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# May Day, 1975

May 1 is the day when workers throughout the world celebrate past and current struggles and declare their determination to struggle still harder in the future. It is also a day that brings out the opportunists of the social-democratic and revisionist varieties with their fine words that attempt to conceal their betrayal of workers' basic principles and interests. In New Zealand there is a growing movement to restore May Day to its proper role, to overcome the fraud of Labour Day as an October substitute.

This May Day sees the international working class at an unprecedented level of struggle. As world capitalism in its imperialist stage goes deeper into crisis, revolution is the main trend throughout the world today. The victories of the liberation and revolutionary struggles give cause for greater celebration than ever before.

On May Day, 1975, revolutionary and progressive people everywhere hail with joy the glorious victory of the Cambodian liberation movement, described by Head of State and Chairman of the National United Front of Cambodia, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, as "the most beautiful page in Cambodia's history."

Revolutionaries and progressives also welcome the tremendous, shattering victories of the people and liberation movement of Viet Nam.

What a crushing blow to US imperialism (which poured in thousands of millions of dollars into Viet Nam to rule the roost in this part of the world), to its prestige and arrogance! Its military machine, modern technique, armour, equipment, bombers, napalm, toxic chemicals, gas, etc. — all these were of no avail against the common people, the workers and peasants, who fought with unparalleled heroism and dedication for their independence and freedom from the imperialist yoke.

But US imperialism, licking its wounds over its defeats, remains vicious, desperate and unrepentant. It is still the major enemy of the peoples of the world. Although cheered by the historic victories of the peoples of South East Asia, revolutionaries cannot afford to be complacent but must remain on the alert. Undoubtedly US imperialism will try new tricks and prepare to counter-attack. The use of nuclear weapons cannot be ruled out. The imperialists will never lay down their butcher knives until their doom, as Mao Tsetung said.

As experience and history has shown, future struggle will be full of twists and turns. Revisionists — secret agents of the bourgeoisie within the working class movement — will still talk deceptively about "unity" (actually unity with the labour social-reformists), but quietly cover up for imperialism, sabotage the workers' struggle and betray Marxist-Leninist principles. As the "People's

Voice" article in this issue points out, it is essential to continue the struggle to expose the humbug in the anti-imperialist movement. This means developing the fight against both the local capitalist class as agents of foreign imperialism, and the sell-out merchants (the opportunist-revisionists).

The peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, defeated the US imperialist enemy, mainly and basically, not by mediation, though conferences at certain stages played an important role, not by appeals to reason or prayer, but with gun in hand.

As pointed out by Mao Tsetung, US imperialism is a "paper tiger" — extremely formidable and terrifying, but inwardly weak. It can be defeated by a small nation whose people are aroused, united and politically conscious.

In the international sphere, the struggle against imperialism must also involve struggle against Soviet social-imperialism which colludes and contends with US imperialism and, with regard to national liberation movements, pursues its own mercenary aims. This has been made clear in its treacherous, two-faced role in Cambodia — on the one hand, paying lip service to the liberation struggle, but on the other, backing the puppet Lon Nol regime.

The struggle against imperialism also involves the building up of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard, a Communist Party, which will equip the working masses with a steered, theoretically advanced and experienced leadership capable of showing the correct path forward in the future.

Dare to struggle, dare to win!



# Women's Liberation — a Class Question

(Contributed)

"The problems of women do not stand all by themselves isolated from and unrelated to the other problems of society, they are not problems that can be solved easily or, what is worse, that can be ignored. The problem of women is not merely a problem of sentiments that can therefore be treated in a sentimental and romantic way. It is a great problem of life, of the materialist dialectic development of the history of mankind.

"It is for this reason that Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and all their followers have attached primary importance to the problem of women." (Enver Hoxha, "On some aspects of the problem of Albanian women.")

"In class society everyone lives as a member of a particular class, and every kind of thinking, without exception, is stamped with the brand of a class." (Mao Tsetung).

These two quotations make nonsense of the capitalist attempt always to present women as a classless mass that can be manipulated to suit the ruling class.

## CLASS SOCIETY

To understand women's movements for recognition in society, for equality and finally for complete liberation they must be seen as part of the historic development of class society. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the rise and development of capitalism, a new mode of production which challenged and defeated feudal relationships and brought into being a new class — the working class.

