic needs of the masses.

- For a Workers Socialist Greece, for the Socialist United States of Europe from the British Isles to the Russian steppes!
- Our class brothers and sisters of Greece mark the road: against the catastrophe that the capitalists try to download onto the proletariat and the exploited of the world, we must fight to organize a true international counter-offensive of the working class, to expropriate the expropriators and open the road to the international socialist revolution!
- For the working class and the exploited of the world to live, the capitalist system must die!

Bolivia: Open Letter from the LTI to the POR*

*Build a united front of struggle of all the militant workers', peasants' and students' organizations to take the COB and COR** out of the hands of the servants of big business and their government, and re-open the revolutionary road of 2003-2005!*

It has already been proven that the policy of using the COB and COR as pressure groups on parliament to make petitions to change the laws has been a total failure. The only thing that parliament has voted for is Morales' constitution, the fascists of Santa Cruz and the transnational companies.

Today our workers organizations are subordinated to the bourgeoisie and its government in the Altiplano and attacked by fascism in the East. The Trotskyist Internationalist League appeals to the POR and all the organizations that call for a break from the bourgeoisie and the government, to confront fascism by reviving the Pulacayo Theses of the Bolivian workers, to form with great urgency, a common struggle front, that can open a road different from the collaborationist bureaucracy of the COB for the vast majority of the Bolivian working class.

This call must organize, without delay, a united offensive of all the workers organizations, to demand the immediate replacing of the collaborationist leadership of the COB and the convening of a Congress of delegates of the rank and file of all workers, poor peasants and revolutionary students organizations, to retake the road to the revolution opened in 1903-2005 by exploited masses of Bolivia.

The POR has an enormous influence in the vanguard of the workers and students. This must not be used to give Trotskyist "blessings" to whichever union bureaucrats are prepared to betray the working class. Nor is it enough for POR to teach the lessons of the *Theses of Pulacayo* and the sliding scales of wages and working hours without a the rest of the Transitional Program to fight for a Workers and Peasants Government.

"Revolutionary violence" as proposed by the POR, is not a program. The fascist counterrevolution has smashed our worker and poor peasant brothers and sisters in the Media Luna. Will they be able to miraculously break from the leadership of Montes, Patana and the other agents of the popular front and the bourgeoisie? No way! We must unite all the workers, poor farmers and student organizations to vote for the immediate formation of workers and peasants militias, as in the '52, to smash the fascists and destroy the Banzerist murderous officer caste.

Enough! The fascists operate in Santa Cruz without fear of reprisal and in broad daylight. We must initiate a drive in the unions and fighting workers organizations a massive recruitment of workers, poor farmers and students, to build a workers and farmers militia to march on Santa Cruz to smash fascism.

There is no time to lose. The differences that we have with POR and other organizations that claim to be Trotskyists in Bolivia are clear and deep and have already been debated publicly before the masses. But we do not make these differences an obstacle in uniting in a common front to face the life and death matters that confront the Bolivian workers and poor farmers. Already the call for a united front has been met with enthusiasm by hundreds of thousands of workers, poor farmers and revolutionary students eager to break their subordination to the class collaborationist government of Morales and the transnationals, and to fight the fascist attacks of the Santa Cruz oligarchy and British Petroleum and the Banderista officer caste as in Pando.

Without a doubt, the miners of Huanuni have responded to this call and with them the Bolivian miners' movement. So have the militant vanguard of the teachers unions, the industrial workers of La Paz, the pensioners and all those

unions that fight against rising prices which were brutally repressed by Morales army. The workers of Plan 3000 refuse to be isolated and surrounded by the fascists with their sticks and pistols and have raised their battle cry to settle accounts with the "little white bums" that, everyday, terrorise our workers and farmers.

The Internationalist Trotskyist League of Bolivia, a member of the FLT, will take these proposals and this program to all the workers' where we are active to get their support for these resolutions. To succeed it is necessary to defeat all the collaborationist leaders of the COB that currently subordinate the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. This is the number 1 and most urgent task at the moment. Only in this way can the exploited stand up to fight starting with the most basic and pressing demands.

It is clear that the haste with which the pact between the popular front and fascism was rushed through against the masses is motivated by the exploiters need to solve their world crisis and the bankruptcy of imperialism on the back of the oppressed masses and to contain a workers counter-offensive.

The working class must rise up against this offensive! It is necessary for the rank and file of to take control of the COB! It is necessary to re-open the road to the workers and farmers revolution, because for the workers and poor farmers to live, world capitalism and imperialism must die!

There is no doubt that the Bolivian working class has been surrounded by the Bolivarian bourgeoisie and the treacherous leaders of the World Social Forum, which subordinates it to the bourgeoisie. The survival of the workers and poor farmers' revolution in Bolivia, now contained and expropriated, must be reclaimed. It is necessary to confront and expose the scam and sham of the "Bolivarian Revolution" which is nothing but a parody of a revolution. Its true purpose is to deceive the masses into supporting the governments of the national bourgeoisie and their business partners of the various imperialist powers, which are disputing among themselves over the loot of the nations of Latin America.

The worker and farmer masses of Peru have already entered a phase of semi-insurrections against the Fujimorist regime and the pro-Yankee government of Alan Garcia. Rebellious Chilean youth, with their shout of "the red cops are the dangerous ones", have entered a heroic struggle to defeat the reformist leaders who hold back each step of the masses.

The masses of the American continent need to stand in unity with the workers and poor farmers revolution in Bolivia, at a critical point when the national bourgeoisies, Bolivarian or not, and allied to the imperialist transnationals are already preparing for a massive attack against the workers who refuse to pay for the crisis of the rotten bankrupt capitalist imperialist system.

The Bolivian workers and farmers do not have the revolutionary leadership they deserve able to prove to them that their true allies are not the national bourgeois partners of Totalfina and Repsol but the Latin American and world-wide working class, already entering enormous class struggles for food and survival. Long live the Bolivian working class; long live the international working class!

*From the International Trotskyist League to the Revolutionary Workers' Party.

** COB and COR are Bolivian Workers Central and Regional Workers Central i.e. the main union organisation.

Brazil: No to violence in the working class!

We condemn the physical attack by Urban Quilombo, an associate of the PSTU (LIT-CI), against the comrades of the Committee for a Null Vote and the Trotskyist Fraction (FT) of Brazil. This is an urgent appeal to constitute an International Moral Tribunal in defence of proletarian principles and morality and in defence of workers' democracy in working class organizations everywhere.

Violent attack on Students and Trotskyists

The Leninist Trotskyist Fraction denounces and repudiates the brutal physical and moral attack by Urban Quilombo and PSTU youth militants against the comrades of the Committee for a Null [spoiled] Vote (which includes the German group, independent students, and the Trotskyist Fraction -FT-VP, member of the FLT- militants) in the city of Sao Luis (Maranhao State), Brazil.

On October 3, 2008, a group of comrades of the "Null vote" Committee held a rally in the "Children's Square", known as the Quilombo Yellow Lagoon square, to call for a Null Vote in the municipal elections. The comrades were acting on the resolution of the Assembly for the Null Vote (convened on September in the "B" CCH auditorium in the UFMA, Maranhao Federal University), and were painting posters and propagandizing their position for the Null Vote.

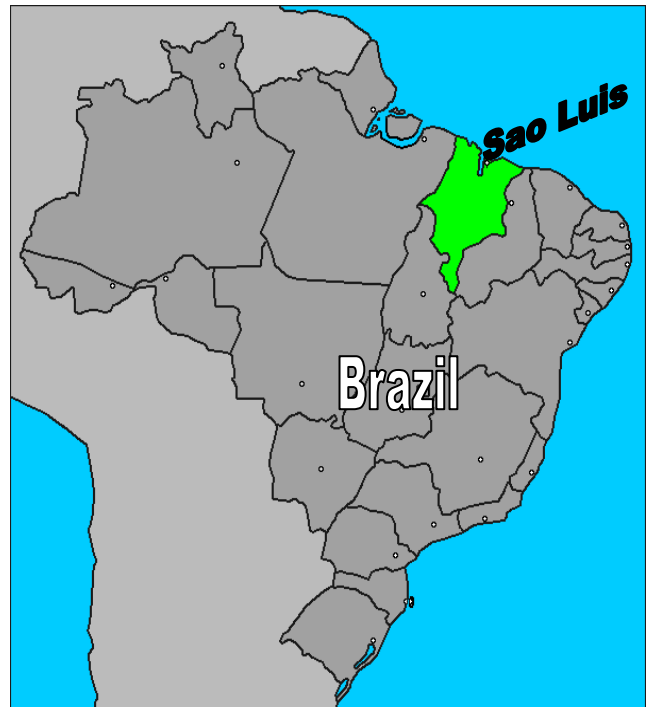
The aggression started when Joerbeth Prado used the microphone to defend the Null vote position. (He is known as Fusca, and for several years had been a militant close to the PSTU, stood on their slate for the elections in the Philosophy College in 2007, and on the PSTU-PSOL slate, "Barricades Open Ways" in the elections for the Students Central Executive in the UFMA in June 2008). He said that the candidates of the PSTU and PSOL, among others, were at the service of the popular front. Urban Quilombo and PSTU members immediately took the microphone off him, claiming they were using that space to call to vote for PSTU and would not allow any one to put a position other than theirs.

Immediately after that a torrent of verbal abuse was directed at Patricia Arantes and other comrades: "What does that pussy cat want around here?" "Go get yourself a playboy somewhere else!" "What's that faggot doing here?" Following that, Fabio Jardim, Claudio and Jardes were physically attacked by Diogo Rogelio and other members of Urban Quilombo - who waited until the comrades separated, so they could attack them, one at a time and beat them up.

Two days after this attack, on October 2008, Comrade Fabio Jardim went to da Liberdade (a neighbourhood in Sao Luis where Urban Quilombo and PSTU meet) and he tried to establish a dialogue with Urban Quilombo leaders about the violence used against the comrades. Diogo Rogerio, one of the thugs was there, in a PSTU office. He started to abuse and threaten comrade Jardim again; telling him "you are one more on my list".

On the afternoon of October 2008, in the Federal University of Maranhao, the activists of the Committee for the Null Vote looked for members of the Trotskyist Fraction-VP, and told them about the verbal and physical aggression that they had suffered. FT-VP militants said that the way to stop the verbal and physical aggressions, slanders, threats and the gangster-like methods, that some organizations and groups which pretend to be working-class fighters use, is to publicly denounce them and call everybody who claims to be in the workers' movement to condemn these methods.

On October 2008, the total membership of the Committee for the Null Vote publicly denounced this aggression in a statement. This statement points out correctly that the purpose of the attack is to avoid political discussion, and to silence any militant who disagrees with the PSTU's policy. It was an attack against the student comrades of the UFMA, who



are mostly PSTU militants but disagree with PSTU's policies. It was an attack also against the Trotskyist Fraction of Brazil and against the CONLUTAS minority, since comrade Balthazar was a CONAT delegate at the founding congress of CONLUTAS in 2006, and one of the leaders of the left opposition current against the majority leadership of CONLUTAS which represented 5% of the delegates present.

Clearly the brutal physical and moral attack by Urban Quilombo (actually a PSTU front group) seeks to resolve political differences by silencing those who think differently with clubs and slander. That is the way the PSTU treats those who oppose its politics!

The FLT repudiates what we consider a conscious direct attack against the comrades of the Committee for the Null Vote, against our comrades of the Brazilian FT (which is also an attack against our international fraction), and against the Brazilian workers and youth militant vanguard, particularly against those thousands of honest fighters who split from the PT and CUT and looking for a revolutionary road joined the CONLUTAS and CONAT in 2006.

Urban Quilombo admits to use of violence:

The Urban Quilombo leadership responded to the public denunciation made by the Committee for the Null Vote in a letter on October 2008. In this letter, the UQ leadership accepts that it beat up the comrades. Their "reasons" for such behaviour are typical of the union bureaucracy, and that of Stalinist thugs, in directing their attack on comrade Baltazar, a leader of the FLT and Brazilian FT.

In the letter they say: "... It happened when their group of students, under the influence of drugs, came back to the square and provoked our militants, saying that they were armed. Both sides became aggressive which was sad but inevitable. One of the students mentioned by Baltazar has problems of drug dependence that badly affects his memory,

and Urban Quilombo militants have been approached for help to get him off the "paco" (a cheap drug made with the rubbish left from cocaine, NT). Mr. Baltazar a teacher of many years experience should help these people (especially those from the slums) and not use them for his own deplorable political ends."

They continue: "Unlike left parties like PSTU, Baltazar always slanders Urban Quilombo because of its origins in the slums, which besides verbal exchanges, uses the methods of street gangs as self-defence" (our emphasis).

This letter with its Stalinist methods is a confession of UQ responsibility for those attacks, and proof of their aggression against the comrades of the Committee for the Null Vote and FT comrades.

In the letter the UQ leadership tries to justify the attack against the comrades saying that they were "stoned on drugs and alcohol". This is a despicable lie. But even if were true, the UQ leadership is "admitting" that they act just like the police in physically repressing youth that see no future under

capitalism and therefore become victims of despair or drugs. And these people cynically claim to be "fighters against racism and inequality!"

But this is not all. In the purest Stalinist traditions, UQ slanders comrade Baltazar accusing him of "infiltrating" the left as a right-wing agent (the same slander made by PO of Argentina- Partido Obrero/Worker Party- against the LOI-CI DO leader Juan Pico Muzzio in 2002, who was beaten and handed over to the police and bosses' justice by the PO!).

They say: "Mr. Baltazar, uses irresponsible people and others who need clinical help, to further the criminalization of our group by the bourgeois state. Baltazar has never defended us against the state's persecutions, but he is ready to slander revolutionary organizations like The Flash, and to stir up a political witch hunt with documents like this. There is nothing strange about this as historically the rightwing has infiltrated revolutionary organisations to destroy them. The history of Bolshevism is proof of this. In the same way FBI and CIA used addictive drugs in the US ghettos to criminalize and destroy the Black Panthers Party".

Comrade Baltazar, who is accused today by UQ of being an "infiltrator", is currently a teacher, but he used to work as an unskilled labourer in civil construction in Sao Paulo (from 1981 to 1983). In Natal he also worked until 1988 as a general labourer either in civil construction or as an assistant upholsterer. Between 1988 and 1990 he worked as a substitute teacher in public schools in Rio Grande do Norte (RN). From 1994 to 1997, he worked in the municipal teaching network in Natal, and since June 1997, he has worked at the Federal University of Maranhão as a teacher. That makes more than 20 years as a worker.