The break-up of feudal society and the development of capitalism did not do away with class antagonism, but because of the changed relationship of exploiter and exploited, it did establish new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones. Capitalism brought into being the modern working class and with it, working class ideology. This new force the working class, was a class as a whole, men and women torn from their ties with the land to work side by side in mine and factory — and right from the start women were treated as inferior beings, receiving less than half the pay of men. Peasant women who had formally been subject to the old feudal laws, now became members of the working class subject to the laws of capitalism.

The women's rights movements began to organise in England around the 1840's, at the time of deep economic depression in England and the wholesale export of immigrants to the "colonies."



These movements were middle-class and were based on and reflected the position of this class. They were mainly for the right to vote, the right to stand for parliament, and for legal and property rights. These demands did not in any way affect the working class women who had no property and were still wage slaves irrespective of which parliamentary party (including female members) was the government of the day.

Many working class women in England and here in New Zealand became caught up in these movements and worked very hard for the realisation of their demands, seeing them as some relief from the intolerable conditions of their time.

But improvements in the working conditions of women came about only as the result of direct action at the work bench and in solidarity with the struggle of their menfolk.

### **UPSURGE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT**

The rapid decline of imperialism and the vigorous development of the struggle for national independence, particularly in the Third World Countries, has seen a great upsurge of the women's movement for liberation and equality comparable, though on a higher level, to those of the later part of the last century and the beginning of the present one. In spite of all the bourgeois clap-trap they are beginning to move away from the concept of replacing "manpower" with "womanpower" and taking a more positive anti-imperialist stand. But because of the deliberate slurring over of the class aspect of women's movements and the influence of bourgeois thinking among the working class, there is a great deal of confusion in the capitalist countries on just where the movement is going and just what it hopes to achieve.

The United Nations General Assembly in designating 1975 as International Women's Year, International Year for Equality, Development and Peace, feeds this confusion. Capitalism and its henchmen, such as the revisionists, resort to many tricks and manoeuvres to divert people from real and basic issues and involve them in activity which may appear to be progressive, even anti-establishment, but in essence, assists the capitalist class. One such prop of the capitalist class is the promoting of bourgeois movements and organisations for women in capitalist society. Link this question to that of children and you have an emotional cauldron that the press, radio, TV and Parliamentarians can puddle in endlessly, (such as "orphans" in IndoChina today), in an effort to divert attention from the real culprits — imperialism and their lackeys.

### **BOURGEOIS CAMPAIGN OF DIVERSION**

Feminists, women's liberationists, bourgeois women from all countries are travelling the world pushing their bourgeois line, distorting the real position of women's liberation struggles in their countries. One such was an Indonesian member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women who is reported as

saying, "New Zealand women should be more active in politics", and "Women took an active part in Indonesian affairs because they were involved in the struggle for independence thirty years ago and therefore, did not need a women's liberation or suffragette movement." Evidently she has not heard of the hundreds of thousands of Indonesian men and women murdered and imprisoned in that country for taking part in liberation struggles only ten years ago.

Then we have the call of an Opposition member in Parliament, in which he sees "Women as Peacemakers", to have women "appointed as industrial conciliators or mediators". "Women," he said "more than any other group are involved in industrial relations, either as part of the workforce or as unpaid working house-wives." This is a blatant call to women to act as strike-breakers and desert their class position.

### REVISIONIST "GIMMICK"

Then we have the revisionists' proposition of "wives being allowed to attend union meetings" as their contribution to International Women's Year. By all means let wives attend union meetings if the intention is that they gain a greater understanding of class antagonism and relationship of worker to employer, and by so doing are better equipped to play their full part in the overall struggle for the abolition of wage slavery and the establishment of socialism.

But if such a proposal is introduced as a mere "gimmick" or remains on the level of trade unionism, as favoured by the revisionists, while the whole problem of women's position under capitalism and as part of the working class, is ignored or evaded, then it is a diversionary trap.

So we see International Women's Year as an instrument to push the bourgeois line and hold back the real struggle against imperialism and for the liberation of women.