He has also been an active militant of the student, popular and union movement since 1982. He has been a member of the Academic History Centre of the UFRN, of the Student Central Directory of UFRN, of the opposition of the Association of Residents of Nazare neighbourhood in Natal, and a member of the opposition in the Teachers' Union in RN (SINTE-RN). Since 1997 he has been a rank and file militant of APRUMA-ANDES, a former member of the Council of Representatives of APRUMA. He has been a delegate to the ANDES congresses, actively participated in every strike of the teachers movement since 1998. He is a militant of the movement that fights for the reinstatement of Sociology in the high school, especially since 2005.

Not only that, since 1982 comrade Baltazar has been a Trotskyist militant, joining O Trabalho in Sao Paulo-SP. He was member of the old Socialist Convergence from 1988 to 1992 but left because of its support for the popular front. At the beginning of 1997, he joined TPOR, but in the same year split because of Lora's national-Trotskyist policy. In 2004, comrade Baltazar and the Trotskyist Fraction (VP) of Brazil joined the Liaison Committee for an International Conference of the principled Trotskyists and revolutionary workers organizations. Finally, in 2005, together with CWG of New Zealand, POI (CI) of Chile, LTI of Peru, LTI of Bolivia, and LOI (CI) - Democracia Obrera of Argentina, he founded the Leninist Trotskyist Fraction (FLT). That is 26 years of militancy as a revolutionary Marxist.

But most of all, by slandering him as a right wing "infiltrator", UQ and its ally the PSTU, want to hide the fact that comrade Baltazar was a delegate to the CONAT congress of 2006, representing the Sociologists Union of Maranhão, being elected by the rank and file on a show of hands in an assembly. He is a founding comrade of CONLUTAS that led the opposition in that congress.

This is comrade Baltazar, a working class fighter for 26 years, with a staunch record of public activity well known to the workers and youth vanguard in San Pablo, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraiba, Maranhão and Ceará; a founding leader of CONLUTAS, in opposition to the present leadership of CONLUTAS (PSTU), and despite that the UQ tries to pass him off as a rightwing "infiltrator".

Besides, after admitting to be slanderers and using violence against political dissidents, the UQ leadership has the nerve to compare themselves, shamelessly, to the Black Panthers of the United States! This is a blatant fraud. Sadly, the Black Panthers, a

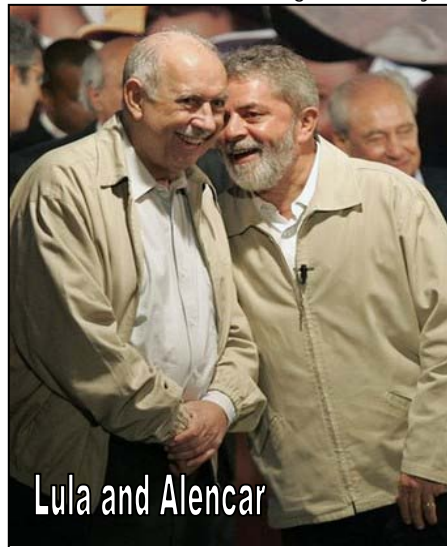
movement of African-Americans that in the USA in the '60s and the '70s was the vanguard of the resistance to the Vietnam War and the imperialist US regime, was destroyed by their political co-optation by the Muslim black bourgeoisie.

The victimizer today wants to present itself as the victim. But the Black Panthers were decimated because of the same class collaborationist policy followed today by the PSTU and UQ, which supports Morales bourgeois movement in Bolivia, which called for a vote for Lula-Alencar in 2002, and in Argentina, supported the bourgeois Kirchner government in the fight with the agrarian bourgeoisie, and so on

A silent PSTU (LIT-CI)

Immediately after the Committee for the Null Vote's denunciation of UQ was published, a number of condemnations of UQ were made in support of that statement. Darío Catrighuala, Bilbao and Rosales, Las Heras workers and political prisoners in Puerto Deseado and Pico Truncado, declared themselves in solidarity with the attacked comrades and condemned the aggressors. The family commission that fights for the freedom of the political prisoners also denounced UQ. Clovis Oliveira, leader of the teachers union of Rio Grande do Sul, LCT of Argentina, among others, has made a statement in support of the Committee.

Nevertheless, until now, PSTU (LIT-CI) has said nothing. There has been a total silence from the UQ despite being publicly known as an organization closely associated with the PSTU. On the PSTU TV shows, UQ militants make appearances campaigning for that party. Furthermore, UQ and PSTU fought together for the referendum demanded by the CUT (the union central that is pro-government) for the re-nationalisation of



the gold mine of Vale do Rio Doce. There are militants that introduce themselves as UQ militants in the meetings of CONLUTAS-MA and, at the same time, they appeared in a PSTU TV show as PSTU militants. Marcio went to the last CONLUTAS congress as an UQ observer, but he claims to be a member of the PSTU.

Furthermore, in UQ's blog there is posted the information: "*Hertz da Conceição Dias, Teacher; Reginaldo Neves Rocha, student and Afonso Henrique Vale Coqueiro, hair stylist; all of them members of Organized Hip Hop Movement of Maranhão Urban Quilombo, while Hertz is a democratic member of the Unified Socialist Workers Party (PSTU)...*", just to mention another example.

Also, as we said above, when on October comrade Fabio (one of the victims of the physical violence) went to the Liberdade neighbourhood, present at the premises of the PSTU and UQ was Diogo Rogerio (former leader of PSTU youth in Maranhão and UQ militant) who led the attack, Claudia Durans (PSTU leader in Maranhão), Noletto (PSTU leader who ran for the council in the October 2008 elections), Nicinha Durans (several times a PSTU candidate, and according to Fabio, an UQ leader), Hugo (PSTU youth leader) among others.

PSTU can't keep silent anymore:

We challenge them to state their position on these facts. But this silence by the PSTU (LIT) doesn't surprise us at all. LIT sadly has a long tradition of attacks and slanders against those who think differently. In 1988, the Argentinean MAS (the most important party of the LIT at that time) expelled the Internationalist Bolshevik Tendency (TBI, which later founded the PTS) by accusing it of being "a group of petty bourgeois, drug addicts and faggot students", the same accusation that its ally UQ uses now. But not only that: in December 1989, after a mobilization to oppose the US invasion of Panama, MAS security guards ambushed and attacked a group of workers and their families, together with students, all members of PTS, in a La Plata train station as they were returning home after the mobilization. Tens of workers and their children were badly beaten and ended up in hospital.

The next year, the MAS attacked a group of students, members of PTS again, in the Letters and Philosophy College of the UBA. Its security guards, fully armed, filled the college building and chased the PTS militants through the classrooms and halls, beating one of them. When a teacher (who wasn't a PTS militant) tried to stop the attack, he was in turn badly beaten and ended up in a coma in hospital. The next day, the teachers and workers union of UBA held a strike to repudiate the actions of the MAS.

On May 2000, the PSTU (LIT) attacked the Brazilian Worker's Cause stand, destroying it completely and beating up the PCO militants that were there. Of course, PCO and PO (PCO's fraternal group in Argentina) did not call for a Moral Tribunal then to condemn the PSTU action. On the contrary, they waited for several months, and when a PSTU delegation traveled to Buenos Aires to participate with the FOS (the LIT group in Argentina) in a demonstration against ALCA (FTAA), the PO attacked them causing several serious injuries.

So, far from uniting the Argentinean and Brazilian working class, the LIT and the PO and their international currents, "educate" the workers of both countries in the worst union bureaucratic and Stalinist methods. They "educate" the workers with the "street law" that UQ proudly proclaims. These methods are alien to the most basic worker's democracy that allow the workers to organize themselves, discuss and decide, as class brothers and sisters, their political differences. For these currents, that is what "internationalism" means!

Last but not least, in 2002, when Juan Pico Muzzio, a leader of LOI (CI) Workers' Democracy of Argentina was hit and handed over to the police by Partido Obrero, and many workers organizations and workers parties around the world

publicly came out in his defense calling for an International Moral Tribunal to condemn the PO leadership as responsible for these reprehensible actions, the PSTU and the LIT kept silent.

Today, the PSTU keeps quiet, even though its close ally, UQ, confesses to beating the comrades, and tries to justify this attack by raising lying charges against the members of the null vote committee, against Baltazar, the Brazilian FT, and, hence, against the whole FLT. If the PSTU-LIT does not immediately publicly repudiate the attack and the aggressors, then the FLT will publicly hold the PSTU and the LIT leadership responsible for the attacks on the physical security of the comrades of the FT of Brazil and of all the comrades of the null vote committee.

For a Workers' International Moral Tribunal

The methods used by Urban Quilombo, the close ally of the PSTU-LIT, as we have proved, including its "street law" (the methods of gangs, criminals and thugs), are straight out of the fifth-columnist-Stalinist arsenal, and opposed to proletarian morality and principles. They want to settle political differences and silence their political opponents with clubs. These methods destroy workers' democracy, the only truly principled method in the working class that allows workers organizations to settle their political difference in front of the worker's vanguard and the exploited masses.

These methods make the enemies of the working class seem like their allies, and their allies seem like enemies. But in reality they are designed to demoralize the workers and youth vanguards as they are entering into the class struggle. Besides the use of violence that destroys worker's democracy, these methods leave comrades exposed to the attacks of the bourgeois state. When militant workers are labeled "alcoholics" or "drug addicts", and especially an "infiltrator", they can be isolated from the working class and without the support of other workers, exposed to the state's attacks. We will not allow it! We must condemn the thugs and liars and come to the defence of the exemplary class morality of Baltazar and the assaulted comrades!

This is why the FLT makes an urgent appeal for a campaign for an International Moral Tribunal that investigates and passes judgment in front of the world workers' movement on those who are responsible for the physical and moral aggression towards the comrades of the null vote committee, and in particular Baltazar, a member of the FT. We call for a tribunal with six members, workers whose history of fighting for their class, and whose moral qualities, are beyond question. We propose that the PSTU nominates three of the six members. The FLT proposes three members, a rank and file mine worker of Huanuni (Bolivia), Clovis Oliveira, a long-standing militant of the Brazilian Trotskyist movement and a leader of the teachers union of Rio Grande do Sul, and Manoel Boni, the historical leader of the homeless workers of the West Diadema-SP Association and leader of the Marxist Workers' Party of Brazil.

We call on all the workers organizations of Brazil, Latin America and the world, on the rank and file workers of CONLUTAS in Brazil, on the militant miners of Huanuni in Bolivia, on the dock workers of local #10 of ILWU of USA, on the rank and file members of C-CURA of Venezuela, on all the rank and file workers that belong to all organizations of the ELAC, hosted in Brazil last July. We call on them all to be a part of this internationalist call to create an International Moral Tribunal, in defense of the proletarian principles and morality and in defense of workers' democracy inside the organization of the proletarians and the masses.

Leninist Trotskyist Fraction, December 2008

Imperialism

Genocide in the Congo

Almost Invariably in the Western imperialist media the millions of deaths in the Congo over the last decades are presented as the results of a 'failed state' due to the backwardness of African society, and an inability to overcome tribal and civil wars and adopt Western civilisation. The real history of colonisation and imperialist plunder and exploitation is seldom mentioned.

Long history of imperialist genocide

In a society dominated by private ownership of the means of production it is the nations with the richest mineral resources whose populations are subjected to the most wretched living conditions, the most brutal dictatorships and the most extreme violence. The Middle East has its oil, its dictatorships and its incessant wars. At various stages in history Congo has had its ivory, its rubber, its copper, cobalt, coltan and its incessant war.

From the depredations of the slave trade right up to the present day the Congolese have endured holocaust after holocaust at the hands of imperialist plunderers. In the era of overt empire building and the 'scramble for Africa' following the expeditions of Stanley, Congo was seized by the king of Belgium as his private estate. In arguably the first great PR spin operation of modern times it was euphemistically named 'The Congo Free State', which won the annexation prompt recognition from freedom loving but racist US senators keen to re-export recently liberated slaves back to their continent of origin.

The Congolese population was violently coerced into stripping the vast region of its ivory from elephant tusks for export to Europe. When that resource had been exhausted the monarch's next entrepreneurial achievement was to introduce rubber cultivation from Brazil and militarily impose quotas for its cultivation and delivery. The genocidal effects of the forced labour regime, hinted at in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, were exposed by (amongst others) the diplomat and novelist Erskine Childers, later executed by imperialist Britain for his activity in support of Irish nationalism.

The exposure briefly aroused the first international human rights campaign in the Century and pressure from the organized working class resulted in the curtailment of the royal prerogatives by the Belgian parliament. The humanitarian impulse was soon however overwhelmed by jingoism in the first great climax of imperialist competition in WWI, when it became convenient for Entente propaganda to firstly arouse sympathy for 'poor little Belgium' and later (in order to engage US voters) to pose as champions of democracy.

It took another world war (against fascism) with the necessary mobilisation of the rhetoric of freedom to bring about the decolonisation wave of the 1960s and 70s. The imperialists had found it necessary to rule their empires indirectly. On gaining independence, the Congo immediately fell foul of Cold War machinations and the unfortunate circumstance that it possessed vast mineral deposits, including some that were at that time were of critical strategic importance. It was the only region outside the Soviet Union with significant deposits



of germanium, then (before the adoption of silicon) essential for the electronic transistorisation that would give the superpowers' military communication, navigation and missile guidance systems a decisive advantage.

The measures then used by the imperialist champions of 'democracy' to retain control of 'their' resources included the assassination of a socialistically inclined president Lumumba and a UN General Secretary Hammarskjöld and the financing of secessionist militias and warlords. The ensuing dictatorship of Joseph Mobutu lasted three decades till he had outlived his anti-communist usefulness with the demise of the Soviet Union, and the Western alliance permitted Laurent Kabila to overthrow him in 1997 with the assistance of their protégés in Uganda and Rwanda. "Kabila agreed to a treaty that split economic dominance of Eastern Congo between Uganda and Rwanda in areas adjacent to their own borders."