In the countries struggling for freedom from colonialism and for national independence the issue is more simple and clear-cut. "Countries want independence — People want revolution" as Mao Tsetung has pointed out. But there, also, the struggle of the two lines goes on. The traditional suppression of women by the old laws and customs of the feudal type society have to be fought against, the outlook and thinking of both men and women has to be changed. This is being done through practice. Women in their thousands are taking up the gun to fight in defence of their homeland for liberation of their class, and through that the liberation of women. The outstanding example of the heroic Chinese, Albanian and Vietnamese in their struggle for the liberation of their homeland, in which thousands of women took part and gave their lives for the cause, has been an inspiration to women the world over, and has proven that there can be no question of liberation for women without the liberation of the whole class.

# Expose Humbug in Struggle Against Imperialism

"N.Z. PEOPLE'S VOICE" MARCH 12, 1975

**T**HE struggle for socialism requires an exposure of the capitalist system in New Zealand — an exposure of the way the local capitalist class allies itself with foreign imperialism (selling out resources and labour for a share in the profits) and an exposure of the various types who try to help both local and foreign capitalists by tricking the working class into one or another form of collaboration.

If the struggle against imperialism does not expose the local capitalist class and sell-out merchants (the opportunists) then that struggle is a sham and a humbug that can only strengthen the local capitalist class and therefore its collaboration with foreign imperialism.

Such a sham struggle is a form of opportunism itself because it is sacrificing the basic interests of the working people to cater for the needs of the capitalist class.

It leads to theories that pervert the tried and tested experience of the international working class movement (Marxism-Leninism and the teachings of Mao Tsetung). Such revised theories disarm the working class by deceiving them into thinking that socialism can be won through evolution and reforms and not by revolution.

For example the Labour Government regulations putting limitations on foreign ownership of shares and property are interpreted by some people as proof that there is a thriving liberation struggle successfully being waged through pressure on Parliament. If this is so then socialism can be won through peaceful evolution with the profiteers peacefully abdicating and putting their armed state machine in the hands of the workers!

In actual fact the Labour Government is merely regulating the amount of foreign investment and property purchase — providing some more orderly ground rules so the local ruling class and established foreign firms can compete and collaborate with foreign imperialists while trying to fool the public which is growing alarmed over the joint plunder of New Zealand.

## BID TO HOODWINK

The "independent" Labour Government approach to SEATO and ANZUS was a similar move to streamline and strengthen these anti-people military alliances on behalf of both local and foreign imperialism while trying to hoodwink the public, which was getting increasingly disturbed by the dirty work being done on behalf of US and other imperialisms.



Far from showing that there is a successful, progressive liberation movement, the Labour Government's moves show that the local capitalists have matured to a stage where they have become liberated enough to protect and advance their own position while collaborating with foreign imperialism more effectively and cunningly.

To support the local capitalist class and its politicians (in this bargaining for more profitable shares in imperialist plunder) while claiming to be working for socialism is social-chauvinism — pretending to be a socialist while working for local imperialism.

It is easy for some people to fall for this kind of opportunism because it is presented as if it is a movement that unites everyone by benefitting everyone. As if the fully developed capitalist system in New Zealand allows any movement that unites and benefits both exploiters and exploited!

### REVISIONISM

As Lenin pointed out, such indiscriminate unification is most dangerous and most harmful to the working class movement. It is a typical opportunist characteristic of being influenced by the mood of the moment, by the fashion of the day, by the idea that "the movement is everything and the final aim nothing."

Lenin said **"To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chops and changes of petty politics, to forget the basic interests of the proletariat, the main feature of the capitalist system as a whole and of capitalist evolution as a whole; to sacrifice these basic interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment — such is the policy of revisionism."**

But then isn't it true that all revisionists and opportunists will support any belief or practice that allows them to live comfortably within the capitalist system they love so much?

Opportunism and revisionism rear their ugly heads in many disguises but they all have one thing in common — they remove from the agenda the fact that the working class must smash the state power of those who exploit and oppress them and set up their own state power.

Some opportunists are prepared to engage in class struggle — as long as it does not extend the recognition of that struggle to the recognition that the working class must win state power. There is nothing wrong with the day-to-day struggles for wages and conditions, housing, civil liberties, etc., etc. Indeed such struggles are vital. But if they are seen as isolated goals or as sure methods of permanent improvement then they can be used to obscure the revolutionary goal and can only help the class enemy.