"The Kivu region of the Congo is the geological repository of some of the world's greatest strategic minerals. The eastern border straddling Rwanda and Uganda runs on the eastern edge of the Great African Rift Valley, believed by geologists to be one of the richest repositories of minerals on the face of the earth. The Democratic Republic of the Congo contains more than half the world's cobalt. It holds one-third of its diamonds, and, extremely significantly, fully three-quarters of the world resources of columbite-tantalite or "coltan" -- a primary component of computer microchips and printed circuit boards, essential for mobile telephones, laptops and other modern electronic devices."

"America Minerals Fields, Inc., a company heavily involved in promoting the 1996 accession to power of Laurent Kabila, was, at the time of its involvement in the Congo's civil war, headquartered in Hope, Arkansas. Major stockholders included long-time associates of former President Clinton going back to his days as Governor of Arkansas. Several months before the downfall of Zaire's French-backed dictator, Mobutu, Laurent Desire Kabila based in Goma, Eastern Zaire had renegotiated the mining contracts with several US and British mining companies including American Mineral Fields. Mobutu's corrupt rule was brought to a bloody end with the help of the US-directed International Monetary Fund."

"Washington was not entirely comfortable with Laurent Kabila, who was finally assassinated in 2001. In a study released in April 1997 barely a month before President Mobutu Sese Seko fled the country, the IMF had recommended "halting currency issue completely and abruptly" as part of an economic recovery programme. A few months later upon assuming power in Kinshasa, the new government... was ordered by the IMF to freeze civil service wages with a view to "restoring macro-economic stability." Eroded by hyperinflation, the average public sector wage had fallen to 30,000 new Zaires (NZ) a month, the equivalent of one US dollar...the IMF's demands were tantamount to maintaining the entire population in abysmal poverty.

They precluded from the outset a meaningful post-war economic reconstruction, thereby contributing to fuelling the continuation of the Congolese civil war ..."

"The real reasons for the ongoing war in the Congo is described in great detail in several United Nations Security Council Expert Reports, they make clear that war and massive civilian deaths in the Eastern Congo since 1996 have little, if anything to do with "tribalism," "ethnicity," or even the "Rwanda genocide." But, rather, have *everything* to do with the rape of the Congo's resources by the militaries of Rwanda and Uganda and their local surrogates."

"The UN Reports show that that since the 1996 invasion and a second invasion in 1998, Rwanda and Uganda have become the major trading centers for diamonds, precious metals and other natural resources that are not found in either country...but which exist in great quantities in the Congo. As of 2003, the UN Security Council Reports put the cost of civilian lives at some 3 million (the current estimate is more than 5 million lives....so far)."



The Rape of the Congo Continues Today

"By 1998, however, Uganda and Rwanda invaded Eastern Congo again, after the new President Kabila began attempting to reclaim military and economic influence in the areas of his country controlled by Rwanda and Uganda. Unlike 1996, Kabila had made alliances with other African nations that opposed the foreign-supported aggression against the Congo and troops from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia entered the war in support of the Kabila government. Despite a 1999 Lusaka peace treaty, which also provided for the creation of MONUC (UN Observer Mission in the Congo), the war continued. In 2000, while the U.S. media was distracted by the Bush/Gore campaign, the Uganda/Rwanda began vying for control over portions of the Congo and the long-standing alliance split over control of the resources of the Eastern Congo."

"(A) more extensive report in October 2002 documented the seizure of banks, sugar refineries, mines and provides the names of local leaders and war-lords with ties to Uganda and Rwanda...as well as describing the ties between both "Hutu" and "Tutsi" Rwandans who were *working together* to enrich themselves, and their Rwandan and Ugandan sponsors, at the expense of the indigenous Congolese.¹⁶ And the October 2003 Security Council Report states:

...The Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) still play an important but highly discreet role in the [RCD-Goma's] operations...." And, that the Rwanda-linked network in the Eastern Congo had the objective of "...permanent, autonomous control over the territory of the eastern DRC..." (citing training operations and lines of communication to Kigali). "Although the *real* reasons for the Congo War have been well-documented by UN Security Council sources, as well as the fact that US/UK surrogates are getting rich in the Congo, neither the United States nor Britain have much of an interest in helping critics and Human Right activists "connect the "dots" that link Yoweri Museveni/Kagame's 1986 military-takeover of Uganda or Paul Kagame's military-

takeover of Rwanda in 1994, with the horror that has engulfed the Congo since the joint Rwanda/Uganda invasion of 1996."

"After Museveni seized power in 1986, Uganda became, and remains, a major recipient of British aid to Africa, as well as the beneficiary of British military training and armaments. After Museveni took power, the CIA also established its major African electronic listening post in Kampala, Uganda's capital. And, Kagame's long-standing Pentagon ties can be traced to the 1980's and he was actually had been receiving U.S. officer training in Ft. Leavenworth Kansas which he returned to Uganda, then Rwanda, to lead the 1990 invasion. His reputation in U.S. military circles remained intact when he seized power in 1994, during his first invasion of the Congo in 1996 AND during the 1998 *second* Congo invasion."

"By the time of the 1996 Congo invasion, the Rwandan military had been receiving U.S. military training for at least two years (and perhaps more) and Kagame's Pentagon ties had been established for at least ten years. Today Britain remains Uganda's largest foreign patron. And, U.S. support as swelled the Rwandan army from 7,000 Belgian/French-trained troops under the previous government when Museveni/Kagame invaded in 1990, to an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 U.S.-trained and armed troops in 2007."

"But, the mutually beneficial relationships between the U.S. and Britain and their African surrogates goes both ways. Not only are Rwandan and Ugandan elites basking in the Congo's stolen wealth, but "private contractors" from both countries are two of the largest contingents of military-mercenaries in



Iraq and in Darfur, where the Chinese-supported Sudanese government has rejected US/UK investment and have been labeled "genocidaires" in a far less-bloody conflict than the Rwandan/Ugandan adventure the Congo. Ugandan troops are also part of the U.S.-Ethiopian "Christian" occupation of "Muslim" Somalia...which was the greatest humanitarian tragedy in Africa before last week... when the Congo War disaster reached the headlines, again."

"Casual visitors to Uganda and Rwanda can't help but notice that both Central African countries are better off than their neighbors, both economically and

in terms of social organization. Compared to other African countries that lack close relationships to wealthy sponsors, these two, small, densely-populated nations appear to be outposts of calm and relative prosperity on a continent. But, the fact is that the relative prosperity and calm in Museveni's militarized Uganda and Kagame's militarized Rwanda has come at the terrible price of more than 5 million Congolese lives, as documented by the UN Reports."

"There is now no doubt that, when Ugandan Major Paul Kagame invaded Rwanda in 1990, he was accompanied by nearly 25% of the Ugandan and Ugandan complicity has been confirmed by formerly confidential US and UN files at the UN Tribunal for Rwanda.

. And, like other African wars, the cost of supporting the Museveni/Kagame 4-year war of attrition *must* have come from outside the country. And, most probably, the massive support must have come from or been known by Uganda's main foreign sponsors, the US and UK. As one former U.S. State Department source has stated: "Either Museveni was misusing (the U.S. support) he was receiving and was not being called to account...or he was using it for the purpose intended."

"If France was the covert target of US 'surrogate warfare' in 1994, today it is clearly China, which is the real threat to US control of Central Africa's vast mineral riches... Now, in comes the new US AFRICOM. Speaking to the International Peace Operations Association in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 27, General Kip Ward, Commander of AFRICOM defined the command's mission as, 'in concert with other US government agencies and international partners, [to conduct] sustained security engagements through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of US foreign policy."

Quoted passages are from a number of articles at <http://www.Globalresearch.ca>

A world playground: Congolese people sacrificed for International Games and Profits:

[://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid](http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid)

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China and the Congo wars: AFRICOM, America's new military command.

[://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid](http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid)

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War in the Congo: the Ambitions of Nkunda and his Anglo-American allies.

[://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid](http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid)

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World Bank oversees Carve-up of Congo rainforests.

[://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid](http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid)

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The War that did not make the Headlines: Over 5 million dead in Congo.

[://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid](http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid)

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Global Crisis

Obama: US Imperialism's fresh black face**The crisis of the world capitalist system**

The crisis of the imperialist capitalist world economy has become global. The recession with price inflation and loss of jobs is already here. Billions of dollars evaporate as banks and share markets collapse. The failures of banks and investment funds are merely the symptom of a bankrupt system. All the fictitious capital represented by shares, futures, currency in circulation in the computers of the bourgeois state, banks, investment funds, corporations, amounts to fourteen trillion dollars that has no value. US dollars are not backed up by real commodities or assets; they are backed by the U.S. state treasury and the military. Real value can only be produced by human labour, the labour of the productive working class. The capitalist crisis appears in order to destroy the productive forces and wealth so that the profit rate can be restored. \$4 trillion dollars over five years spent on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as the profits of the US military-industrial monopolies. \$140 billion dollars for Exxon -not counting the other imperialist oil or the vultures of Halliburton, Cheney Co - thanks to the "war for oil"!

The masses of the world are already paying for the crisis, through the actions of the reformers. In the U.S., the working class was betrayed by the union bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO and suffers losses to their wages, pensions and many other past gains won by workers. The mass anti-imperialist struggle that arose in the streets against the war, and for immigrant rights, was diverted into votes for Obama and the Democratic Party by the reformist left which sows illusions that there is a "democratic" and "pacifist" imperialism. In Europe the union bureaucracies betray the working class with social pacts.

In Latin America, it is the phony "Bolivarian revolution" that has diverted and contained the revolutionary and anti-imperialist struggles that have arisen in the new century. The reformists have not managed to extinguish the fire of revolution and wars

against imperialism, as in Bolivia, Colombia or the Middle East. But they seek to contain them in anti-imperialist "united fronts" such as Chavez and Morales in Latin America, or the Islamic Hamas and Hezbollah in the Middle East.

The crisis reveals that the capitalist imperialist system is rotten and bankrupt before the eyes of billions of exploited around the globe. The system that oppresses the masses has lost all legitimacy in the eyes of millions of wage slaves. The government of the murderer Bush and the "Republicrat" regime and the imperialist powers in Europe and Japan that are fighting the war in Afghanistan and all imperialist monopolies profiting from the war, appear before the masses as what they truly are: genocidal murderers of more than one million Iraqis, more than half a million Afghans, 10s of thousands of Palestinians, and the jailers of thousands of political prisoners around the globe. The veil had been torn away, showing that the world is dominated by the US, European and Japanese imperialists, claiming to be "democrats" but in essence capitalist dictators.

The apologists of capitalism had promoted years of economic expansion, with several "centres of production" working together in a "harmonious" global

economy. When the crisis erupted, the parasitic capitalists were totally unprepared. Bewildered, the bourgeois cried "everyone for himself". This only served to deepen their unmasking before the working class. The masses of the world can see that today, without any veils to hide behind, "the king is naked". The declining imperialist system only survives by exploiting the masses and threatening the entire human civilization. Today, it is clearer than ever, that for the exploited and oppressed peoples of the world to live, the capitalist system should die.

The US imperialists support the election of Obama to try to hide the hideous face of a rotten capitalist system of capitalism from the masses of the world. Its purpose is to put a new black face on the rotten corpse to re-legitimate US "democracy" in the eyes of the U.S. and world working masses. So, get ready for new wars and counter-offensives against the masses by the



imperialist parasites, led by their new fresh black-faced Obama.

The victory of Obama is a fraud against the U.S. working masses

The result of the US election on November 4 put the seal on the ruling class expropriation of the anti-imperialist struggle of the U.S. working class. This was achieved through the "democratic" imposition of a fraud against the masses. The election of Obama is a trap for all the exploited of the world. We no longer see the real face of the warmongering imperialist capitalism facing a major crisis. Instead we see Obama who holds out to the masses the promise of "change" and "we can".

In this way US imperialism tries to make the working class believe that the imperialist butchers can be "good" and that this rotten capitalist system can be "cleaned up". It is like the mass murderer turning up to the funeral of his victims dressed as a choir boy! Obama, with a new government, is sweet talking the U.S. working class' out of its crisis of confidence in capitalism - damping down the fires of an growing consciousness that Wall St exists only by exploiting Main St and sending its sons and daughters to die in imperialist wars. But there is no such thing as "clean", "peaceful" and "democratic" capitalism.

The war launched by the Bush administration and the oil cartel after the Twin Towers in 9-11-2001, was supported and sustained by both Republicans and Democrats. Together they voted for Bush's budget and war to destroy Afghanistan and Iraq and spark genocide



in those two nations. Together they voted for the "Patriot Act" which marked a fierce attack on democratic freedoms of workers within the United States and outside the U.S. Together they voted for the tough anti-immigration laws. Then, recently, both voted to make the working class pay for the bailout of the major banks and financial institutions with around a trillion dollars. Thus they both collaborated in a massive attack on the US working class, cutting its living standards and removing its most basic democratic freedoms.

The "Republicrat" wars for oil have failed to smash the anti-imperialist resistance

The reason why US imperialism needs a fresh black face to sell itself as peace-loving and democratic is that it has failed to win its genocidal wars for oil in the Middle East. The invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq have failed to overcome the indomitable strength of Afghan and Iraqi resistance, and the heroic resistance of Palestinians of South Lebanon that humiliated and defeated the genocidal Zionist army of Israel backed by imperialism. This opened the danger of a Vietnam-type scenario developing which might arouse a strong anti-war movement in the proletariat. The failure of these costly wars was blamed on the Bush administration. To divert the awakening anti-war consciousness of the American working class a new face for US imperialism was needed. After 40 years of the black bourgeoisie personally profiting from the struggles of the masses of exploited blacks, U.S. imperialism brings one of their representatives to re-legitimate the Yankee regime in the eyes of the American masses and to clean the blood on its hands.

Today the most politically advanced section of the US working class is made up of super-exploited immigrant workers of Latin American origin. In the 1960s and 1970s the vanguard was made up of the black labor movement. But US imperialism is very capable of dividing and ruling workers. While the vast majority of African-Americans were condemned to wage slavery, unemployment and poverty, a small minority were co-opted as a privileged black bourgeoisie. No doubt today US imperialism is busy co-opting a small segment of Latinos as a new bourgeoisie to play the same role of containing the masses. Meanwhile Obama's victory serves this purpose as is clear from the fact that while more than 90% of blacks voted for him, a big majority of Latinos also voted for him.