Revolutionaries, on the other hand, fighting alongside their workmates and neighbours in such day to day struggles, show how all these issues inevitably arise from the capitalist system, how local and foreign imperialism aggravate hardships and problems,

how there is a need to develop revolutionary struggle and organisation.

Some opportunists and revisionists are prepared to fight against foreign monopoly penetration of New Zealand — as long as it leaves local monopoly and hence local capitalism intact. Indeed such an approach is helping foreign imperialism because it is strengthening the hands of those who wish to join it in joint plunder of the world, including New Zealand.

(A detailed examination of this appears in the March issue of the "NZ Communist Review").

The correct struggle to build an anti-imperialist united front (particularly against US imperialism) must embrace the struggle against the local imperialists and their agents otherwise it is leaving the rear open while concentrating on only one part of the enemy's forces. It is as dangerous as ignoring foreign imperialism while attacking only local capitalism.

The developing crisis of world capitalism and revisionism provides many issues for educational struggle, showing the correctness of the Communist Party programme of struggle against imperialism and revisionism in such a way that it develops revolutionary awareness and organisation.

## **Proletarian Revolution and Proletarian Dictatorship**

V. I. LENIN

(Excerpts from articles)

### **BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY**

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" so long as different classes exist; we can only speak of class democracy . . .

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the working class. History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy . . .

Bourgeois democracy while constituting a great historical advance in comparison with mediaevalism, nevertheless remains and cannot but remain under capitalism restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a trap and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor . . .

The learned Mr Kuatsky "forgot" — no doubt accidentally —

a "bagatelle," namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of minorities only to the other bourgeois party, while on all serious, profound and fundamental issues, the working class gets martial law and programs, instead of the "protection of minorities" . . .

Even in the most democratic bourgeois states the oppressed masses meet at every step the crying contradiction between the formal equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists, and the thousand and one *de facto* limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians wage-slaves . . .

We are governed (and our state is "run") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges — such is the indisputable and obvious truth, which tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their living experience, feel and realise every day . . .

If we argue in a Marxian way we must say: The exploiters inevitably transform the state (we are speaking of democracy, i.e. one of the forms of the state) into an instrument for the domination of their class of the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be democracy for the exploiters. The state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be democracy for the exploited, and a means of suppressing the exploiters; and the suppression of a class means inequality for this class, its exclusion from "democracy." . . .

The exploiter and the exploited cannot be equal. This truth, however unpleasant it may be to Kautsky, is nevertheless the quintessence of socialism . . . There can be no real equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been destroyed . . .

("The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.")

### STATE POWER

The basic question of any revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no conscious participation in the revolution, not to speak of guidance of the revolution. ("On the Dual Power", April, 1917).

The transfer of state power from one class to another class is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a revolution, both in the strictly scientific, and in the practical political meaning of the term. ("Letters on Tactics," April, 1917).

### THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

It is often said and written that the main point in Marx's teachings is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this untruth very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification in such a way as to make it acceptable to the bourge-

oisie. For the doctrine of the class struggle was created **not** by Marx, **but** by the bourgeoisie **before** Marx, and generally speaking it is **acceptable** to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognise **only** the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois thinking and bourgeois politics. To confine Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who **extends** the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the **dictatorship of the Proletariat**. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the **real** understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested . . .

"The state, i.e. the proletariat organised as the ruling class," this theory of Marx is inseparably bound with all he taught of the revolutionary role of the proletariat in history. The culmination of this role is the proletarian dictatorship, the political rule of the proletariat. ("The State and Revolution", August-September, 1917).

If Comrade Crispian now says that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a new thing and adds: "We have always stood for the capture of political power," it shows that he is evading the main issue. The capture of political power is recognised, but dictatorship is not. All literature — not only German but French and English — proves that the leaders of the opportunist parties (for example, MacDonald in England) stand for the capture of political power. They are all sincere Socialists — I am not jesting — but they are opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat! (Speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International, July, 1920).