Obama is the mask of "democracy", "civil rights" and "solidarity with the poor and minorities" in the United States. Behind this mask US imperialism will launch a fierce offensive against the masses and exploited peoples of the world to make us pay for the bankruptcy of the capitalist imperialist system. Using this democratic front, US imperialism will make alliances with the "progressive" national bourgeoisies to win advantages against its imperialist rivals at the expense of the poor masses as in Bolivia and the Middle East. Like its "democratic" mask at home, these alliances with "progressive" national leaders are temporary masks designed to contain the masses so that US imperialism and its allies can prepare their counter-offensive.

Obama tries to defend US world dominance facing the global crisis

Unlike Bush whose regime has lost its legitimacy before US and world workers, Obama has the prestige and authority to defend and extend US dominance over its rivals and the world working class. The imperialist bourgeoisies are in a panic facing the economic crisis and the crisis of legitimacy of the capitalist system. Bush, whose genocidal regime is exposed before the

masses, says "we must save the system". Sarkozy, representative of one of the most reactionary bourgeoisies in history, says: "we must rebuild a new form of capitalism" to stop a "revolution on a global scale." Immediately, he was applauded and congratulated by Chavez and other "Bolivarian" parrots, who are working with Sarkozy as junior partners in the business of looting Latin America. In this way the "democratic" imperialists try to make the masses believe that the problem is "neo-liberalism" and not the rotten imperialist capitalist system. So, against "neo-liberalism", "comrade" Sarkozy and the "Bolivarians" want to build "another capitalism", to "renew", "re-found" etc., capitalism based on state management of the market, and at the same time to "refund on new bases" the IMF, the G-7, the G-8, the G-20, the World Bank, etc.

Of course this is a deception of the workers. The imperialist states are not "refounding" capitalism when they "nationalize" bankrupt banks and businesses. This is nothing more than the old scam of nationalising the losses of finance capital paid for by the masses, while at the same time guaranteeing that the monopolies and parasites continue to expropriate the labour of the working masses -social welfare for the bosses, impoverishment and misery for the workers.

In order for US imperialism to remain the dominant power it has to use Obama's victory to try to re-legitimate not only itself, but also the capitalist system as a whole before the masses of the world. Obama thus gives a veneer of legitimacy to all the imperialist states and their client regimes. The leaders of those countries that supported Bush lost the support of their people. Today they rush to be photographed hugging the "African American", "democratic" and "pacifist" Obama to regain popular legitimacy. All of the counter-revolutionary leaders including Sarkozy, Putin, Castro, Chavez, Morales, Kirchner, Ahmadinejad, Nasrallah etc., have greeted the victory of Obama and offered him their support, helping to strengthen the illusions of the masses of the world in their executioners.

Yet Obama must first and foremost legitimate US imperialism. Because to retain its dominance US imperialism must make the exploited pay the costs of the global crisis of capitalism. And to do that it is necessary to increase their offensive against its imperialist rivals, in particular against France, to make them shift the cost of the crisis on to their own workers. In this way Obama will attempt to revive US nationalism to unite the workers and the imperialist bourgeoisie against the workers of the other imperialist and semi-colonial countries, so that the nation is united in new trade wars and new wars of occupation.

And last but not least, to rebuild its legitimacy with the masses in the US and around the world, it is necessary for US imperialism to guarantee the world financial system against the most serious crisis since the 1930s. Obama will take the world stage with a world "New Deal" in which US finance capital will use the US state institutions to stabilise the global economy and retain its dominant imperialist rule. So today in the midst of the crisis, it is even clearer than in the previous short growth cycle, that far from being in "decline" or "losing its hegemony," the United States

remains the dominant imperial power.

The masses around the world are already paying for the crisis

The masses of the world are already paying the crisis as the US and EU goes into a deep recession with 100s of thousands of jobs lost, homes foreclosed and pensions wiped out. 1 in 10 persons in the US is on food stamps. In these countries we can not rule out that deep recession will be combined with price inflation (stagflation) produced by the printing of hundreds of billions of dollars to pay for the imperialist state bailouts of finance capital. But in the semi-colonial nations, it is almost certain that looming recession will cause massive galloping inflation. In countries like Chile that is absolutely dependent on oil imports, or Venezuela, which imports most of the food it consumes, this will cause rapid cost of living increases.

For sure, imperialism can only solve its crisis in its own interests by stepping up the levels of plunder and looting of the resources and cheap labour of the semi-colonial and colonial nations. Now that U.S. and the imperialist powers are in a recession, the demand for gas, oil, minerals, and agricultural commodities is drastically reduced. Thus, in just a few weeks and months, the prices of these raw materials have almost halved. Oil decreased from US\$140 to US\$70 a barrel; soybeans fell from about US\$700 per ton last March, to around US\$300 today. The collapse of mineral prices has hit Bolivia, Peru, causing a big drop in mining production, and hence loss of jobs and wages, and fuelling the revolutionary unrest of the masses. In Argentina, the capitalists have already launched a brutal attack on workers to save their falling profits by massive sackings and suspensions in industry, and by the devaluation of the peso and the resulting price inflation that is destroying workers living standards.

The "Bolivarians" make the workers kneel before "democratic" imperialism

The balance of power between the imperialist powers has been thrown into disarray by the global crisis. Each imperialist power wants to solve its crisis by making its rivals pay for it. Disputes over control of markets, spheres of influence, and the sources of cheap raw materials and slave labour are intensifying. Under these conditions, Latin America is no longer exclusively a "backyard" of US imperialism. French, German, Spanish and Japanese imperialism, along with their national bourgeois junior partners, compete with the US and one another to extend their spheres of interest in the subcontinent.

They can do this only because the imperialists and their national bourgeois allies in Latin America have been supported by the actions of the treacherous reformist leaders grouped together in the World Social Forum who have suppressed the anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggles of the masses of the continent and contained them by means of popular front regimes. These reformist leaders have acted to subordinate the working classes and poor farmers to the "democratic" imperialists and the "Bolivarian" bourgeoisie. Thus, the

reformist leaders subordinated the revolutionary upsurge of 2003-2005 in Bolivia to the government of Morales who then used the army to kill members of the miners' vanguard and enter into a series of pacts with the fascist gangs of the landowning and mine-owning bourgeoisie.

In Venezuela the anti-imperialist struggle of the working class has been co-opted by Chavez government which enters into agreements with imperialism over the shares of the oil revenue. Argentina strangled the revolution of 2001, subordinating the working class to Kirchner, supported by Fidel Castro, Chavez and all those in the World Social Forum. In the US, as we said above, the task of making workers swear loyalty to US imperialism is that of the "democratic" Obama, Clinton and company.

The reformist left welcomes Obama's victory as a "progressive" step in the struggle of workers and exploited Americans. But it's a stab in the back against the proletariat. The anti-war pickets, the May Day strikes for migrant workers, the strike against the war by the ILWU, the mass mobilizations to end the war in Iraq, all of this militancy by the working class, has been sold out to a black faced bourgeois politician!

Today, internationally, the fake Trotskyists, joining the chorus of Chavez, Fidel Castro, Morales, Mandela etc "salute the American people" that according to them, brought about the "defeat for Bush and the neo-conservatives of the Republican Party." Thus, in sowing illusions in "democratic" imperialism, they prevent the revolutionary uprisings of the Latin American masses joining forces with the struggle of US workers against the war and for the rights of immigrant workers who are a real bond of flesh and blood able to unite into a single army the workers of North, Central and South America. These fake Trotskyist counter-revolutionaries are providing the left leg propping up the popular fronts that sacrifice the mass struggles in Bolivia and Colombia, and prepare the ultimate betrayal in Latin America, the completion of capitalist restoration in Cuba.

The heroic resistance of the masses begins the counter-offensive

Despite the electoral victory of Obama to re-legitimate US imperialism, this does not decide anything. The bourgeoisie have not yet translated their electoral victory into a defeat of workers in the streets or the workplaces. The struggle against the bosses' offensive will not be decided in the polls but in the struggles for the defence of jobs, wages and workers rights.

Disarmed and with their hands tied by the treacherous leaders of the popular front, the masses of the world have begun a resistance to the attacks which

have already created the first pre-revolutionary situations. Thus, we saw uprisings for bread in Burma, Georgia, Pakistan, Haiti, and so on. Since then there has been the huge general strike in Belgium, the strike of German metalworkers for wages and the mobilisations of millions of workers and students in Italy against the imperialist government of Berlusconi.

Now in Greece a revolutionary situation opens with mobilisations, occupations, sackings of public buildings and police stations and general strikes. Who can doubt that there, in the hands and the working classes of the imperialist countries, is the key to a success of the revolutionary upheavals in the semi-colonial world!

Thus the working class of the European powers must unite their ranks with their class brothers and sisters of the former state workers from Eastern Europe. The workers of the former USSR oppressed by French and German imperialism, or by the Russian bourgeoisie itself allied to France and Germany, need to raise among their own demands the return to the dictatorship of the proletariat of the October Revolution of 1917.

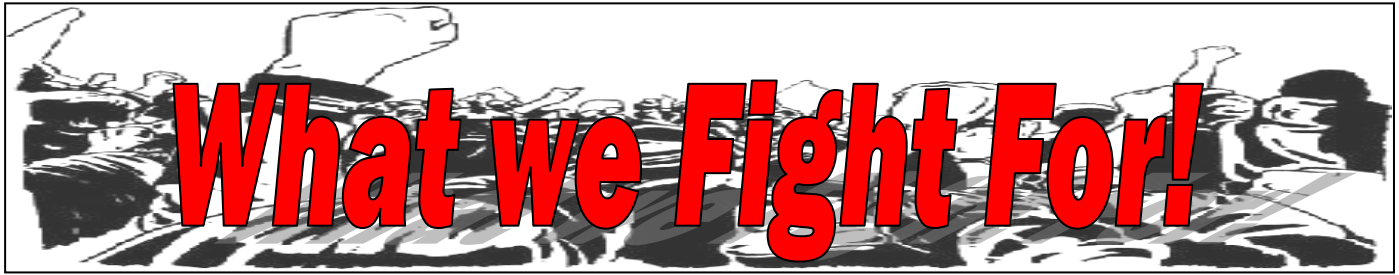
Meanwhile in Peru working masses have started an uprising of street mobilisations, semi-insurrections, and clashes against the police and the army in Moqueagua, Tacna, Cajamarca and Moyabamba, to bring down the pro-imperialist regime of Alan García. Here is the renewal of the struggle to reopen the road to the Latin American revolution, temporarily suppressed in Bolivia, Venezuela and other countries by the "Bolivarian revolution"!

For all of the proletarian uprisings that are now breaking out, the first and most urgent task is to break with the bourgeoisie, in other words, end subservience to the "democratic" imperialists like Obama, and with their servants, the "Bolivarian" bourgeoisie and its treacherous left wing of fake Trotskyists who have become reformists.

The FLT fights for an international conference to unite the healthy forces of Trotskyism and revolutionary workers groups. To do this, we have advanced 23 programmatic points to sum up the revolutionary tasks facing the world crisis and the offensive against the working masses that spells out the clear differences between revolutionaries, centrists and reformists. This would be a new Zimmerwald that will bring together the forces necessary to build a new international on the program and legacy of the founding program of the Fourth International of 1938.

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Secretariat of Coordination and International Action (SCAI) of the FLT
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Overthrow Capitalism

Historically, capitalism expanded world-wide to free much of humanity from the bonds of feudal or tribal society, and developed the economy, society and culture to a new higher level. But it could only do this by exploiting the labor of the productive classes to make its profits. To survive, capitalism became increasingly destructive of "nature" and humanity. In the early century it entered the epoch of imperialism in which successive crises unleashed wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions. Today we fight to end capitalism's wars, famine, oppression and injustice, by mobilising workers to overthrow their own ruling classes and bring to an end the rotten, exploitative and oppressive society that has exceeded its use-by date.

Fight for Socialism

By the 20th century, capitalism had created the pre-conditions for socialism - a world-wide working class and modern industry capable of meeting all our basic needs. The potential to eliminate poverty, starvation, disease and war has long existed. The October Revolution proved this to be true, bringing peace, bread and land to millions. But it became the victim of the combined assault of imperialism and Stalinism. After 1924 the USSR, along with its deformed offspring in Europe, degenerated back towards capitalism. In the absence of a workers political revolution, capitalism was restored between 1990 and 1992. Vietnam and China then followed. In the 21st century only Cuba and North Korea survive as degenerate workers states. We unconditionally defend these states against capitalism and fight for political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy as part of world socialism.

Defend Marxism

While the economic conditions for socialism exist today, standing between the working class and socialism are political, social and cultural barriers. They are the capitalist state and bourgeois ideology and its agents. These agents claim that Marxism is dead and capitalism need not be exploitative. We say that Marxism is a living science that explains both capitalism's continued exploitation and its attempts to hide class exploitation behind the appearance of individual "freedom" and "equality". It reveals how and why the reformist, Stalinist and centrist misleaders of the working class tie workers to bourgeois ideas of nationalism, racism, sexism and equality. Such false beliefs will be exploded when the struggle against the inequality, injustice, anarchy and barbarism of capitalism in crisis, led by a

revolutionary Marxist party, produces a revolutionary class-consciousness.

For a Revolutionary Party

The bourgeois and its agents condemn the Marxist party as totalitarian. We say that without a democratic and a centrally organised party there can be no revolution. We base our beliefs on the revolutionary tradition of Bolshevism and Trotskyism. Such a party, armed with a *transitional program*, forms a bridge that joins the daily fight to defend all the past and present gains won from capitalism, to the victorious socialist revolution. Defensive struggles for bourgeois rights and freedoms, for decent wages and conditions, will link up the struggles of workers of all nationalities, genders, ethnicities and sexual orientations, bringing about movements for workers control, political strikes and the arming of the working class, as necessary steps to workers' power and the smashing of the bourgeois state. Along the way, workers will learn that each new step is one of many in a long march to revolutionise every barrier put in the path to the victorious revolution.

Fight for Communism

Communism stands for the creation of a classless, stateless society beyond socialism that is capable of meeting all human needs. Against the ruling class lies that capitalism can be made "fair" for all; that nature can be "conserved"; that socialism and communism are "dead"; we raise the red flag of communism to keep alive the revolutionary tradition of the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, the Bolshevik-led October Revolution; the Third Communist International until 1924, the revolutionary Fourth International up to 1940 before its collapse into centrism. We fight to build a new, Fifth, Communist International, as a world party of socialism capable of leading workers to a victorious struggle for socialism.

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