The entire history of the bourgeois-parliamentary, and to a considerable extent also of the bourgeois-constitutional countries, shows that a change of ministers means very little for the real work of administration is in the hands of an enormous army of officials. This army, however, is saturated through and through with an anti-democratic spirit, it is connected by thousands and millions of threads with the land-owners and the bourgeoisie and it depends upon them in every way. This army is surrounded by an atmosphere of bourgeois relations; it breathes only this atmosphere; it is inert, petrified, fossilised; it has not the power to extricate itself from this atmosphere; it cannot think, feel or act otherwise than in the old way. This army is bound by the relations of rank worship, by certain privileges of "state" service, while the upper ranks of this army are, through the medium of stocks and banks, entirely enslaved by finance - capital, being to some degree its agent, the vehicle of its interests and influence . . . This apparatus **can** serve a republican bourgeoisie, creating a republic in the shape of a "monarchy without a monarch", like the Third Republic in France, but of carrying out reforms seriously undermining or limiting the rights of capital, the rights of "sacred private property," not to



speak of abolishing them — such a state apparatus is absolutely incapable . . . (“One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution,” September, 1917).

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a **new one** which, in the words of Engels, is “no longer a state in the proper sense of the word.” (“The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.” 1918).

### PARLIAMENT

But for Marx, revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and the others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the “pig-sty” of bourgeois parliamentarism, especially when the situation is obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuine revolutionary-proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament — such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics. (“The State and Revolution,” 1917).

The Bernsteinites accepted and accept Marxism **with the exception** of its direct revolutionary aspect. They consider parliamentary struggle not as one of the means of struggle, suited particularly to certain historical periods, but as the chief and almost the exclusive form of struggle, which makes “violence”, “seizure”, “dictatorship”, unnecessary. (“Cadet victory and the Tasks of the Workers’ Party,” March 1906).

### REVISIONISM

One of the essential conditions for preparing the proletariat for victory is a prolonged, persistent and ruthless struggle against opportunism, reformism, social-chauvinism, and similar bourgeois influences and tendencies which are inevitable as long as the proletariat acts under capitalist conditions. Unless such a struggle is fought, and unless a complete victory over opportunism within the working-class movement is preliminarily gained, there can be no hope for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Bolshevism would never have triumphed over the bourgeoisie in 1917-19 had it not previously learned during the years 1903-17, to defeat and ruthlessly expel the Mensheviks, i.e., the opportunists, reformists and social-chauvinists, from the party of the proletarian vanguard. (“The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” December, 1919).

Opportunism is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is not proletarian socialism, but bourgeois socialism. Practice has shown that the active

people in the working-class movement who adhere to the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie, than the bourgeoisie itself. Without their leadership of the workers the bourgeoisie could not have remained in power . . . (Report delivered to the Second Congress of the Communist International, July, 1920).

### **THE TRANSITION FROM CAPITALISM TO COMMUNISM**

The essence of Marx's teaching on the state has been mastered only by those who understand that the dictatorship of a **single** class is necessary not only for every class society in general not only for the **proletariat** which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire **historical period** which separates capitalism from "classless society," from Communism. The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but their essence is the same: all these states whatever their form, in the final analysis are inevitably the **dictatorship of the bourgeoisie**. The transition from capitalism to Communism certainly cannot but yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: the **dictatorship of the proletariat** ("The State and Revolution").

The transition from capitalism to communism represents an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this **hope** is converted into **attempts** at restoration. And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters — who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it — throw themselves with energy grown tenfold, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of the "paradise", of which they have been deprived, on behalf of their families, who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the "common herd" is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to "common" labour . . .). ("The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky").

### **THE COMMUNIST PARTY**

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully. It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralised big bourgeoisie than to "vanquish" the millions and millions of small owners; yet they, by their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible elusive, demoralising activity, achieve the very results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to restore the bourgeoisie. Whoever weakens ever so little the iron discipline of the party of the prole-

tariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. (" 'Left-wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder," 1920).

Marxism teaches — and this tenet has not only been formally endorsed by the whole of the Communist International in the decisions of the Second (1920) Congress of the Comintern on the role of the political party of the proletariat, but has also been confirmed in practice by our revolution — that only the political party of the working class, i.e. the Communist Party, is capable of uniting, training and organising a vanguard of the proletariat and of the whole mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, i.e., of leading it politically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people. Without this the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible. ("Preliminary Draft of the Resolution of the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party on the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in our Party" March, 1921).

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